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Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 4:01 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Tree Protection Ordinance

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Hello Councilwomen-

Rebecca, thank you for taking a stab at writing a tree protection ordinance. Anika, including you because I'm in your ward.

I didn't learn about it until just recently and hope there is still time for amendments.

Mostly: the ordinance lacks any enforcement mechanism. Is the City supposed to protect themselves? That set up violates basic conflict of interest principles (I'm suggesting the principles are misaligned not accusing anyone of anything).

Seems like we that could be addressed in several ways:

1. **Residents need a way to route complaints** if they see either designs or implementations that violate the principle of protecting trees. What's the intake and adjudication mechanism for sorting out which trees are actually able to be preserved when residents disagree with the City's plans?
2. **Intake respondents.** If the intake simply brings residents right back to the agency that determined the trees were in the way in the first place, that doesn't seem effective. Can we get the services of a reasonable third party? I have heard someone propose to use the American Society of Consulting Arborists. That seems reasonable.
3. **Punishment. Stop orders** need to be available. Once a tree is gone, it's gone, and it will often take longer than the complainants time left on this planet for a replacement tree to grow to the size of the one that was lost. As a secondary measure, there should be fines. **Fines** can be levied against the contractors hired to complete construction work if they aren't able to meet the protection plan they have outlined. Those fines need to be tied to the size of the tree - the bigger and more valuable the tree in terms of the benefits it provides, the steeper the fine. Partial fines for partial damage, etc. Fines would also be punitive in instances of non-planned wanton and negligent destruction of trees.
4. **Wanton and negligent destruction of trees, non-construction related.** The final point would be an add-on to the scope. Please add scope so that people who wantonly destroy trees, take actions that will lead to their destruction (e.g. poison, mauling them with a vehicle, etc), or otherwise cause them to perish can be found guilty of a misdemeanor and fined. Two trees near me were killed due to drunk drivers mauling them at high speeds. Many along Lexington Parkway have died as a result of vehicular accidents.

It's a much much nicer, shadier, quieter neighborhood with trees. Thank you so much for putting this ordinance forward and, hopefully, for giving it some teeth.

Have a great weekend!

Yours,

Laura Norén
Ward 1, St Paul, MN