

Closter Shade Tree Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 13, 2020

8:00 p.m.

Held remotely via Zoom

I. Call to order

II. Roll Call

Present: Nils Abate, Chair; Todd Bradbury; Scott Devlin, Council Liaison; George Futterknecht, Miriam Lockhart, Secretary; Anthony Lupardi, Sr.; George Paschalis, Nancy Pergament, Env. Comm. Liaison; Tsun Tam; Leslie Weatherly, STC Coordinator; William Fuchs, Tree Code Enforcement Official

No members of the public were present.

III. Approval of Minutes.

The June 8, 2020 minutes were unanimously approved with the following clarifications:

- a) The minutes should reflect the meeting was held remotely and not, as originally advertised, at the Senior Citizens Center.
- b) The first two sentences under "Old Business/63 Bergenline" shall be removed.

IV. Discussion with Tree Code Enforcement Official

Mr. Fuchs reported on the unlawful removal of trees at 40 Pine Street/145 Demarest Ave. The property owner has appealed to the Mayor and Council for a reduction in assessed fines. The Commission reviewed the facts and endorsed the Tree Code Enforcement Official's actions relative to the removal of the shade tree, including the \$1,461 fine.

V. Old Business

- a) 63 Bergenline Avenue

The homeowner intends to replace the two compromised trees previously identified by the Commission and has installed deer guards on the remaining two trees. The Commission discussed and had no objection to the homeowner's request to relocate one of the remaining trees to the Bergenline Avenue frontage (bringing the total number of trees along Bergenline Avenue to four).

VI. New Business

- a) Fall planting

The Commission unanimously approved a motion to authorize the Borough to obtain quotes for the planting of up to 50 trees, not to exceed \$30,000.

- b) Annual Tree Maintenance

The Commission unanimously approved a motion to authorize the Borough to

obtain quotes for maintenance pruning in District IV and along Main Street, not to exceed \$25,000. Commissioner Bradbury noted new specifications will be needed for the pruning of young trees.

c) Tree Removals

Ms. Weatherly inquired about the current tree removal list. The Commission unanimously approved a motion to authorize the removal of trees previously identified—in addition to any diseased ash trees deemed critical—not to exceed \$15,000.

d) Deer Guards

Commissioner Bradbury noted an instance of a deer guard being removed following the issuance of the certificate of occupancy, and suggested the need for a longer-term enforcement mechanism.

e) Elm Yellows

Commissioner Bradbury noted a Zelkova tree at the Harrington Avenue Bus Stop (near West Street) is stricken and needs to be removed soon. He suggested a sample be sent to the Rutgers Plant Diagnostic Laboratory for testing. Commissioner Bradbury will speak with Mr. Fuchs on next steps.

VII. Adjournment: 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

George Paschalis