

Homewood planting community meeting

Meeting overview

On March 22, 2023, Hennepin County forestry and Northside Safety NET interns hosted a hybrid community meeting to solicit feedback on the proposed planting design for the 2.1-acre vacant lot at the intersection of 8th and Washburn Avenue North in the Homewood neighborhood in Minneapolis. The proposed planting plan includes 65 bare-root trees, pollinator shrubs, and invasive species removal. There was one community member present. Eight members of the community provided feedback via an online survey.

Positive feedback on the proposal

Six residents expressed support for the plan. Things they liked:

- Variety of tree species
- Removal of invasive species
- Pollinator shrubs and fruit trees.
 - Some residents requested additional species of fruit shrubs and nut trees. (They are not species we currently have on hand for this phase of the plan)
- All eight respondents expressed support for Tree Trek signs.

Concerns shared by community members

Two residents shared concerns about the plan on the online survey. One resident attended in person, sharing input from thirteen neighbors who agreed the plan should not go ahead as written. Here are the concerns shared:

- There are too many trees in the plan. (Note that a typo in one of the outreach documents stated that there would be 92 trees. The plan proposed on March 22 included 65 trees).
 - The issue of safety and sightlines was a major concern for some residents
 - Open space was desired so residents can use the space.
- Pollinator shrubs and nut trees will contribute to the nuisance of bees and squirrels in the neighborhood.
- Fencing around young shrubs would look tacky.
- No need for more paths.

- We should not remove the black locust trees because they are the only trees on site that provide a place to sit under the shade.
- Neighbors would have liked to receive something in the mail.
- Some neighbors felt that the proposed plan did not reflect previous feedback given by the community.

Future outreach

Hennepin County forestry and outreach staff will develop a plan for further outreach to invite residents to vote on several options of planting designs. The options will include components that were highlighted as positive by residents and different approaches to address concerns that were raised. Resident feedback on these alternate plans will be gathered in April.

The planting plan that gets the highest level of neighborhood support will be implemented on Saturday, May 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at a community planting event. Community members are invited to attend. Find more information and RSVP at hennepin.us/homewood

