

Annual Meeting 2021 Questions

Tree Related Questions:

Doug Meyer FW 105

The established policy of MCCA has been for years that trees in common areas are to be protected rather than thinned. We are now decades in since trees were planted, such that pocket parks are dense with large and small trees. This has made the pocket parks and other common areas less likable and useable, and with global climate change a real fire danger. If one examines the risks to our community of the 'new normal' climate, fire appears to be the greatest.

Question: When is MCCA going to implement a tree cutting and thinning program to reduce this fire danger?

Response

MCCA works with a certified arborist to determine which trees we need to remove and when. In the past three years, our arborist moved towards a philosophy where we emphasize the health of the stand of trees. We have locations, such as South Park, in Vine Maple, and the Fairway playground where we have done extensive tree work to ensure the remaining stand is healthy. Budget is always an issue; education of our residents is also an issue. We are committed to working with experts to make decisions and take actions that are in the community's best interest as a whole.

Cathy Laberta SW 76

While I have heard and read the reasoning for clearing the underbrush at the common land at 148th and Village Green Drive, what is the plan to replant the 10 trees that were cut down? My understanding or what I was told from MCCA response is that the policy for common grounds is if a tree is cut down a new tree would be planted. If this is not the policy or process how will MCCA replenish the trees in our common areas in particular at 148th and Village Green Drive? The reason I bring this up is that in my opinion, one of our best Mill Creek assets is our trees that bring peace and noise mitigation to our community. For example, the peace and quiet of the trees and the many miles of walking on the trails put us above a comparable community like Edmonds.

Response

The policy to replant is for native evergreens. MCCA has four native evergreen trees that we consider protected: Douglas Fir, Western Red Cedar, Western Hemlock, and White Pine. The trees that were removed from the 148th and VGD corner were alders which had rot issues. The native evergreen trees were limbed up, but none were removed. MCCA maintenance planted 50 Western Red Cedars in our common areas this past year, and the Noxious Weed Committee planted 55 native evergreen trees. MCCA purchased some of these trees, and others were donated by residents who have removed a native tree from their yard and bring us a native tree as a replacement.

Annual Meeting 2021 Questions

Bob Thompson

I am wondering why trees when they fall or are taken down the pieces are left in place? Wood is valuable and the pieces will take forever to break down.

Response

Most of the trees we take down are rotten and therefore of little value. We remove these pieces when we take down trees in our parks and roadside areas. In the Nature Preserve and other natural areas, we tend to leave the timber on the forest floor to feed the forest. Downed logs provide habitat for animals as well as understory plants. To make the tree removal safer, and because they are generally working in tight quarters around fences or homes, our tree cutters generally climb the tree and cut it down a small chunk at a time; this means the wood is not suitable for milling. To sell timber to a mill, you have to take it down in large sections and crane it out, which is costly.

Bill Rosenthal WS 51

Hi everyone - Thank you for all you are doing for our community. We appreciate it. What is policy to replace trees removed by MCCA at subdivision entrances?

Response

Thank you for your question. The answer is specific to the entry. Some of our entries, like Huckleberry, Vine Maple, or Swordfern have native trees. In those cases, if we have to remove a tree we would assess the area to see if another tree is necessary there. Some of our newer subdivisions, like Aspen or Winslow, have street trees. Street trees are governed by the city, and removal requires their approval and a replacement plan. We would need to send our plan for replacement trees to the Design Review Board for approval.

Noise Abatement

Robert Blix VM 123

Recently, STRESS has been identified as a key/critical health risk. Noise has been identified as a major component to elevated levels of stress. This is well documented and easily verified. What is MCCA doing to enhance Noise Abatement within the MCCA jurisdiction? Washington State mandates Blowers and mowers to comply with maximum decibel statutes. Unfortunately, acceptable State decibel levels still exceed healthy levels. Has MCCA pursued noise abatement technology and PROCEDURES to improve on State mandated decibel levels for their own landscape/maintenance operations? If not, why not?

Response

Thank you for the question. We certainly want to reduce stress whenever and wherever we can. We strive to get our work done with as little noise as possible. We buy and use the best equipment that we can afford. And we adhere to current City and State decibel level regulations. But, as far as I know, we have never pursued noise abatement

Annual Meeting 2021 Questions

technology or procedures to reduce noise levels below current government standards. However, we can look into this to see what we can do. Thank you for asking.

Traffic

Edward Silva AS 28

With an increased amount of cars and speeding along Mill Creek Blvd. should we consider putting in a request to put speed bumps along Mill Creek Blvd. at different locations to force cars to slow down. I have contacted Mill Creek Police and have seen some improvement when they have stationed cars to issue citations, but it still seems like there are a lot more speeders and no one really seems to pay attention. I think some people use Mill Creek Blvd to get around traffic on 527 as well.

Response

Good question. Thank you. First of all, the City of Mill Creek controls the roads, signs, and speed limits. Like you, I've driven this road many times, and I think our resident members generally observe the posted 25 mph speed limit. I'm guessing many of the "speeders" may be vendors, visitors, and guests. However, the MCCA can raise awareness. The bi-monthly MillStream newsletter can be a voice for reminding residents of this safety issue. MCCA emails from PayHOA may be another way to bring attention. There is no easy solution on a main roadway like this that is long, straight, and downhill. But we will look into ways that the MCCA can help. Thank you for the question.

Nature Preserve Trail Mapping

Jean Dotson AS 16

If you should witness an emergency in the Nature Preserve, it would be helpful, to be able to call 911 and alert the police, ambulance, as to where you are located in the woods. The way it is now, you call 911, they want to know where you are located, which is impossible to tell them. The solution is to Paint numbers on the walkway starting with the number one for the lower trail, and use the letters of the alphabet for the upper trail. When you need help, you can call 911 and get assistance immediately and not have to have the police or whoever spend valuable time hunting for the victim.

Response

Thank you for your question. First of all, MCCA did work with the city a number of years ago to get all of our parks located on maps which helps first responders find our pocket parks. Secondly, we do have signage with "you are here" signs in the Nature Preserve. However, even with the "you are here" signs I agree that it would be difficult to tell the 911 dispatcher exactly where you are in the Nature Preserve if you needed help. Your suggestion on some type of numbering system in the Nature Preserve is a good one for the board to consider. By the way, the "you are here" signs were donated and installed as part of an Eagle Scout project.

Annual Meeting 2021 Questions

Welcome Bags

Valerie Liptak EV 65

I was looking at the Committees page on the website and noticed the Social and Hospitality committees. I do not recall receiving a hospitality committee welcome basket upon our purchasing a home here within the last year. Have these committees been suspended due to COVID? If so, is there a plan for bringing them back?

Response

Thank you for your question. During COVID the Hospitality committee was unable to meet and the office took over putting together the Welcome Bags. Every month we send them out to our new residents. My apologies if we inadvertently missed you. We definitely want to correct that error, thank you for letting us know.