

Hope is a Tree #4: Your Tree Commission

Ken Baker, December 21, 2023

Tree huggers; it's a phrase often used to denigrate environmentalists. But here's another take: In the year 1730, 363 members of the Bishnoi community in Northern India were killed by soldiers of the local Maharajah while trying to protect a grove of Khejri trees. He wanted wood for a new palace. They hugged their trees and were hewn down.

Curious, the things people deem as sacred.

We members of Ohio's many city and town Tree Commissions might not go so far as viewing the Norway maple in front of your house as sacred, but highly valued and esteemed? Yeah, we'd go there.

In fact, your town's Commission members have volunteered many days to learning about what it takes to maintain the city's living infrastructure, its "treescape" ... and there's a lot to learn. If, for example, you dig a hole, plop in a \$185 sapling the nursery says ought to live a hundred years, and nicely mound up the soil around its trunk...wrong! You'll be lucky if it lives ten years.

If you plant it OK but City Council doesn't foot the bill to "train" its young trees with knowledgeable pruning over the next 15 years, they'll soon enough be paying for storm-tossed branches and downed trees when the next windstorm rips through town.

Shade Tree Commissions advise and support the efforts of the Mayor, Council, and Public Works Department in the non-trivial task of developing both day-to-day and long-range Management Plans for your very own urban forest.

You're welcome.

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Author: TreeMinion15

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