



SHADE TREE COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 9, 2022

8:05 p.m.

[held remotely via Zoom]

1. Call to Order—Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Commission Members present:

Nils Abate, Chair

Todd Bradbury

Scott Devlin, Council Liaison

George Futterknecht

Miriam Lockhart, Env. Commission Liaison

George Paschalis, Secretary

Daniel Serata

Tsun Tam

Commissioners absent:

Anthony Lupardi, Sr.

3. Approval of Minutes

The April 11, 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

4. Open Meeting to Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

5. Correspondence

a) 1 Heaton Court, request for trees

b) Received from NJUCF: *Why Would Anyone Cut a Tree Down/Tree Owner's Manual*

c) 336 Demarest Avenue, request for tree

6. Old Business

a) NJUCF Tree Inventory Grant Status

The steering sub-committee reviewed the updated vendor proposals on April 27. Chairman Abate recapped the proposal scoring process. Following a motion by Ms. Lockhart and seconded by Mr. Devlin, the Commission unanimously approved the sub-committee's recommendation to select **PlanIT Geo, Inc.** as the vendor of choice. The inventory shall be completed by September 15.

b) Arbor Day Tree Planting Ceremonies

Mr. Paschalis recapped the ceremonies at the schools, which were attended by students, staff, parents and the mayor. Mr. Paschalis thanked the library for displaying the winning posters. Commission members discussed ways future Arbor Day events can be enhanced.

c) 12 Haring Street

Commission members discussed ways to improve communication between Borough departments prior to issuing notices to homeowners.

d) District 3 Street Tree Pruning

Chairman Abate and Mr. Bradbury updated the Commission on the successful efforts to complete this year's pruning. The Commissioner members agreed that the Borough should release payment to the vendor.

e) Financial Disclosure Forms

Mr. Paschalis reminded Commission members to submit their forms.

f) Tree Preservation

Ms. Lockhart reminded Commission members tree removal regulations should be revisited, specifically to address the current loophole allowing two trees to be removed per year, without mitigation and without exception, save for trees that have landmark status. Ms. Lockhart also noted that the current tree removal ordinance does not provide guidance on what tree species are and are not recommended for planting as mitigation in the Borough.

g) Secretary Vacancy

Following a motion by Ms. Lockhart and seconded by Mr. Devlin, the Commission unanimously approved Mr. Paschalis as Secretary to the Commission.

7. New Business

a) Updated STC-approved tree list

Following a motion by Ms. Lockhart and seconded by Mr. Serata, the Commission unanimously approved the species list—dated May, 2022—be adopted by the Commission and forwarded to the Building Department for their guidance. The Commission members agreed to regularly review and update this list and potentially include tree species that are prohibited.

b) Fall Tree Planting

Mr. Bradbury noted that the Commission may want to reserve a portion of the annual procurement of trees for a spring planting, which better suits species such as White Oaks and Nyssa. Following a motion by Mr. Paschalis and seconded by Ms. Lockhart, the Commission unanimously agreed to initiate the procurement process for 50 trees and to accommodate plantings this fall and spring 2023.

c) 186 Harrington Avenue—unauthorized tree removals

Following a discussion, Commission members agreed the two White Oaks that were removed by the homeowner will need to be replaced in-kind, either by the homeowner or the Borough. It was further agreed that the Chairman and Secretary to the Commission should be notified of any Borough Hall communications with homeowners related to shade trees.

d) 25 Poplar- Sugar Maple damage

A Sugar Maple planted approximately 10 years ago has been improperly pruned by the homeowner.*

- e) Bill Ulrich pruning concerns
Mr. Bradbury shared feedback received from licensed tree expert Bill Ulrich.
- f) Boards/Commissions/Committee Meeting, May 14th
Chair Abate reminded Commission members of an upcoming Borough meeting.
- g) STC webpage updates
Mr. Paschalis outlined recommended updates for the Commission's web page.
- h) Mayor's Newsletter
Mr. Paschalis recommended the Commission submit a story regarding the historic Salem Oak seedlings made available to all municipalities.
- i) George Futternecht
Mr. Futternecht announced his retirement from the Commission. Commissioners thanked and praised Mr. Futternecht for his many years of service to the Borough.

7. Liaison Reports

- a) Governing Body—Mr. Devlin reported that the introduced municipal budget included a 13% increase for the Commission's work.

Following a discussion, the Commission was in favor of having Ms. Weatherly attend Commission meetings.

- b) Environmental Commission—Ms. Lockhart previewed upcoming changes to the Environmental Commission's website.

8. Inspection Requests

- a) 4, 5, & 10 Hawthorne Terrace

Closter resident Krishna Rege inquired about the vines growing on three trees. Mr. Futternecht inspected the trees and determined the following:

1. Vines growing up a tree do not necessarily harm the tree unless the vine is growing over the leaves.
2. The tree at 4 Hawthorne Terrace is fine and needs no further action.
3. The tree at 5 Hawthorne Terrace has a number of cavities, and there is the potential that it may need to be removed. In order to conduct a better visual inspection, the vines may need to be cut at the base.
4. The tree at 10 Hawthorne Terrace should be removed.

The Commission will follow up with Ms. Weatherly to coordinate the Commission's response.

9. Meeting Adjournment 9:30 pm

* A "do not prune" letter was sent to the homeowner on May 10.