

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION
 April 17, 2018

7:30 p.m.

Chrmn. Colleen Truppo called this Regular Meeting of the Shade Tree Commission to order at 7:30 p.m., Room 201, Upper Level, Chatham Borough Hall. The Open Public Meetings Act was read aloud.

Name	Present	Absent
Colleen Truppo, Chrmn.	X	
Fran Drew	X – arrived 7:45 p.m.	
Ken Fekete	X	
Dean Wilson	X	
Kristy Chmura	X	
Ken Chmura	X	
Council Member James Collander		X
Tony Torello, Shade Tree Enforcement Officer		X

Public Comments

Praveen Srikanth and his wife, Yamini Natarajan, of 174 Weston Avenue, came forward. Ms. Natarajan informed the Commission that she and her husband are currently renting a home in Chatham Borough; however, have bought a house at 174 Weston Avenue. She asked Chrmn. Truppo what are the responsibilities of the Shade Tree Commission. Also, Ms. Natarajan asked to review the process of when a resident is seeking to remove a Borough tree.

Chrmn. Truppo answered that the Commission tries to maintain Chatham Borough’s tree canopy. The Commission tries to maintain the town trees that are already growing and to plant new trees. The Commission also prunes Borough trees when needed.

Chrmn. Truppo reviewed what transpires after a resident submits a Tree Service Request Form when there is a problem with a Borough tree, or the resident wants the tree removed. She noted, after the Tree Service Form is submitted to the Commission, the Public Works Dept. is the first entity to inspect the tree in question. If a homeowner disagrees with the assessment made by the DPW, the Commission can ask the Borough Arborist to look at the tree and give his opinion. The arborist is licensed as a certified tree expert by the State of New Jersey. Chrmn. Truppo stated that the Shade Tree Commission reviews the report that the Borough Arborist submits reporting on the tree’s condition. The Commission then informs the homeowner of the arborist’s findings on the tree in question.

Mr. Srikanth noted that he meant no harm to the Borough tree at 174 Weston Ave., however it is blocking the entire house with its branches. He would like a cleaner appearance in front of his house. Are there other options that he and his wife can pursue to have this tree removed? Can they plant new trees on the side of the property? Can the tree be pruned?

Ms. Natarajan reported that the original home at 174 Weston Ave. has been torn down. The new home will be constructed on higher ground and more shade will result if this Borough tree is still in place.

Chrmn. Truppo pointed out that the tree is on Borough property. Borough trees cannot be pruned by homeowners. She offered, however, to contact Mr. Torello, the Director of Public Works, and see if his men could prune the tree.

Mr. Srikanth and Ms. Natarajan thanked the Commission for their time and left.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes of March 20, 2018 were approved.

New Business

Tree Canopy Resolution

Each Commissioner had a copy of the resolution. Chrmn. Truppo reported that Margie Lowe, the Administrative Assistant in Community Services, has brought this to the Commission's attention. This resolution is one of the actions which help the Borough obtain its Sustainable Jersey certification. The resolution before the Commissioners tonight is exactly what was approved the last time.

Chrmn. Truppo read the resolution aloud:

Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission – Tree Canopy Goal Resolution:

The current tree canopy coverage in Chatham Borough is 30.8%. This data is from the U.S. Department of Agriculture publication, "Connecting People with Ecosystems in the 21st Century," a USDA book.

Whereas the American Forest Organization suggests a target of 40% tree canopy coverage for municipalities east of the Mississippi, the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission adopts a goal of 40% tree canopy coverage this 17th day of April, 2018.

Ms. Chmura made a motion to approve the Tree Canopy Goal Resolution. Chrmn. Truppo seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted to approve this resolution, except for Mr. Fekete. Mr. Fekete abstained from voting.

Final plans for Arbor Day 2018

Chrmn. Truppo noted that a presentation for children, ages 6 to 9, will be given at the Library of the Chathams on April 25th. A rain date, May 8th, has been arranged. The program will be similar to the tree program given at St. Paul's Church last summer for their Vacation Bible School.

Ms. Chmura reported that on Sunday, April 29th, she will be holding her Arbor Day Concert at St. Patrick Church, 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. She also reported that the children's choir "The

Morning Song Choir” will be performing at this concert. There will be readings as well as music. Ms. Chmura noted that this will be the Third Annual Arbor Day Concert in Chatham.

Update on Roots to Rivers Grant plantings

Chrmn. Truppo reported that Janice Piccolo, in the Director of Community Services, has been very helpful in organizing this planting project. A nursery in Pennsylvania has been found who could supply all the plantings, plus fulfill all the requirements made by the grant people. The order for the trees and plants will be finalized this week. Chrmn. Truppo noted that all the trees and shrubs have been wetland approved.

Chrmn. Truppo described the two pathways which will be created in Shepard Kollock Park. The “Adventure Trail” will be a mulched trail, closest to the river. A paved pathway will also be created.

Chrmn. Truppo reminded Commissioners that Chatham Clean Day is scheduled on Saturday, May 5th, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers can choose to either work at Shepard Kollock Park or the Gazebo area. Free T-shirts will be given to the workers that day. Mrs. Piccolo had suggested some of the Clean Day volunteers could be assigned to plant the Roots to River trees. The DPW will be on hand that day to help to unload materials.

Old Business

Chrmn. Truppo reported that the tree banners will be up tomorrow in downtown Chatham. Mrs. Drew noted that the banners will be taken down by the second week in June to be replaced by the Farmers Market banners. She suggested the possibility of then putting the tree banners up on lower Fairmount Avenue, lower Hillside Ave. close to Main Street, and east and west Main Street where the Farmers Market banners won’t be on display. The railroad station area would also be a good place for the tree banners. Commissioners discussed the bracket situation for the banners.

Mrs. Drew will email information on the number of banners to Chrmn. Truppo. Chrmn. Truppo will follow up on this plan with Mr. Torello, the DPW Director.

Mrs. Drew showed Commissioners a photo of a tree that was recently removed at 124 Fairmount Avenue, a county road. The residents at 124 Fairmount Ave. had felt that this tree was blocking their view when they were pulling out of their driveway. Mrs. Drew believed that a mirror could have been installed on an existing sign to make backing-out conditions safer. Chrmn. Truppo reported that Council Member Resto had reached out to the Morris County Shade Tree Commission about this incident.

Chrmn. Truppo will send Commissioners a copy of Council Member Resto’s email to the County Shade Tree Commission.

On other matters, Mr. Chmura reported that he had spoken with Kate Murphy, Chair of the Borough Environmental Commission, about the Shade Tree Commission and the Environmental Commission sharing a table on Fishawack Day. Chrmn. Murphy said that arrangement would be fine. Mr. Chmura suggested the Shade Tree Commission create a poster or display for this table.

Mr. Chmura brought up the Scarlet Oak tree in Lum Field that had been a controversial issue not too long ago. He offered to approach the Chatham Historical Society and ask that they create a plaque for this tree.

Mr. Chmura discussed a colored flier he had distributed to the Commissioners tonight: “Ten Reasons to Plant a Tree this Spring”. He pointed out that this article was published by an electric utility company from the south. This article made excellent points on the benefits of planting trees, among them is that trees, standing between a home and the elements, may decrease a homeowner’s energy bills.

Mr. Chmura also discussed an article reporting that 155,000 people in Utah had recently volunteered to plant 377,000 trees.

Mrs. Drew suggested an easel be put up on Fishawack Day to put these upbeat articles promoting tree plantings. She offered to obtain the easel.

At 8:12 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Shade Tree Commission meeting will be held Tuesday, May 15, 2018, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, upper level, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Minutes Secretary