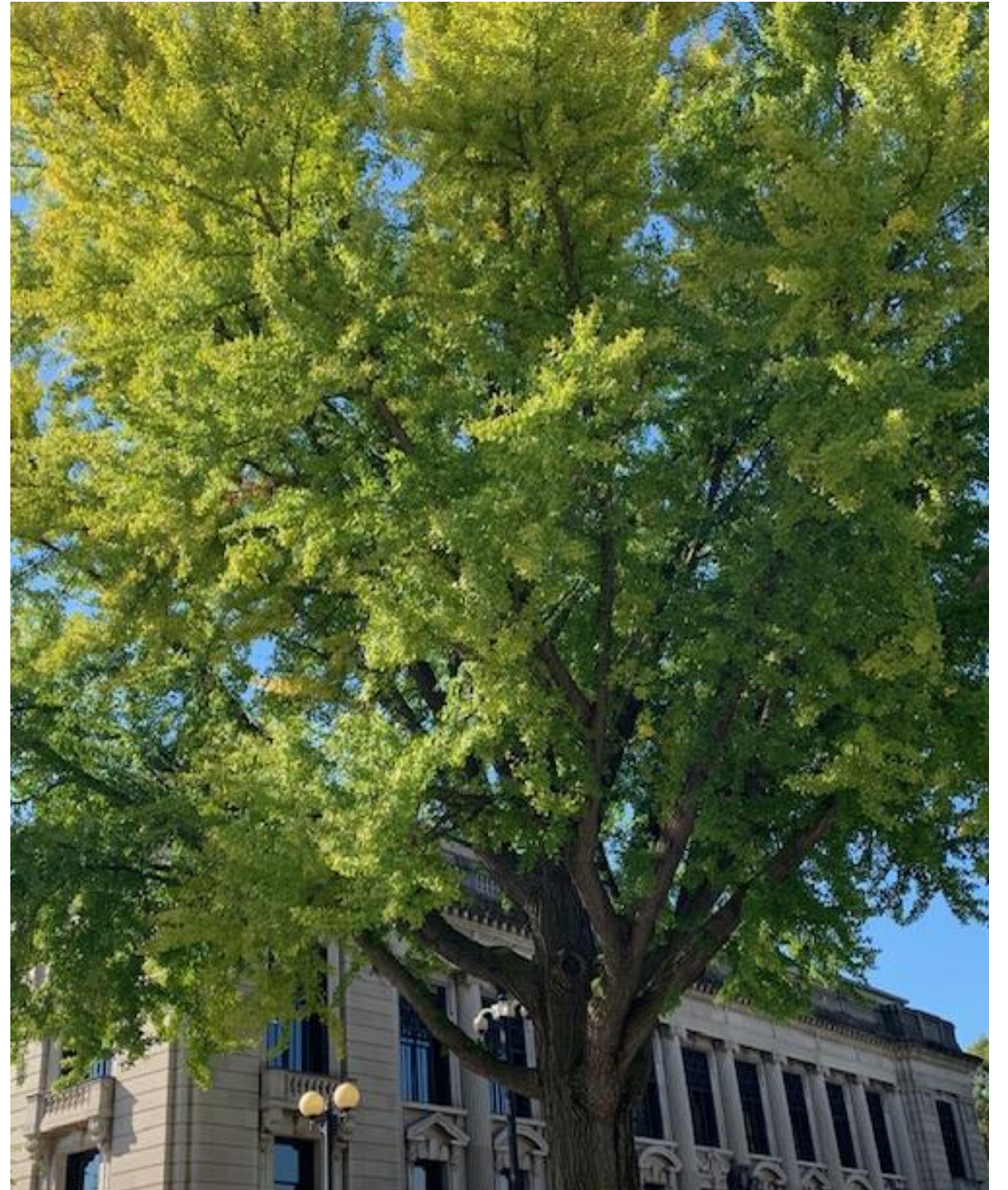


The Year of the Tree in Springfield: 2021

City of Springfield, Illinois
Mayor Jim Langfelder

February 1, 2022





Springfield Urban Forestry Commission (UFC)

Jan Von Qualen – Chair

Scott Marlow – Secretary

Susan Allen

Randy Belville

Ernestine Lawrence

Dr. Amy McEuen

Erskine Route

Rianne Hawkins (term ended August
2021)

Jeffrey M. Reim, City Arborist (ex-
officio/non-voting)

Nathan Bottom, (ex-officio/non-voting)

Scott Rogers, (ex-officio/non-voting)



The role of the UFC is to advise and consult the City arborist.
A Big Thank you to:

City Arborist Jeff Reim and
Public Works Director Nate Bottom.



Through their efforts Springfield

- Became a Tree City USA
- Earned a Growth Award
- Planted Trees
- Is becoming a good steward of its urban forest

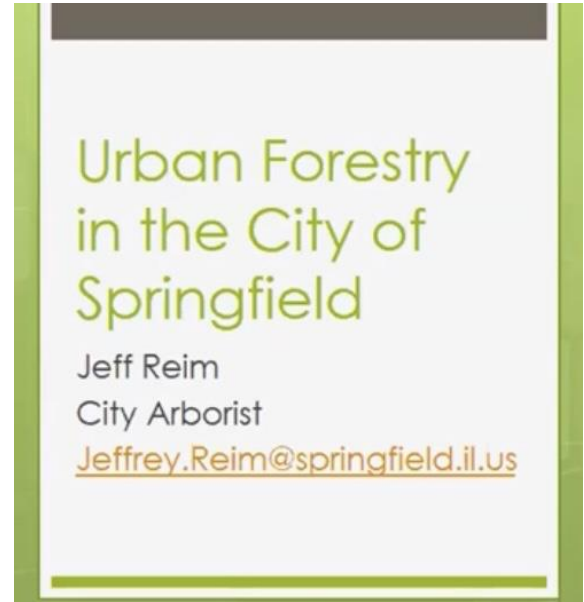
Citizens Club of Springfield

Public Policy Forums

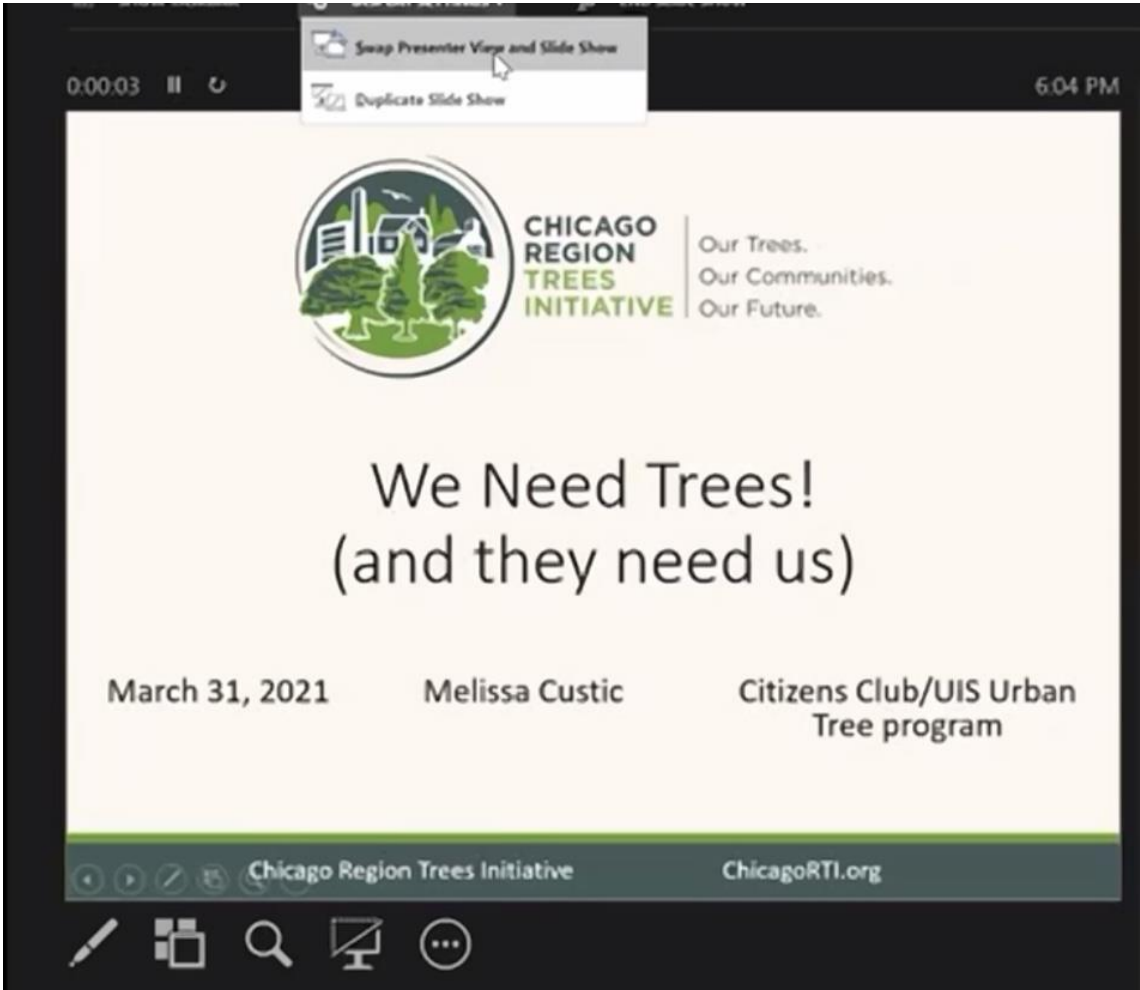




Building relationships with the University of Illinois, Springfield.



Sharing the City of Springfield's Urban Forestry Policies and Regulations



Learning from the experts at the Chicago Region Trees Initiative.



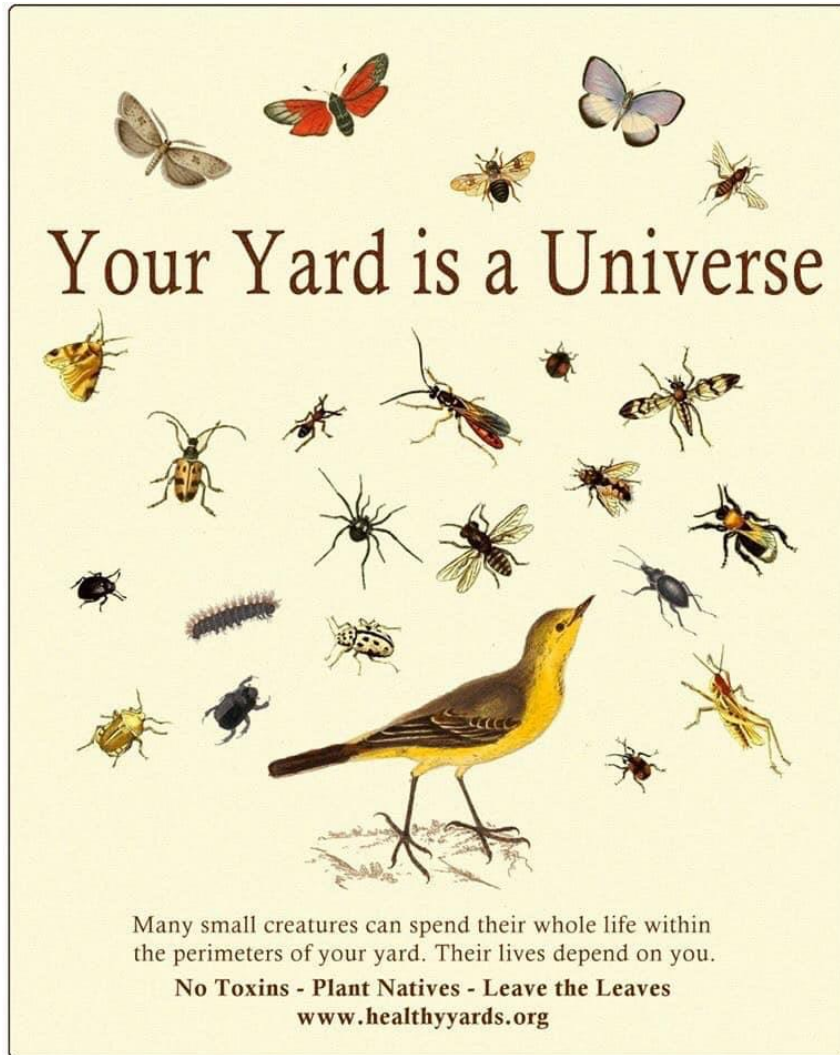
Sharing our concerns.

“For several billion years the whole of the earth’s surface was completely barren.”
(Lab Girl, Hope Jahren, p. 177). “Plants are the only things in the universe that can make sugar out of nonliving organic matter.” P. 64. Once the first plant did somehow make its way onto land...it took only a few million years for all the continents to turn green. P. 177.

“Urbanization is decolonizing the surfaces that plants painstakingly colonized ..., turning them back into hard and barren lands. On the continent of Africa, a Pennsylvania-sized area of forest is converted to city every 5 years.” P. 177

Plant an Illinois Native Tree: Support a Food Chain

Sharing expertise.



Amy McEuen, PhD
Associate Professor
and Chair, Biology
Department, University
of Illinois Springfield

Commission Member,
Springfield Urban
Forestry Commission

April 14, 2021



Ernestine Lawrence and Susan Allen of the UFC and Tiffany Mathis, CEO, of the Boys and Girls Club of Central Illinois, coordinated the Arbor Day event at the Boys' and Girls' Club.

April 27, 2021

The event included giving away trees and planting two trees, a hackberry and a Japanese lilac at the Boys and Girls Club.



Mayor Langfelder issued a proclamation:

“Whereas the saying, “The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is now,” highlights the importance that the actions we take today impact our children’s children tomorrow.

...

... trees are an essential part of Springfield’s green infrastructure and contribute to our community’s health and awe-inspiring beauty in our neighborhoods and city-scape;

...

... if ever there were a time for trees now is the time. Communities worldwide are facing issues with air quality, water resources, personal health, and well-being, energy use, and protection from extreme heat and flooding and urban forests promote beneficial water quality and reduce storm water management costs;

...



The program featured and honored middle school student artwork depicting trees, which CEO Tiffany Mahis presented in poster form to Mayor Langfelder and older student artwork regarding the benefits of trees.

UFC ribbons were awarded to the younger students and McDonald's gift cards to the older students.



BGCCIL Staff, Silas Tockey and Phil Cavil, who supervised the students and helped plan the event were honored.

About 50 people were present, including Tiffany Mathis, Mayor Langfelder, Deputy Mayor Bonnie Drew, members of City Council, District 186 Superintendent, Jennifer Gill, City Officials and a group of BGCCIL students.



Earth Day,
April 27, 2021
Henson Robinson Zoo

Activities included:

- Tree Giveaway
- Tree Advice

Commissioners Rianne Hawkins, Ernestine Lawrence, and Dr. Amy McEuen with Arborist Jeff Reim



News Flash:

Davidson's Japanese Maples is donating hundreds (thousands!) of trees to beautify the area honor and emphasize the Sister City relationship between **Springfield, Illinois and Ashikaga, Japan** and between the **University of Illinois at Springfield and Ashikaga University**.



In late October of 2021, Gale Myers generously offered to donate numerous trees remaining at Davidsan's Japanese Maples.

The offered trees Included:
Ginkgo
Conifers
Beech
Nyssa (Tupelo)
Japanese Maples by the 100's
Other hardy Maples
And other miscellaneous trees

The UFC found this to be an offer that could not be refused.

Our plan: volunteer, community tree planting days





Randy Belville, Polly Poskin, Anne Logue, and other volunteers hauled a thousand trees and several pieces of beautiful statuary from Davidsan's to be stored at the New City Greenhouse:

- 22 trips,
- over 900 miles and
- 64 work hours

Randy has about 1,000 trees in storage at the new City Greenhouse, to be planted in the City over the next three months.



At 10 a.m. on December 4, 2021, about 18 volunteers convened to plant trees at the Northwest and Southwest corners of So. Grand Ave. & Dirksen. An arrangement of five Japanese maples, maples in a variety of sizes were planted on the northwest corner of Clearlake and Dirksen.





Fifteen Japanese maples of various sizes were planted on the southwest corner of Clearlake and Dirksen.





Fifteen Japanese maples were planted at the 5th/6th Street location.

They included two styles, three uprights to the west and smaller dissectum to the east.

Care was taken that the trees would not interfere with traffic or the City sign.

A total of 35 trees were planted through this effort.



The Tree Inventory has begun!!

The City received a \$20,000 grant, funded by DNR and the U.S.D.A. Forestry Service and managed by the Morton Arboretum.

Great Lakes Urban Forestry Management, a Graf Tree Care Company, began the tree inventory on January 10.

The inventory will take place in the northeast quadrant of the City; the area of the City bounded by Camp Sangamon Road on the north; Walnut Street on the west; So. Grand Avenue on the south and the City limits, east of I-55, on the east.

Trees on City-owned property and right-of-ways will be inventoried.

The inventory will be completed around the end of January, weather permitting.

One of the requirements for the Grant is that the City adopt a Tree Protection ordinance. UFC will be submitting a draft to Corporation Counsel in the very near future.



Why are Trees Important?

Energy savings by providing shade and cooling urban heat islands;
Absorb and mitigate storm water;
Fight climate change & air pollution;
Provide habitat for wildlife; and
contribute to the community's physical and mental wellbeing.

Why is a Tree Inventory Important?

To maintain the health and diversity of the urban forest, the Arborist needs to know the details about the trees within it.

The Tree Inventory and the Urban Forestry Management Plan will give Springfield a quantitative analysis of Springfield's urban forest & a blueprint for maintaining it.

They will allow the City to efficiently and effectively manage its urban forest.



Plans for 2022

- Plant trees
- Arbor Day Event and Earth Day activities
- Tree giveaway
- Educational programs:
- Volunteer tree planting days
- Advise and Consult