



Mount Vernon

MOUNT VERNON-The City of Mount Vernon will be hosting informational videos featuring Dr. Jim Brown late this month about plans to manage the health, growth, and safety of the trees on the Public Square. The Shade Tree and Beautification Commission works closely with the City of Mount Vernon's Engineering Office as well as the Parks Department to provide and protect a healthy shade tree landscape for the city. Trees protect the environment, enhance public outdoor spaces and benefit economic development. Three trees on the Public Square will be removed and replaced.

"Two years ago the commission started to assess the condition of the trees on the Public Square, Dr. Jim Brown, Chair of the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission quoted. "After consulting with the experts, it was determined that 5 trees showed potential safety risk and were in different stages of decline." Dr. Brown also said, "We plan to plant three new trees on the square: A Weeping Alaskan Cedar, a Buckeye, and a Tri-Colored Beech. Five trees will need to be harvested for various reasons."

Specifically, the city is removing a Sweet Gum, Sugar Maple, Blue Spruce, Norway Spruce, and a Buckeye. The Sweet Gum was planted over a cistern and has a weakened, shallow root system. The tree gets distressed every summer. The large Norway Spruce is overgrown and becoming a safety hazard. The Blue Spruce suffers from a fungus disease and is dying from the bottom. The Sugar Maple has a dangerous branch structure and is an unsafe tree especially for its location. Fortunately, a young maple was planted nearby several years ago in preparation for the loss of this large Sugar Maple. The large Buckeye, has soft wood breaking off and its size is a safety concern for the perimeter of the square and its proximity to people and cars. Additionally, the Buckeye is shading several young trees and inhibiting their growth. The Buckeye has a plaque dedicating the tree as a memorial to the end of WWI by The Mount Zion Lodge on May 26, 1919. A new Buckeye will be planted ensuring that there are always a few Buckeye trees on the square.

“It’s hard to see big trees removed to make way for young trees”, said Colleen Clarkson, a recent member of the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission. “It’s important to plan and manage tree growth, so that future generations can benefit and enjoy their beauty, too.”

The wood will be harvested and repurposed for woodworking projects through local artists. The Mount Vernon Music & Arts Festival (MVMAF) Director, Joe Bell, is working with Mike Pryjda of SOS Tree Service and Andy McGough of Ghost Logging who will harvest the trees on March 13 at 8:00 AM (rain date March 20) on Public Square. A demonstration of how the wood is planked and utilized for reuse will take place for anyone interested in viewing.

The Shade Tree and Beautification Committee identified the activity as something that will keep these trees alive after they have been harvested. Proceeds from the activity will be used to help support the MVMAF activities. More information about the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission can be found at <https://mountvernonohio.org/contact-us/boards-and-commissions/>.

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ABOUT THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON:

The city of Mount Vernon is an innovative community with an authentic hometown feel. Home to 17,000 people, Mount Vernon is the county seat for Knox County and boasts historic buildings and districts as well as business and professional, educational, and recreational opportunities through many adaptive reuses of the community’s infrastructure and spaces. Specific attractions are the historic Woodward Opera House, the Knox County Memorial Building and Theater, and the 250-acre Ariel-Foundation Park adjacent to the state scenic Kokosing River. With strong ties to higher education, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College, and Central Ohio Technical College have satellite locations in the historic downtown. Located 40 miles northeast of Columbus, Mount Vernon is near the geographic center of Ohio and has connections all over the globe.

CONTACT: Judy Ashcraft
PHONE: (740) 393-9528
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