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Message from Pam Hansen, Village President

One of the Streetscape goals is to restore the tree canopy in the downtown to help remind us of qualities that contributed to Franklin's ambience in the past. Elms were the tree of choice in many US cities because of their graceful shape, large size and durability in locations close to city streets. Dutch Elm Disease devastated the Village's elms in the 60's and early 70's and the trees were not replaced. An interesting aspect of Franklin's former tree canopy is that many of the elms were located on private property.

As plans for the future streetscape were discussed by the various groups involved, enthusiasm for replacing the trees grew. This enthusiasm is not a surprise. Franklin has a strict tree ordinance and maintains a list of heritage trees that has strict rules around their removal and replacement and is strongly supported by residents. As a side note, several years ago, a major reforestation effort was undertaken by the village to plant new trees in areas where trees had been lost due to natural causes.

I'd like to share some information about the trees we expect to plant and how your village council is ensuring their long-term health and safety.

Thirty-three new trees are planned for the downtown proper. Seventeen will be planted within the village right of way and sixteen will be planted on private property. Resident and Chair of the Historic District Commission Gary Roberts and Landscape Architect Tad Krear have been meeting with property owners obtaining their agreement for the planting.

As you can see from the list below, a variety of trees will be planted to ensure we will not have another situation where disease will take large numbers of trees in a small space. In addition, smaller trees will be planted beneath power lines. The village will assume responsibility for the trees for at least two years including watering, pruning, feeding etc. to help ensure their survival. The trees were selected because they are durable and tend to do well along roadways.

Canopy Shade Trees Being Planted

Autumn Blaze Freeman Maple
Exclamation London Planetree
Accolade Elm
Armstrong Maple
Katsura Tree

Ornamental Flowering Trees Being Planted (Under Overhead Utility Lines)

Japanese Tree Lilac

Royal Raindrops Crabapple

No trees will be removed to accommodate the Streetscape since we will not build new pedestrian walkways in residential areas. A Catalpa tree near the Village Office will be removed because our arborist has determined it has significant rot in the main trunk. In general, if a tree is removed by the village it is done for health, safety and welfare reasons.

Finally, it is our hope that this planting program will start a new succession of street trees to replace the ones that have been lost over the years or may be lost in the future to insects and diseases. It goes without saying that trees slow traffic, create a walking environment that is visually distinct from a roadway, help with drainage, encourage other plantings and enhance shopping areas.

Check back to get updates on other features of Franklin's Streetscape.

Best Regards,
Pam Hansen, Village President