

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of June 23, 2020
Virtual Conference Call
Monument Hall--East Conference Room
1 Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540**

Members

Voting:

Sharon Ainsworth
Victoria Airgood
Welmoet Bok van Kammen
Patricia Frawley
Lily Krauss
Alexandra Radbil
Janet Stern

Non-Voting:

Sandra Chen: 2nd Alternate
Ray Devoe: 1st Alternate

Council Liaison:

Michelle Lambros

Town Arborist:

Taylor Sapudar

Guests: None

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order via Zoom on 6/23/2020 at 5:02 pm by Ainsworth.

OPENING STATEMENT: Read by Ainsworth.

ROLL CALL: Radbil, Stern, Frawley, Chen, Ainsworth, Krauss, Bok van Kammen, Sapudar.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MINUTES: The minutes of the May 26, 2020, meeting were approved with corrections by a motion made by Bok van Kammen and seconded.

Ayes: Bok van Kammen, Radbil, Stern, Krauss, Ainsworth.

No: Frawley

Motion carried.

(Airgood and Devoe arrived at 5:07.)

REPORTS

1. Arborist Report

--Sapudar indicated that pruning on Nassau Street from Harrison to Bayard Lane has begun and will continue for about two months. The pruning is being done by the State. There are a few removals requiring work such as stump grinding.

-- Since Princeton University is not back full time, no new work has been done on the Prospect Street planting.

-- Sapudar will be working on putting the Davey contract together for an RFP.

All STC comments were taken into consideration. All addresses can be manually changed. Trees entered will be assessed. No copy and pasting from the old inventory will occur, as the old inventory was used to generate a bid amount. The document submitted by the STC subcommittee will be attached as an addendum. Airgood asked if the proposal was out for bid. Sapudar indicated that it will be; the contract will go out for bid due to its size. The time estimate from Davey is about three months. Airgood indicated that she hoped that the specifications are developed to the extent that would limit contacts. Sapudar will be working on the contract next week and will do his best to get it to Council for approval.

--Both Sapudar and DPW staff are back five days a week.

--A local tree care company will be putting on a free pruning demo at Monument Hall. Date to be determined.

--On Tuesday there is fuel station meeting with the PEC to go over work there. The canopy has been taken down.

--Ainsworth indicated that there was unauthorized tree removal on Gallup Road. A resident had taken down four or five trees one of which was in the ROW. The resident will receive several citations for removal and debris violations.

--Airgood asked why the STC does not have authority over expenditures from the Princeton Shade Tree Trust Reserve (PSTTR). Ainsworth stated that we do have approval authority, but each request then needs to go to the Town Administrator, who might need to refer it to Council. Airgood indicated that it was a bit cumbersome to have all requests go through all the steps of this process. Ainsworth replied that the Town Administrator has the ability to approve requests; they won't all be sent on to Council.

2. Council Liaison Report

--Lambros was unable to attend but submitted a brief report to Ainsworth. The STC TPZ draft had been submitted to Lambros and then to Lisa Maddox. The Town Attorney has nearly finalized the TPZ proposal to go to Council. Airgood indicated that she has "red lined" the draft so that renovation and expansion are added in terms of violations and suspensions of the building permit.

--The Construction department issues these permits, and we cannot insert ourselves into this process; the only way the STC can initiate violations is through the Municipal Court. Complaints and fines are the only enforcement methods available at present. In the past, this has not been effective, but other methods of enforcement may be considered.

--The third issue is adding a sentence from the former ordinance such that "no contractor may disturb the soil in the TPZ," with language added by Airgood. Once the TPZ is defined for a particular tree, are there instances where activities within the zone may be considered or when the zone can be entered? Sapudar clarified the issue and said yes, agreeing with Airgood. He said that he would tell this to Lisa Maddox.

--Lambros hopes to introduce the TPZ proposal in July.

--The final issue is the Commemorative Tree Planting guidelines; we still have no clarity regarding whether this protocol needs to be approved by Council. We do know that any donation is tax deductible. Whether we need approval from Council is not clear.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Status: Princeton Shade Tree Trust Reserve (Lambros):** Addressed below.

2. **Status: Commemorative Tree Planting Protocol (Lambros/Radbil)**

--Radbil indicated that the document needs to be rewritten to include suggestions made by Lambros, with Stern stating that we also need to state that donations are tax deductible. Stern asked whether we are also waiting to hear whether Council needs to approve the PSTTR. Ainsworth indicated that all we need is action on the protocol, not the PSTTR as such. The Town Administrator has oversight over the process.

--Stern asked about the TPZ and whether the proposal would go to the Construction department prior to going to Council. Ainsworth replied that Maddox has shared this document with Engineering and other entities. Stern asked if this would be mirrored in the Construction code also. Ainsworth indicated that that was her understanding. Airgood stated that her understanding was that the other department's ordinances would not be amended. Ainsworth stated that the revised TPZ code would be mirrored.

--Radbil asked whether dedicated contributions to the PSTTR would be honored. Airgood indicated that that was not included. There is no provision in the PSTTR indicating that the money be spent as requested. Any change as suggested by Radbil would require that we resurrect the PSTTR document and revisit it, adding protection for the donors. Airgood did not remember whether the protection was in place in the document. The PSTTR and the Commemorative Tree Planting fund should be reviewed. Airgood argued that the PSTTR has been reviewed and is ready to be implemented. Radbil suggested that both documents should be reviewed to ensure that they do not conflict and cover all options. Discussion ensued about the intent of the PSTTR as opposed to the Commemorative Tree fund. Ainsworth indicated that we need to review both documents to make sure that donated money would be dedicated in keeping with the intent of the donor. Ainsworth stated that she will ask Janice Most to review both the PSTTR and the Commemorative Tree planting guidelines to see if they make it clear how funds are to be deposited, withdrawn, and identified for specific projects.

OTHER

--Stern indicated that she would have loved to have ,during the hiatus ,the door hangers that Devoe had prepared so that they could have been left wherever STC members saw mulch volcanoes. Devoe has made the changes that were requested and was waiting for approval to get the door hangers made. He can have one thousand hangers prepared in a short time, and they will be turned around within ten days. Stern stated that the office parks are the worst offenders. Over-mulching appears to be ingrained, with little headway made to change the mindset of property owners and landscapers.

--No July or August meeting will be held.

--Volunteer hours to date for each member should be submitted to Ainsworth.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Devoe and seconded.

Ayes: Stern, Frawley, Radbil, Krauss, Airgood, Ainsworth.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Addendum: Action Plan

| Action | Due Date | Responsibility |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| Princeton Shade Tree Trust Reserve Authorization authority (Council and/or town administrator) | September meeting | Lambros, Sapudar, Ainsworth |
| Volunteer hours to Ainsworth | June | All members |
| Mulch volcano door hangers, Production and distribution of one thousand copies to STC members | July | Devoe |
| Commemorative Tree Planting Protocol Authorization authority (Council and/or town administrator) | September meeting | Lambros, Sapudar, Radbil |