



PRINCETON SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES Tuesday, April 28, 2015

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Princeton Shade Tree Commission (PSTC) was convened at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2015 in Monument Hall. S. Hiltner opened the meeting in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, Section 5, Chapter 231, P.L. 275. In conformance with the requirements of the Law, Notice was provided of the date, time and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy of the adopted Schedule of Regular Meetings in the Monument Hall and Witherspoon Buildings, by mailing copies to the Trenton Times, Princeton Packet, and Town Topics and by filing a copy in the Office of the Clerk of Princeton.

PRESENT: Victoria Airgood, Joanne Diez, Pat Frawley, Steve Hiltner, Pam Machold,
Bernie Miller (left at 7:00 p.m.), Janet Stern

ABSENT: Sharon Ainsworth, Lily Krauss, Alexandra Radbil

ALSO PRESENT: Lorraine Konopka, Arborist; Janice Most, Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT

S. Hiltner read a letter sent to the Shade Tree Commission (undated) sent by Daniel A. Harris, 28 Dodds Lane, concerning tree removals at 93 Overbrook Drive and Tree Ordinance 2014-2 in general.

MINUTES

P. Frawley moved to approve the Draft Minutes of March 24, 2015 as amended.

P. Machold seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET

Nothing new to report.

BUSINESS

436 Mt. Lucas Road Tree Removals

Shicheng Yang, (and his wife who did not state her name), owners of 436 Mt. Lucas Road were present. He stated that when they purchased the home the Real Estate Agent told them it would be no problem for them to cut down as many trees as they liked. His wife is afraid trees are going to fall on the house. S. Yang presented a Power Point presentation consisting of: reasons for the tree removals; pictures of the current status of the west side/back/east/northeast/front of the property; picture of the roof with branches and leaves overhanging; tree list of removals; replacement plan.

L. Konopka stated that she visited the site and inventoried the trees and the initial request was denied. The request was for 24 removals, mostly White Oak, Ash, and Sweet Gum; eight are exempt from the Ordinance as they are in poor health and have structural issues and can be removed. Sixteen are healthy, well rooted, and in good health. She has deemed this removal as an aggressive site clearing. L. Konopka also stated that after this initial clearing around the house the applicant wants to remove more trees for a driveway and garage. Also, the replanting plan is not adequate.

Discussion ensued concerning: wetlands tree removal; will removing trees cause an increase in standing water; replanting ornamental trees; explanation to the applicant of the benefits of having trees; removing too many strong trees could be dangerous; trees nearer to the house that might fall causing less damage than a tall tree further away that has more time and distance to fall (velocity); explaining to the applicant how to live with trees; wetlands at the rear of the property; using caution when regrading which can make a strong tree weak; the need of an Environmental Engineer to help with water management as putting soil in a wet area can be dangerous; the negatives of planting bamboo; ways to remove a very large dirt pile. As the Applicant has not moved into the house yet, it was suggested that they move in, get to know the house and land (drainage, etc.), talk to professionals and neighbors for ideas concerning grading and drainage, and then make decisions on removals.

J. Stern moved to support the decision and recommendations of L. Konopka, Arborist.
V. Airgood seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

11 Green Street Tree Removal Denial

J. West, Land Use Engineer for Zoning and Planning was present and gave a summary of this project. The Applicant wishes to remove a tree in the right of way to gain access for a crane to install a pre-fabricated home.

Marina Rubina, Architect and owner of the property was present. M. Rubina stated that she is requesting to remove the tree so a crane can gain access for the installation of a modular home. She presented a Power Point presentation consisting of: Shade Tree Commission Mission

Statement; first time asking for a tree removal; existing site plan; approval to remove the Cherry and Ash trees; this particular tree is a Zelkova, young and 12 inches in diameter; picture of existing house and tree; time lapsed presentation of building a modular home; moving of driveway to the opposite side; a complete picture of the proposed location of the house, driveway, and street tree. M. Rubina stated she purchased the house for a friend and it cannot be saved as there are multiple leaks, asbestos, and the foundation is crumbling. She explained how a modular home is built and stated there is less construction time.

L. Konopka stated that she denied this application as the Zelkova is the youngest and healthiest of the trees along the streetscape.

There was discussion concerning: building of modular homes; status of trees along the streetscape; alternatives if the tree is not removed; benefits of the tree not being removed.

P. Frawley moved to table discussion and decision until the next regularly scheduled meeting. V. Airgood seconded. The Motion passed with the following vote: V. Airgood, yes; J. Diez, abstain; P. Frawley, yes; S. Hiltner, no; P. Machold, yes; J. Stern, yes.

M. Rubina stated she will email the Power Point presentation to S. Hiltner.

256/266 Shady Brook Lane Update

J. West gave a brief update of the neighbor dispute stating that the situation is in the hands of the Attorney for guidance of multiple violations.

EAB Trap Locations

L. Konopka stated that EAB trap locations will be Marquand Park and the River Road Convenience Center facility.

“Invasives” Speaker

J. Diez stated the about a year ago she went to a seminar on Invasives Species and gave a brief overview on what was discussed. She thought it would be beneficial if the speaker came to address the entire Shade Tree Commission noting that each member would obtain CEU’s if needed. The fee would be \$235 plus mileage of approximately \$34. J. Diez will pass along more information.

Realtor Brochure

P. Frawley stated it would be a good idea to compile a brochure for Realtors, and others as deemed fit to educate the public on the role of the Shade Tree Commission and in particular the new Ordinance and how it affects tree removals. P. Frawley, V. Airgood, and J. Stern volunteered to work on this effort.

Thanks

L. Konopka thanked everyone for a successful 2015 Arbor Day and 2015 Communiiversity events and the Board thanked Lorraine for same.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:00 p.m. V. Airgood moved to adjourn the meeting. P. Frawley seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted May 18, 2015
Janice S. Most

Adopted: May 26, 2015