

FACT SHEET

HERITAGE TREES DESIGNATION

FRIENDS OF LITHIA PARK | SPRING 2019

-  **Friends of Lithia Park**, an informal group of Ashland citizens, is seeking to protect the Douglas fir grove near the Japanese Garden in Lithia Park by **applying for a City of Ashland designation as Heritage Trees.**
-  A recently approved redesign of the Japanese Garden requires cutting down two of the biggest trees in the fir grove. The proposed removal of the trees met with significant citizen opposition. The Parks Commission, however, voted 3-2 to adopt the plan, which requires the trees to be cut. This decision still stands. **But because of the community discord, the donor has stepped back and Parks has suspended action on the project for this year.**
-  The trees in the historic Douglas fir grove were planted in 1916 as part of Lithia Park's original design by renowned landscape architect, John McLaren. When the proposed Japanese Garden design was vetted during the Lithia Park Master Plan Design Week (July 2018), participants welcomed the concept, "as long as other elements in the park remain undisturbed." (October 22, 2018 APRC Minutes). **Cutting two trees in this grove violates that condition.**
-  In 2002 the City Council unanimously approved the Tree Protection and Preservation ordinance, part of which established the **Heritage Tree program**. The Heritage Tree language (AMC 18.4.5.060) states that, "The City recognizes that specific trees in Ashland are deserving of special status due to distinctive form, size, age, location, species, unique qualities, or historical significance." **This hundred-year-old grove of 12 Douglas firs meets the criteria and should be designated as Heritage Trees.**
-  To begin the process, Friends of Lithia Park has completed the application for Heritage Tree designation. In order to allow more time for outreach and for input from Ashland citizens, **for the next weeks we are circulating a petition asking people to endorse the Heritage Tree designation.** Look for us asking for your signatures in our public places. Speak for the trees by signing our petition online at tinyurl.com/firgrove and please **visit and like us on Facebook** at <https://fb.me/friendsofLithiaPark> .
-  After the completion of signature gathering, **Friends of Lithia Park will submit the application along with the signatures**, first to the Parks Commission, then to the Tree Commission, and finally to City Council.

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