

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMMISION
Reorganization and Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 24, 2017 7:30 p.m.

Since the Commission Chairman was not yet elected, Minutes Secretary Liz Holler called the Reorganization/Regular Meeting of the Shade Tree Commission to order at 7:30 p.m., room 301, upper level, Chatham Municipal Building. The Open Public Meetings Act was read aloud.

Name	Present	Absent
Colleen Truppo	X	
Christopher Jadro	X	
Fran Drew	X	
Ken Fekete	X	
Dean Wilson	X	
Kristy Chmura	X	
Ken Chmura	X	
Thaddeus Kobylarz	X	
Tony Torello	X	
Council Member James Collander	X	

Administration of the Oaths of Office

Ms. Holler, a Notary Public, administered the Oath of Office to Dean Wilson and Thaddeus Kobylarz. Commissioners Kristy Chmura and Ken Chmura had been sworn in at the Borough Council Reorganization Meeting on January 3, 2017.

Mrs. Truppo asked if it was the desire of the Commission, she will preside over the next portion of the meeting. Commissioners had no objection with this request.

Public Comments

There was none.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

A motion was made/seconded to approved the minutes of the November 15, 2016 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The following 2017 Reorganization Resolutions for the Borough Shade Tree Commission were approved:

Resolution #17-01: Establishing the Commission's Annual Meeting Schedule for 2017

Resolution #17-02: Designating the Official Newspapers for the Publication of the Commission's Legal Notices for 2017

Resolution #17-03: Electing the Shade Tree Commission Officers for 2017

Chair: Colleen Truppo

Vice Chair: Christopher Jadro

Resolution #17-04: Appointing Commission Personnel for 2017

Shade Tree Enforcement Officer: Erminio (Tony) Torello

Certified Tree Expert: John Linson

Chrmn. Truppo will be touching base with Mr. Linson regarding this appointment.

Reports

Council Liaison Update

Council Member Collander congratulated Mrs. Truppo and Mr. Jadro on their election as Commission Officers. He reported that the Municipal Budget is going along well. He felt that the Shade Tree Commission will do well in the budget process.

Council Member Collander asked Mr. Torello what was happening with the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) treatments on local trees. Mr. Torello reported that 112 trees were treated for EAB. These trees will be fine for two years. EAB hasn't reached the Borough yet. Mr. Linson selected the neighborhoods that needed their trees treated. Rowan Road was added to the list, since that street is heavily populated with ash trees.

Ms. Chmura asked Mr. Torello about EAB treatment for the ash trees on the Middle School property close to the residential homes. Mr. Torello stated that those particular trees are filled with holes. Most of them will probably have to be taken down in the near future. This topic will be revisited at the March Shade Tree Commission meeting. Perhaps Mr. Linson can have a look at these trees.

Chrmn. Truppo confirmed with Mr. Torello that no further EAB treatment will be done on the ash trees this present year. This treatment is done every two years.

Pending Business

Review of John Linson's Report concerning the trees at 15 Oliver Street

Barbara Bennett and her daughter, Wendy Pierson, both residents of 15 Oliver Street were present.

Referring to Mr. Linson's report, Chrmn. Truppo noted that Mr. Linson believed that the Red Maple tree at 15 Oliver Street has residual storm damage issues, as well as a severe root problem. Mr. Linson recommended the Red Maple tree be taken down. He recommended that the Zelkova tree, which he felt was in good condition, should remain. Because of the overhead wiring, selective pruning could be done to this Zelkova tree.

Ms. Pierson reported that the Zelkova tree is dropping seeds all over. As a result, there are shoots coming up on the property. These shoots are also sprouting up in the wall put up by the Borough when Oliver Street was recently dug up. Ms. Pierson and Ms. Bennett had concerns about the condition of this wall.

Mrs. Drew promised to come to Ms. Bennett's house with Kristy Chmura and pull up the offending shoots. She had meant to attend to this chore earlier, however, the weather at that time was not good for any type of gardening.

Commissioners discussed who was responsible for the maintenance of the wall.

A motion was made/seconded to leave the Zelkova tree at 15 Oliver Street in place with Mrs. Drew and her team will provide spring maintenance work in its vicinity. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Mrs. Drew told Ms. Bennett and Ms. Pierson that she will contact them when she and her team are coming over to do the maintenance work. Ms. Pierson gave Mrs. Drew her cell phone number.

Chrmn. Truppo asked Ms. Pierson and Ms. Bennett what their feelings were concerning the Red Maple on their property. She pointed out that John Linson, the arborist, believed there were serious root problems. Ms. Pierson answered that she didn't have any concerns with the Red Maple. Ms. Pierson and Ms. Bennett then departed the meeting.

Chrmn. Truppo suggested the Commission table any decision on the Red Maple at 15 Oliver Street until she follows up with Mr. Linson, the arborist. If a genuine safety concern exists, the Commission will have the Red Maple taken down.

Update on Tree Ordinance

Chrmn. Truppo reported that Mrs. Drew did extensive research regarding the number of private trees that have been taken down and the number of tree permits that had been issued in the Borough. Chrmn. Truppo pointed out that Council Member Collander and Borough Administrator Bob Falzarano were surprised at the number of trees that had been removed. Far more trees are being taken down, then the number that can be planted.

Chrmn. Truppo noted that Council Member Collander had wanted information on public trees that have been removed in the Borough. Tony Torello has provided a list of tree removals for 2016. Ms. Chmura pointed out that PSE & G has removed a great deal of tree canopy close to the power lines in the past year.

Mrs. Drew stated that the number of trees on private property that have been issued permits to remove trees, in the last 4 years, is around a thousand. That thousand doesn't include the number of people who neglect to take out the permits. Mr. Torello pointed out that after Hurricane Sandy, many residents were fearful of their trees falling on their homes.

Chrmn. Truppo offered to update the table on public and private trees that have been removed. The updated table can be sent to Borough Administrator Falzarano and Borough Attorney Lott.

Mr. Chmura informed Chrmn. Truppo that the State of New Jersey is now tightening up on tree service companies. Effective on January 1, 2017, there are new regulations on rules, regulations and certifications for tree service companies to follow. Mr. Chmura will find more information on this matter.

Chrmn. Truppo suggested the Commission keep working on the tree ordinance.

Council Member Collander felt that the public should be made more aware of the destruction of trees that is going on. Chrmn. Truppo commented that when local homes are demolished, often times trees are cleared from the properties and new trees are not planted to replace them.

Council Member Collander noted that Borough Attorney Lott has a number of projects he's currently working on; however, he will touch base with Attorney Lott about this ordinance. Chrmn. Truppo will gather the necessary updated material for Attorney Lott. She will also arrange for a meeting with Attorney Lott regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Fekete believed that the Commission had never agreed on specific goals for public tree removals. Perhaps a permit should be posted in a window when a public tree is removed. He reminded Commissioners that the Shade Tree Commissions in New Jersey are specifically responsible for public trees. Mr. Fekete felt that the Commissioner has not yet addressed specifics in the public tree arena.

Mrs. Drew recalled that at a November meeting the Commission had discussed a possible ordinance with input from Ms. Chmura, Mr. Barton, and Mr. Jadro. She believed a vote was actually taken on this draft ordinance. Mrs. Drew offered to e-mail the points that she had remembered the Commission had covered.

Chrmn. Truppo asked Ms. Holler to re-send the November 1st meeting minutes to Commissioners to resolve what had been specifically discussed and decided on.

Council Member Collander reiterated that the Shade Tree Commission is tasked for only public trees. Currently private trees are under the domain of the Borough Council. He expressed his serious concerns about the number of trees that are being removed. More sanity has to be brought to this process. He would like to see Mr. Torello brought into the process. Council Member Collander recommended that the Shade Tree Commission's tree ordinance subgroup, himself, and Mr. Falzarano stay connected.

Mrs. Drew felt that Millburn, Maplewood, and Montclair all have good ordinances for public and private trees. She pointed out that Attorney Lott was given the job three or four years ago to work on this tree ordinance. It hasn't been done yet. Mrs. Drew reviewed the progress made by the Commission's tree ordinance subcommittee.

After further discussion, Council Member Collander suggested that the Commission give Attorney Lott a chance to work on the private tree issue. The Commission should, in the meantime, continue work on public trees. Somewhere along the line the two tree categories will intersect. Council Member Collander

would like to hear Mr. Torello's input on this matter. He felt everyone was interested in protecting the town's canopy.

Chrmn. Truppo suggested this discussion be tabled.

Update on Tree Banners

Mrs. Drew noted that in March 2014, the Shade Tree Commission had originally decided to have 12 tree banners put up in town, preferably a week before Arbor Day until approximately June 20th when the Farmers Market begins. Somehow this didn't come to fruition.

Mrs. Drew reviewed the range of prices given by Gates, the banner manufacturer, over the years. She noted that Chrmn. Truppo has asked her to go back to Gates for an up-to-date quote. Mrs. Drew distributed copies of the current quote for the banners. Now a banner costs \$172 each.

Mrs. Drew suggested the Commission could go with the original idea of six different banners. The less expensive banners, at \$128, should be considered.

Mr. Fekete reminded Commissioners that they still had to obtain approval from the Borough Council for these banners.

Mrs. Drew recommended that the banners be purchased with the Commission's budget item for education. She would like to see Commissioners take a vote on this idea.

After further discussion a motion was made/seconded to approve the banner estimate for \$1536. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Council Member Collander will meet with Borough Administrator Falzarano tomorrow and see if this banner expenditure can put on the Borough Council Agenda for their February 27, 2017 meeting.

Update of Annual Report

Mr. Jadro reported that the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission was the first to file their Annual Report for the Borough. In March, the Tree City USA application has to be filled out and submitted.

New Business

Discuss and Review December Planting of Red Oak on public land on North Hillside Ave. leading up to Memorial Park

Commissioners discussed the letter, dated 12/10/2016, they had received from Dr. Collins, of North Hillside Ave., and his health concerns for his daughter. Dr. Collins would like the red oak tree to be moved. Chrmn. Truppo noted that originally there had been two trees. Former Chrmn. Pat Carroll had arranged to have the first tree moved. Mr. Carroll had visited the site after Dr. Collins had contacted him about his daughters' severe allergic reaction to oak trees. Chrmn. Truppo pointed out that there are a number of other oak trees in the neighborhood.

Council Member Collander noted that Dr. Collins had contacted Borough Administrator Falzarano a number of times about this matter. Mr. Falzarano then referred him to the Shade Tree Commission.

This matter was tabled.

Discuss 2017 activities: Arbor Day, Planting(s), Continuing Education

Chrmn. Truppo reviewed the Commission's activities in the past. The Commission needs to organize their Arbor Day activity, their plantings program, and the CEUs that the Commission needs to earn. Mr. Fekete indicated that he didn't want to continue tracking the Commission's CEUs. He briefly reviewed the different CEUs that Commissioners should look into. Mr. Fekete noted that if each Commissioner earned at least one CEU, the required 8 points would be met. Some courses can be taken on-line.

Chrmn. Truppo asked Commissioners whether, to deal with these different activities, sub-committees should be formed or a separate meeting should be held to focus on the plantings project. Mr. Fekete clarified what the Commission's tree planting program entailed. Commissioners discussed what activity could be undertaken for this year's Arbor Day.

Mrs. Drew discussed the Manasquan Tree Program. She will be visiting Manasquan very soon and will obtain more information for the Commission.

On other matters, Mr. Chmura asked if the Commission would consider a descriptive plaque for the Scarlet Oak in the Lum Field. Commissioners indicated that they would like to eventually install such a plaque.

Mr. Chmura asked if there was a way for people to financially contribute to the Shade Tree Commission.

Mr. Fekete recalled that former Chrmn. Carroll was going to set up a separate entity to accept funds that the Commission could control.

Mr. Chmura asked if monetary donations could be given to plant trees in memory of people.

Council Member Collander pointed out that there is now an ordinance that addresses memorial donations. A look can be taken at this ordinance to see how memorial trees are handled. Mr. Fekete recalled that an earlier group, Friends of the Shade Tree, had collected funds for tree plantings, and worked with the Commission. Council Member Collander suggested that the Commission could check with Attorney Lott on the legality of collecting these type funds.

Before adjourning, Mr. Kobylarz asked if Commissioners had any recommendations on helpful reading materials on trees. The Commissioners suggested some materials.

Mr. Fekete asked Ms. Holler to send out an up-to-date contact list of Commissioners. Such a list hasn't been distributed in a while.

At 9:20 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Shade Tree Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, upper level, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Minutes Secretary