

To: Tree Commission Members

June 12, 1995

Subject: Landmark Trees

From: Bob Davis

The following is background for discussion at our next meeting.

The Tree Commission Ordinance lists the following criteria for designation of a tree as a Landmark Tree: Species rarity, Old age, Association with an historical event or person and Abnormally great scenic enhancement or beauty.

Size is not a criterion for Landmark Tree designation. I believe the Ordinance should be amended to include Size as a criterion because it is a criterion with which the public can identify. Also age is nearly if not absolutely impossible to identify unless the planting date is recorded.

There are other aspects of the Landmark Tree program that the Commission needs to consider such as:

1. The source(s) of authority for common and scientific names. We should agree on a source and follow it throughout.
2. Candidate Landmark Trees on public versus private property. We can have our way with boulevard trees and those in city parks; however, we require the property owners' permission to inspect their trees. Also we need to know if the property owners would permit us to put tags on their trees and whether they would permit visitations.
3. We must decide on the signing to be used on Landmark Trees. The tags on the trees at Lake Bluff are one inch by three inches in size. All lettering is in capitals. Their tags have the common names in large capitals and the scientific names in smaller capitals below. Since we will be showing the criterion for designation as well as the common and scientific names, I believe our tags should be at least 1 1/4 inch by 3 1/4 inch. Lake Bluff uses one nail per tag and many of the tags are hanging vertically on the trees. I suggest using two nails with short pieces of rubber tubing between the tags and the tree trunks to permit diameter growth of the trees without the tags becoming imbedded in the bark. Jackpine can get tags made for us, but I don't know the price.
I suggest the tags on boulevard trees be placed five feet above the ground on the street side of the trees. That should discourage vandalism and permit people to read the tags from automobiles.
4. Landmark Trees should be recorded in some form, probably by species, criterion and location and such record should be kept in a public place. Perhaps one copy could be housed in City Hall and another at the library. The record will have to

be updated as additional trees are identified.

5. Jim Scarlata and I have measured a few trees. We believe we have identified the largest sycamore and the largest American elm. We also measured one of the larger silver maples. I am willing to devote a fair amount of time to identifying, inspecting and measuring candidate Landmark Trees. I could sure use some help with the task. Measurement is easier and faster with a two-person team.