



Almadale Farms Homeowners Association  
1851 Hartwell Manor North  
Collierville, TN 38017  
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(901) 861-1028

## Almadale Farms Special Meeting April 28<sup>th</sup> 2016

### Validation of Quorum

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At 6:30 it was announce that we did **not** have a quorum. Property Manager Daphne Winton and Board members Renee Samuels, Drew Johnston, Tom Powell and MJ Doran were present. Thirty households were represented (23 in person, and that includes Board members, plus 7 by proxy). Guest speakers Wes Hopper, Certified Arborist and Diana Dubois, TOC Project Planner were also present.

### President's Report

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The meeting proceeded without a quorum in order to answer questions that had been raised about the Board's decision to remove the aging Bradford Pears along the Parkway and replace them with Cleveland Pears (3"- 4" caliper, approx. 12' to 14' in height). **Renee presented a short Power Point Presentation that can be viewed as a PDF on the Almadale Farms website.**

### Wes Hopper

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Credentials: Wes Hopper is a certified arborist with the TN Urban Forestry Council, a past president of the Southern Chapter of International Society of Arboriculture and owner of Urban Forestry, a company that maintains trees for individuals and carries out consulting for cities. He also teaches classes to people who want to understand urban forestry, which is the careful care and management of trees anywhere in a city. He is among other arborists who teach an Urban Forestry Advisor's Class at Memphis Botanic Garden. He teaches classes on tree selection all over the state for University of Tennessee. He also teaches tree climbing. He has been in the forestry industry 34 years.

Wes shared with us his personal stance on why the trees should be removed.

- I realize this decision is a hard one because trees are emotional. It's hard to remove a living tree. Keeping this in mind let me tell you a little about the Bradford Pear.
- Bradford Pear is a species native to China. While they are beautiful in full bloom, they certainly come with their problems due to the weak branches, shallow roots, bad smell and invasive nature.
- It is important for everyone to understand the impact these trees have on our parks and wildlife. They have been so widely planted that they have become a nuisance and on many states Invasive Plant list, including Tennessee.
- In addition to damaging houses and cars and downing power lines, Bradford Pear trees grows unchecked because birds take their seeds and spread them everywhere. Essentially, they are covering the forestry floor impacting the environment by choking out our native species.
- Shelby Farms is a good example of this invasion. You are lucky to have the most beautiful natural environment located behind this neighborhood and in Johnson Park. You will see them sprouting in these areas as well, unfortunately.
- The Cleveland Pear tree was bred not to sprout seeds, but to grow branches that are stronger and bunched closer together. And they smell better. The produce a similar beautiful bloom without the environmental impact.
- I walked the Parkway with Renee and MJ for over an hour looking at the Bradford's and Cleveland's. It's my opinion that the Bradford's have out grown their space and need to come out. I see roots everywhere getting ready to break through the curbs, and interfering with irrigation and wiring to the lampposts. You will never get grass to grow under the Bradford's.
- The HOA has done a good job limbing up and thinning out the Bradford's over the years. Bottom line, it's not "if" they break, it's "when."

## Questions & Answers

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Wes and the Board answered questions from homeowners.

Q: Would you recommend the Cleveland Pear as the primary number one tree for replacement?

A: The flowers on the Cleveland's are pretty. You could choose a Rain tree. They are Asian trees as well. Cherry trees, Crabapple trees, they will all have the same problem with wide growth.

“The Cleveland Pears are the accepted replacement for Bradford Pears” – Diana Dubois, TOC

Q: What is the proper spacing for Cleveland Pears? And what will be the size when they are planted?

A: The Cleveland's you have now look appropriately spaced. I believe in planting the smaller caliper (i.e. 2" over a 3") due to its ability to grow faster and be healthier. The Board has quotes for 2" and 3 ½" calipers. We are restricted to 4" or less due to the size of the root ball.

Q: What is the cost?

A: Here is the break down:

29 Bradford Pear trees removed

29 Stumps and roots ground with removal of shavings and graded out

29 Areas where stumps ground raised back to grade with sifted topsoil

Debris removed from premise

22 Cleveland Pears Installed

22 Cleveland Pears Staked with Arbor-tie and painted wooden stakes (Brown)

22 Cleveland Pears Mulched

Topsoil added to areas around Oaks where roots are showing (4 yards)

Established trees Mulched in medians and side oaks included

Removal of existing Bermuda Sod from medians that are being landscaped

Install Approximately 15,422 square feet Palisade Zoysia (35 Pallets)

Mulch Approximately 11 yards total

Irrigation allotted \$500, which can be credited if it does not exceed this amount. If exceeded a written change order will be drawn for the overage

Sod Cutter

Skid Steer with auger and fork

**Landscape Totals: 3.5" caliper x22 Cleveland Grand total: \$33,272.00**

**OR**

**4" caliper x 22 Cleveland Grand total: \$37,595.00**

Optional:

\*\*French drain installed on bottom of 22 Cleveland Pear add: \$440.00

Liquid fungicidal drench at time of install add: \$660.00

Lime added to all new turf area before installing add: \$340.00

\*\*Promix added to 22 newly planted Cleveland Pears add: \$375.00

\*\*Recommended

Q: Is this bid chosen from multiple bids?

A: Yes. It was not the lowest nor the highest. It was chosen by close examination and whom we felt was most reliable.

Q: Is this project budgeted?

A: Yes we budgeted for this project. There will be no special assessment.

Q: Would it not be advantageous, as Wes says, to go with a smaller caliper seeing that they will grow faster and result in a healthier tree?

A: We do have a quote for **2 ½ caliper that we presented at the annual meeting. It was \$25,000.**

Q: When are we planning on doing this?

A: It would be this fall.

Q: Any reason why this project is being done now? Has it been considered in previous years?

A: Yes. It has been discussed in previous years. We knew at some point it would have to be taken care of. It was a choice of priority with other large projects such as the Oaks on Houston Levee, converting the pools

to salt water system, taking care of the lamppost wiring which had to be bored under the road in several places. We have been maintaining the Bradford's to keep them in place as long as possible.

Q: What is the life span of the Bradford and the Cleveland. What is the likelihood we will have to do this again down the road?

A: It will have to be done again at some time. It's just the type of growing area that you have there. It really wouldn't matter what kind of tree you put in there. A time frame is kind of hard to tell.

Q: Is there any conflict of interest with anyone on the board and who is doing the landscaping?

A: Absolutely not.

Q: How can we get better communication from the board? I did not attend the Annual Meeting because it was not communicated.

A: Anyone can come to the office and read the minutes to any meeting. A notice for the Annual Meeting was mailed to each homeowner. It was announced in the newsletter and signs were put at the entrances a few days before the meeting. It is also written in the CCRs.

Q: Who submitted bids for the tree removal and replacement?

A: Beau Voir Landscape, A Cut Above, Skip's Tree Planting, Radley Lawn Care

Q: Are we going to have a root problem again?

A: Possibly so. The Cleveland's that are 13 years old on the Parkway do **not** show any signs of shallow roots.

Q: How did you decide on who would get the bid?

A: Daphne, who manages nine other associations, chose from reputable companies she is familiar with. Once the bids were submitted, she went over each one and gave us a report. One was too slow, one was over priced, and two were middle of the road.

Q: Whom did you choose and what are their qualifications?

A: We are looking at Beau Voir. He does the landscaping for Poplar Grove, Almadale Village, Strathmore, Cordova The Town and others. He also does irrigation. We always check references and make sure anyone allowed on the property is licensed, bonded and registered with the BBB.

Q: How will the preparation of the soil take place?

A: Trees are resilient. They can grow just about anywhere. Wes stated that the bid from Beau Voir is pretty detailed in that area as it should be.

Q: Does the bid include replacing the wiring to the lampposts?

A: No it does not. Once the soil manipulation is done, it will be evaluated as to what will be needed.

Q: Will TOC require the wires be redone with new conduit?

A: Diana stated that the Planning Department would give us the facts once we begin.

Q: Why can't we just wait until they break and split and fall apart? Why not continue to spend money on maintaining them as we have in the past?

A: Removing trees are an emotional event. The long-term effect is that we are still going to loose these trees either due to breakage or over growth. In the last 5 years we have spent approx. \$10,000 maintaining the aging Bradford's.

Q: Will the Town help us with the cost to bring in more lighting?

A: No

Q: Where does this leave us with our reserves if we cut all the trees down? At the Annual Meeting it was said we may have issues with the pools in the future and that's the only family-friendly activity we have in this neighborhood.

A: We are not using any reserves. This is a budgeted item. And we could have *plenty* of family-friendly activities if people would step up and volunteer.

Q: Do you have a guess as to the 2” caliper and 3 1/2” as to how long the smaller would take to catch up to the larger?

A: Cleveland Pears grow 4’ a year. The smaller tree will have a better ability to survive and will grow faster.

Q: TOC requires 4” caliper trees in our yards. Don’t you think 2” is a little too small?

A: Anything over a 4” caliper will not get the faster and healthier growth that we want and plus we are limited to the root ball size that will fit in the area. We will certainly look at the options.

Q: What is the next step?

A: This has already been approved, so this meeting is for people to bring their concerns and offer alternatives. The Board will take everything that was said tonight into consideration and then will move forward.

**Side Note from Wes:** Please never “volcano” mulch any tree! If mulch is piled around the trunk, the roots will grow into it. These roots will wrap around the trunk and will eventually strangle the trunk.

### **Alternate Suggestions**

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- Suggest leaving them all up and replacing them as they break and fall apart.
- Suggest starting with only removing the trees next to the lampposts. Add additional lighting to the parkway.
- Suggest saving on cost, plant the 2” caliper since the smaller trees grow faster and will have over all better health.

**With no other questions or suggestions the meeting was adjourned at 8:30.**