



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY COMMUNITY TREE COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Introduction

The Athens-Clarke County Community Tree Council (CTC) is pleased to present to the Mayor and Commission of the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County (ACC) the 2010 Annual Report. This report summarizes activities pursued by the CTC in 2010.

Overall Status

One of the activities of which the CTC is most proud is the Arbor Day Foundation sponsored "Tree City U.S.A. (TCUSA) and the follow-on annual Growth Awards. As the ACC Community Tree Program has grown under the tutelage of its very able Community Forest Coordinator, direct involvement by the CTC personnel has decreased, but still plays a significant role in many of the program's numerous projects. These projects are reflected in the annual Arbor Day Foundation Growth Award petition. Athens-Clarke County is entering the eleventh year as a TCUSA recipient and has just successfully completed its 10th application for the annual Growth Award. In the ACC petition for the Growth Award, activity in four recognized areas were cited and included: Local Awards Program, Utility Partnership, Tree Inventory and Analysis and Improved Ordinance.

Local Awards Program: The ACC Tree Conservation Award Program was significantly improved during 2010, when it was essentially reactivated (The program was last used in 2003). The program recognizes developers who exceed the community's tree conservation and planting standards. Ten recently developed properties were surveyed. The Community Forest Coordinator with the help of the ACC Arborist and a member of the CTC conducted the field review. An award was presented to the developer at the GreenFest Awards ceremony.

Utility Partnership: Georgia Power (a subsidiary of the Southern Company) informed ACC of their Tree Line USA (TLUSA) designation in 2010. This continues their efforts to improve their utility line clearance pruning over the last three years. In addition to maintaining their TLUSA status, they partnered with ACC for a local Arbor Day planting. Georgia Power and ACC worked with the Boulevard neighborhood to remove red maples beneath energized lines and replace them with dogwoods. These activities resulted in 18 trees removed and replaced as well as over 1,000 trees pruned.

Tree Inventory and Analysis: The Tree Inventory and Analysis project is a continuing six-year public-tree inventory updating effort conducted and analyzed by ACC staff personnel. The county was divided into 10 management zones. Two of the zones were inventoried using GPS/GIS (Global Positioning System/Geographic Information System) equipment. There were 4,600 trees added to the inventory during 2010. The analysis was conducted with the aid of *iTree*, a Forest Service computer software package.

Improved Tree Ordinance: A special section was added to the ACC Community Tree Management Ordinance (CTMO) to further protect trees in the community's historic corridors. This new section protects all trees between the street and front of the buildings along these corridors. This significantly increases the preservation requirements of the CTMO.

Prior Projects and Initiatives

Three new initiatives were brought forward in 2009 for consideration and were timed for completion in 2010: **Milledge Ave. Overlay District, 2011 SPLOST proposal, and the Community Tree Management Ordinance (CTMO) review.**

Milledge Avenue Overlay District. In December 2009, the CTC Policy Committee issued a letter of support for the Milledge Avenue Overlay District. The letter expressed the belief that the character of Milledge Avenue can be preserved by creating an effective overlay district with required setbacks consistent with existing property setbacks, preservation of the mature tree canopy, and parking and storm water structures located off the corridor. The letter also requested a meeting with the ACC Planning Department staff to clarify the committee's questions and to discuss comments and suggested additions. Generally, questions, comments and suggestions were related to exemptions for small properties, replacement planting ratios and acceptable planting locations, inclusion of the ACC Community Forest Coordinator when trees are replanted in the right-of-way, permit requirements for planting in state route rights-of-way, and proper demarcation of tree protection zones. A meeting was held with Planning Department staff. Questions were answered and CTC suggestions were incorporated.

2011 SPLOST Proposal: Late in 2009, the CTC submitted a proposal for funding from the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) titled: Athens-Clarke County Parking Lot and Street Tree Improvement Program. The goal of this program was to install 814 large canopy trees at 46 Athens-Clarke County facilities to the street and parking lot tree standards of the CTMO. The mission of this program mirrored that of the CTC: to advance the notion of community forest sustainability adopted as a land ethic as reflected in the CTMO. This project specifically addressed the planting of street and parking lot trees. This comprehensive tree planting project would bring all county-owned facilities into compliance with the street and parking lot tree standards of the CTMO, and would: (1) improve the quality of life for county residents, (2) promote sustainable living and natural resource conservation, (3) facilitate project management such that more focus

could be placed on program and facility development (4) instill community confidence in the ACC commitment to the CTMO and its concept. The project was well received and survived several “cuts” before finally losing out in one of the final screenings. Although the funding was not approved, the project was a major success in that it provided a vehicle for public exposition of the CTC mission and validation of the commitment the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County has made to the CTMO and the land ethic it represents. It is for this reason we believe action to bring county lands into full CTMO compliance is the right example to set for the community at large and will manifest itself in other ways as we move forward.

CTMO Review. Requested by the ACC Commission Legislative Review Committee toward the end of 2009, the CTMO review was deferred until 2010 to allow the CTC more time to gather information, and recommend adjustments to the community’s CTMO.

New Projects and Initiatives

Making the Shade Grant was submitted to the Georgia Forestry Commission for funding under the Urban and Community Forest Grant Assistance Program. Awarding of the grants will be made in the June-July time frame and will begin September 1, 2010. This program would be an extension of the “School Shade Tree Program” initiated in 2006 as a pilot program with the Georgia Forestry Commission and Milliken Corporation as partners. Clarke County was one of two counties selected for this pilot program with the new Gaines Elementary School picked as the site. The program was highly successful and well received by the beneficiaries. The focus of the program was functional use of trees to ameliorate the extreme temperatures occurring on school ground activity areas. Trees were strategically placed to block the sun during periods of maximum use. Using the success of this project, the new grant expanded the concept beyond just the playground areas, but also included an outdoor classroom, fruit trees, and a community garden.

CTMO Review: The Policy Committee of the CTC was assigned the task of conducting the evaluations and producing recommendations for adjusting the CTMO, and reported back to the Legislative Review Committee in September 2010 their findings. One project described was the CTC’s work with the ACC Community Forester and Arborist to develop an assessment process for projects completed under the CTMO. Information derived from this effort will help to establish a more realistic understanding of the effectiveness of the current ordinance as written. Specifically, the assessments are intended to evaluate survival of conserved and planted trees and proper site preparation. As part of this review, the Policy Committee reported on research into required bonds for trees planted in fulfillment of the ordinance and requirements for landscape plans to include bilingual planting notes and proper planting details. The hope is the tools can be used in increase tree survival in ordinance required planting projects. Finally and still on-going is a review of the CTC mission and structure in light of CTMO adjustments and community needs.

The overall status of the CTC is sound and positive. The unequivocal support of the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County and its several departments regarding the strength and efficiency of CTMO validates its commitment to the sustainable land ethic it represents. As stewards of the community tree resources, it is essential to the CTC that this support is in place.



New 2010 Tree Fair Site



A Friend of Trees - Larry Morris



Coile Middle School - Tree that Owns Itself



Ten-Year Consecutive Growth Award



Reforested Lands Planted as a Trees for Tomorrow Grove

Activities

- **Tree City USA:** Athens-Clarke County qualified and received their 11th consecutive Tree City USA designation from the National Arbor Day Foundation along with their 10th consecutive Growth Award.
- **January, Martin Luther King (MLK) Day of Service.** Volunteer tree planting at Chase Street Elementary School. Almost 100 participants provided maintenance to a grove in the new Athens Trees for Tomorrow Program, a donor program that promotes tree planting. Trees and shrubs were planted to shade the playground, sidewalks and parking areas and to screen the water detention pond
- **February, Arbor Day at W.R. Coile Middle School.** The majority of the 7th grade students participated in planting 36 large shade trees to provide shade for the classroom and parking areas. As is tradition, a sapling from the Tree that Owns Itself was planted in honor of the day.
- **Arbor Day with Georgia Power.** The CTC partnered with Georgia Power in an Arbor Day planting that involved removing red maples and replacing them with dogwoods.
- **March, W.R. Coile Middle School.** The CTC coordinated planting hundreds of pine and hardwood seedlings at the school by UGA horticulture students, creating two reforestation study areas that allow teachers and students to study how a forest develops in the Georgia Piedmont. The CTC would like to credit Principal Dr. Dwight Manzie, and Dr. Richard Burrell for their excellent support of the project.
- **April, Friend of Trees Award and 4EverGreen Earth Day Exposition.** Several hundred people stopped by to talk to the CTC representatives at the 4EverGreen Earth Day Exposition, and receive handouts, and draw for a seedling of the Tree that Owns Itself as a door prize. The CTC was invited back for next year. The traditional Friend of Trees Award this year was awarded to Larry Morris, and was presented for the 2nd year at the GreenFest awards celebration at the Terrapin Brewery. As usual, there was a large turn out and great exposure for this prestigious award.
- **August, Urban and Community Forestry Grant.** Funding for the Tree Shade Program was approved and efforts accelerated to fully implement the program at the J. J. Harris Elementary School, where planting plans were already underway. The bulk of the activity will center on the Arbor Day activity in 2011.
- **October, Farmers Market and Tree Fair.** Bishop Park was selected as the new Tree Fair site and October 13th was set as the day. That day and the Saturday previously, were utilized to promote the fair.
- **December, Sandy Creek Park Trees for Tomorrow (TfT) Grove.** In collaboration with the ACC Leisure Services Department, established another TfT grove at Sandy Creek Park. The planting was made around the central orbital road at the park.
- **December, Sandy Creek Park Tree Planting.** American Recovery and Reinvestment Act accepted a proposal based upon the SPLOST concept to plant street and parking lot trees on publicly owned facilities. The grant provided funds for several large trees to be planted in the same general location of the TfT trees.

Membership

As of this writing, the CTC has two vacancies open. Recruitment efforts are on going to fill these positions as soon as possible. Rosters of members, emeritus members, ex-officio members and ACC staff support are included in Appendix A.

Financial Statement: Below is a summary of income and expenses for the year 2010.

2010 Financial Report: Income and Expenses

Beginning Balance *		\$17,907.24
Income		
Trees for Tomorrow donations	705.00.	
Interest	30.94	
Anonymous Donation	500.00	
Tree Fair Proceeds	1,814.00	
Speaking Engagement Donations	50.00	
Holiday Benevolence Market Proceeds	205.00	
Urban Forestry Commission Donation	2,500.00	
Subtotal, Income		\$5,0894
Expenses		
Tree Purchases	6,471.56)	
Event/Member Fees	200.00	
Bank Charges	77.63	
Awards	697.23)	
Planting/Program Expenses	399.35	
Education and Outreach		
Tree Fair		
Subtotal, Expenses		\$7,845.77
Ending Balance		\$15,866.41

* Updated and revised

Respectfully Submitted,



Olin Smith IV
 President
 ACC Community Tree Council

APPENDIX - A



CTC 2010

Membership

The CTC is comprised of 15 members: one each for the 10 ACC Commission districts, one for the Mayor, three representing relevant professions, and the ACC County Forester who serves as recording secretary and liaison to the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County.

District 1 - George Crane

District 9 - Mary Charles Howard*

District 2 - Julia Marlow

District 10 - Vacant

District 3 - Tripp Bridges, Treasurer

Mayor - Paul Stutz

District 4 - Kevin Hamman

Professional - Olin Smith
President

District 5 - Vacant

Professional - William Shealy

District 6 - Larry Morris

Professional - Maureen O'Brien
President Elect and Education Co-Chair

District 7 - Martha DeHart

Andrew Saunders - Recording Secretary,
ACC Community Forester

District 8 - Jere Bowden, Education
Co-Chair

Emeritus Members

Mary Anne Kenner

Harry Yates

Bill Johansen

Bob Barker

* New Members

CTC 2010

Ex-Officio Members and Staff

The CTC by-laws provide for up to 10 ex-officio members. In general, these all represent compatible organizations to the CTC Mission. In addition, certain ACC Staff and citizens serve as advisors to the CTC on a variety of subjects.

Ex-Officio Members

Stacee Farrell - Keep Athens-Clarke
County Beautiful

Amanda Tedrow - UGA
Cooperative Extension Service

Susan Russell - Consulting Arborist

Gary White
Georgia Forestry Commission

Dorothy O'Neill
Oconee Rivers Greenway

Virginia Schultz
Athens Garden Club Council

Clay Szoke
Georgia Power Co

ACC Staff

Roger Cauthen - ACC Landscape
Management Division
Administrator

Eric Blair - Environmental
Coordinator*

Amy Lopp - ACC County Arborist*

Ed Robinson - Mayor/Commission
Liaison

* New Members