

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION  
July 27, 20237:30 p.m.

Chrmn. Colleen Truppo called this Regular Meeting of the Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building. Mrs. Truppo stated that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Beverly Klepper was sworn in as a Regular Member of the Shade Tree Commission, to complete the remainder of Fran Drew's term.

Names	Present	Absent
Colleen Truppo, Chrmn.	X	
Kristy Chmura, Vice Chrmn.	X	
Dean Wilson	X	
John Tortorella		X
Patrick Florentino	X	
Beverly Klepper	X	
George Sweetin	X	
Gina Viola	X	
Miles Gilmore	X	
Council Member Karen Koronkiewicz	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Public Comment

There was none.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Vice Chrmn. Chmura made a motion to adopt the minutes of the June 22, 2023 STC meeting as amended. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. The June 22, 2023 minutes were approved as amended.

Jaycee Memorial Tree

Chrmn. Truppo reported that the memorial planting ceremony took place this past Saturday. The tree planted by the Jaycees in memory of a late member, Mr. Camelotto, is a Swamp White Oak. The Jaycees had offered to pay for this memorial tree, however Chrmn. Truppo refused this pay-back because of the Jaycee's continuous generosity to the Shade Tree Commission.

Mr. Sweetin reported that he had mentioned watering this tree to DPW. The recent rainfall has been helpful with this planting. Unfortunately, the ground where the tree was planted is rocky. Mr. Sweetin has spread some mixed compost in the planting area.

### Girl Scout Gold Award Project

Chrmn. Truppo reported that she has met with Anna Rice. So far Anna has identified 25 trees for her project. Unfortunately, the higher-ups in the Scouts believe this has become more of a “techie” project than an environmental one. Anna will report back to Chrmn. Truppo on what the content will be. She will be researching the trees at Firehouse Plaza, especially of note, the history of the memorial trees.

Chrmn. Truppo noted that Anna is also researching what would be the best material for the actual QR Code when it gets attached to the tree. The QR Code should not interfere with the tree’s growth.

Chrmn. Truppo believed Anna’s project is a sustainable project. In the future, other Scouts in town could identify additional interesting trees in town.

### Meeting of Neighboring STCs

Chrmn. Truppo noted that an earlier meeting of area Shade Tree Commissions had been successful. Summit, Madison, and Morristown were among the participants. The next meeting will be on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1 – 2:30 p.m. in the Madison Community House, Cook Ave., Madison. Chrmn. Truppo asked Commissioners to let her know if they are interested in attending.

### STC Activities for the Year

Chrmn. Truppo presented a power-point display of events/projects that the Commission will take on in the coming year.

Referring to the power-point slide, Chrmn. Truppo noted that one of the goals in the early part of the year, is to submit the paperwork for the State and the Arbor Day Foundation. In April, the STC will ask the Borough Council for a formal proclamation for Arbor Day. Mr. Sweetin pointed out that also in April, the STC should ask the NJ Department of Forestry for trees.

Chrmn. Truppo stated that in May and April the STC should order their tote bags and other materials for Fishawack Day. STC’s activities for Arbor Day should be finalized.

In June, the STC will have a table on Fishawack Day. Perhaps the Commission could host a raffle of some kind, as well have literature available.

Chrmn. Truppo noted that the STC should focus a segment of their time on their Borough tree plantings. Mr. Sweetin noted that the STC start talking to the tree nurseries starting in January. He felt some of the tree plantings could even be done in the spring. The DPW could be asked to water these new street trees. Mr. Sweetin felt these spring plantings would be successful if the temperatures were above 50 degrees.

Mr. Gilmore asked Mr. Sweetin what if a frost happens when these spring plantings are installed.

Mr. Sweetin answered that the leaves don’t come out that early.

Chrmn. Truppo noted that in October the tree markings could be done for the tree plantings in November. Also the Shade Tree Federation Conference and the Core Training will kick in at that time. Tree Walks could also be scheduled. The STC can think of recommendations for Scout projects.

Commissioners discussed how the tree plantings could be watered. Mr. Sweetin felt the watering would be more suitable for the DPW and their trucks, once a week, then a Boy Scout, who would need to obtain water for homeowners. The DPW truck could water the tree once a month.

Mrs. Klepper asked who actually maintains these new tree plantings after they are installed.

Chrmn. Truppo explained that a letter goes out to the property owners, giving guidelines on caring for the new tree.

Summing up, Chrmn. Truppo said she would print out this power-point outline and distribute it to Commissioners. She asked everyone to let her know what project they would be interested to help with.

#### Borough Shade Tree Ordinance

Chrmn. Truppo recalled a couple of years ago the Borough had wanted to have an ordinance to regulate private trees. The Borough officials had asked the STC for their feedback on such an ordinance. The Shade Tree Commission does not have authority over private trees.

Chrmn. Truppo suggested the STC look at how other towns deal with the private tree situation. She brought up the recent tree situation on Washington Ave. where the future homeowner had plans to remove a Borough street tree during construction without permission from the Borough. Negotiations were held with the STC to settle the matter. One of the Commissioners brought up that this new home is now up for sale.

Mr. Sweetin suggested that in tree situations like this, the new homeowners should have to agree to live in the home at least 12 months or else a fine will be imposed.

Commissioners discussed the penalty fees of neighboring towns regarding tree removals for construction projects. Also, perhaps the penalty fee could be based on the diameter size of the tree. It was noted that Madison and Summit has a specific ordinance on landmark trees.

Chrmn. Truppo commented that often times local trees that have construction going on around them, have no protection around their base. Mr. Sweetin pointed out that the Madison ordinance has detailed requirements in place for this situation of trees and construction work. .

Regarding landmark trees, Mr. Wilson expressed concern about a tree recently being removed at 380 Main Street.

Mr. Gilmore pointed out that in Madison, trees being removed, that have a diameter over 6 inches, must be replaced. Mr. Sweetin explained how a DPH measurement is taken. He has

seen first-hand how construction work has damaged existing trees that were thoughtlessly not protected.

Mr. Sweetin and Chrmn. Truppo agreed that the Commission should look into how other towns handle trees and construction work. The tree ordinances for Madison, Summit, and East Hanover would be good ones to review.

#### STC Tree Walks

Chrmn. Truppo noted that the Tree Walk scheduled for June had been rained out. Another Tree Walk could be scheduled for August.

Mr. Wilson wondered if there was a way to speed up the Tree Walk process.

After some discussion, Vice Chrmn. Chmura suggested the Commissioners just focus on possible tree planting locations in town.

To help with identifying planting spots, Mr. Sweetin distributed copies of the Site Factor List which is attached to the Location Planting Strip Info Sheet. He stated that he noticed examples of trees being planted way too close to one another.

Some Commissioners did not feel comfortable inspecting trees and planting locations on their own. Some unfriendly residents may question their presence. Mr. Sweetin recommended Commissioners wear their STC Identification if they go out alone to inspect.

Chrmn. Truppo said she will check with Borough Administrator Steve Williams about obtaining these ID cards.

Commissioners decided the next Tree Walk will be held on Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. Parking is available in the Ogden Church parking lot. From there, Commissioners could walk down Elmwood Avenue, inspecting the trees.

Ms. Holler reported to the Commission that the Tree Request Forms are slowly coming in. So far there is a tree planting for everyone on the list.

At 8:51 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting will be held on Thursday, August 24, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler  
Recording Secretary

