



**Department of Planning and Development**

446 West Crogan Street · Lawrenceville, GA 30046-2440  
(tel) 678.518.6000  
www.gwinnettcountry.com

**Gwinnett County Tree Advisory Committee  
Monday February 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00  
One Justice Square  
446 W. Crogan Street, Lawrenceville  
Conference Room B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

*As set forth in the American with Disabilities Act of 1992, Gwinnett County Government does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. Michael Plonowski, 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, Georgia, 30045-6900, 770.822.8015, has been designated to coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in Section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulations. Information about the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided there under, is available from the accommodations required by individuals to fully participate in any meeting, program, or activity of Gwinnett County Government should be directed to Michael Plonowski, 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville Georgia, 30045-6900, 770.822.8015.*

**February 11, 2013 TAC MEETING MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dennis Billew  
Chris Barneycastle  
Terry Baker  
Larry Genn  
Tommy Loggins

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Hilary Wilson  
Carol Hassell

**STAFF PRESENT**

Bryan Lackey, Planning & Development  
Kathy Holland, Planning & Development  
Patricia Huguenard, Planning & Development  
Amanda Street, Planning & Development  
Donna Joe, Planning & Development  
Thuy Hotle, Planning & Development

**GUESTS PRESENT**

- 1) Call to Order  
Meeting started at 6:01 p.m.
- 2) Determination of a Quorum (5 Members)  
It was determined that there was a quorum.
- 3) Action Upon the Minutes from the Previous Meeting  
October 2012 discussion minutes were approved. Larry Genn motioned; Dennis Billew seconded. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.
- 4) Announcements  
No announcements.

**gwinnettcountry**

5) Adoption of the Agenda

February 11<sup>th</sup> agenda was approved. Dennis Billew motioned; Larry Genn seconded. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

6) Old Business

7) New Business

Election of officers: Dennis Billew nominated Terry Baker as Chairman and Chris Barneycastle as Vice-Chairman. Dennis Billew Motioned; Larry Genn seconded. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Bryan Lackey presented the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to the Committee members. He explained that the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) would combine many of the Gwinnett County Ordinances such as the Gwinnett County 1985 Zoning Resolution, Development Regulations, and Buffer, Landscape and Tree Ordinance (BLTO), including definitions and procedures. Several changes took place in Title 2, and Title 3 is mostly updated in an electronic format to assist in the life cycle of a project.

Patricia Huguenard reminded the TAC members of the strong involvement the committee had in the development of the Conservation Subdivision Overlay District (CSO). The UDO is proposing an Open Space Conservation (OSC) District to replace the CSO. The difference in the OSC is that it will provide a 25% to a 50% conservation space on the site whereas the CSO provides a 40% to a 50% conservation space. With the OSC developers will be able to do a 50 ft. buffer or a 25 ft. landscaped buffer with a 6 ft. height fence or wall or the option of a 150 ft. transition boundary. The CSO requires a 50 ft. undisturbed buffer that is adjacent to outside zoning. The density comparison of the OSC and CSO is based on a base density of 2.5 and climbs a scale to reach a maximum of 45% common area with a density bonus of 0.5 dwellings per acre. Dennis Billew would like to see a more graduated scale for the density bonus. Terry Baker asked if flood plain would count toward the common area.

Buffers will slightly change when the UDO becomes active. The UDO will allow a 50% reduction for a landscaped buffer with Director Approval verses the BLTO which would require an administrative variance. This will also allow parallel greenway encroachment verses a perpendicular encroachment for greenways. In Chapter 610; buffers are shown by a table for the Minimum Buffer Widths.

Timber harvesting and tree thinning buffers were re-evaluated and compared to with other jurisdictions such as Cobb County, Clayton County, Dekalb County, and Fulton County. Currently under the BLTO, Gwinnett County has a 75 ft. perimeter buffer in place for timber harvesting and tree thinning. In review of the other jurisdictions, staff felt the need to propose a reduction of the required buffer of 75 ft. to 50 ft. to be consistent with the other jurisdictions. Timber harvesting and tree thinning would still require the applicant to obtain a land disturbance permit.

The requirement for landscape strips will be modified in the UDO. For commercial sites, for every 40 lineal feet one, tree must be provided. For every four lineal feet one shrub must be provided. Walls will be allowed in a landscape strip, and driveway width will be allowed to be subtracted from the lineal feet calculation.

Street Trees underwent a few changes as well. The UDO will allow the builder to place street trees three feet behind the sidewalk adjacent to the property line in the right-of-way. This will also place the responsibility on the builder and not the developer. Currently the developer is responsible for planting the streets trees. Developers will be responsible for planting in the open space lots of a residential subdivision. Terry Baker asked if the utility companies were satisfied with the requirement. Patricia Huguenard stated the planting would not interfere with the utility lines and would be placed outside the utility lines area. The street trees would be one tree per every 50 lineal feet and required to have a two inch caliper.

Critical Root Zone thresholds changed as suggested by the members from the October 2012 TAC meeting. Chris Barneycastle suggested the threshold be mentioned in the UDO when determining recompense. As requested, staff put together the information to read: "A maximum of 30 percent of disturbance is allowed within the critical root zone given specific circumstances. Any proposed disturbance shall be reviewed and approved by the Director of Planning & Development. Credit may be given for the specimen tree when the critical root zone is disturbed up to 25%." The table was shown as 1-5% disturbance may receive a 90% credit, 5.1 – 10% disturbance may receive a 75% credit, 10.1 – 15% may receive 60% credit, 15.1 – 20% may receive 45% credit, etc. Dennis Billew feels the threshold is aggressive but also feels it is best to save a specimen tree than to cut a specimen tree down. Dennis also suggested that the credit should be re-looked at to see if more credit is should be given for 30% disturbance. Larry Genn mentioned that most developers would cut the specimen tree down if they had to cut any of the critical root zone over 25%.

Redevelopment for landscape requirements in the UDO will require a director approval on disturbed area less than 25% to show landscape strips, parking lot trees and tree density units. For disturbances greater than 25% of a site would require landscape strips, parking lot trees, tree density units and tree save area. Dennis Billew brought up a valid point that redevelopment is strong in Gwinnett County especially during the economic times the community is facing now; the strenuous requirements could cause someone to by-pass a redevelopment project in Gwinnett County. Kathy Holland agreed that the suggestions needed to be reviewed and create requirements that would be more reasonable. Bryan Lackey suggested to possibly create an incentive if the redevelopment is less than the impervious area. Terry Baker thought it would make more sense to tie the disturbance to the building square footage of the property. Kathy Holland said currently this is reviewed as a case-by-case basis. The change would allow more flexibility and reduce board action for requests. Additional review will continue.

#### 8) Other Business

Patricia Huguenard discussed the specimen tree requirement for subdivisions when disturbance is limited to construction of roads and detention. A specimen tree concept plan is required in the concept stage. Small street sections can be done at one time if no specimen trees are at the frontage of lots. Terry Baker brought up the point that builders have to know where specimen trees are located. Kathy Holland suggested pushing this requirement out to the final plat stage of a subdivision. Dennis Billew suggested that requiring the plan at a final plat stage would be a better time and to require the plan for the whole subdivision. Kathy Holland stated this could be allowed for first phase and each phase thereafter.

Terry Baker asked if the tree bank option was ever used. Patricia Huguenard stated the tree bank option was used more frequently two to three years ago. Terry Baker brought up the point that in the City of Atlanta it was cheaper for the developer to pay the fine for a specimen tree than to replace. Patricia Huguenard said that currently Gwinnett County does not have a fine in place but has the option of the tree bank option 2, and it is cheaper to plant than deposit into the tree bank fund.

9) Adjournment (7:05 pm)

Dennis Billew motioned to adjourn. Chris Barneycastle seconded. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.