



PRINCETON SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES Tuesday, June 30, 2015

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Princeton Shade Tree Commission (PSTC) was convened at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 30, 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: Sharon Ainsworth, Victoria Airgood, Joanne Diez (arrived 5:40 p.m.), Steve Hiltner, Alexandra Radbil, Janet Stern

ABSENT: Pat Frawley, Lily Krauss, Pam Machold, Bernie Miller

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

MINUTES

BUDGET

Nothing new to report.

BUSINESS

45 Hodge Road Tree Removal

L. Konopka stated that in August 2014 the former Arborist approved a tree removal request to remove eight trees at 45 Hodge Road with an agreement to plant eight replacements. A replacement plan was not provided at that time. On May 27, 2015, L. Konopka met with the Contractor who submitted a Tree Removal Application requesting removal of two additional trees – one declining 23’ Black Cherry and one live 23” Ash where the roots had been cut for utility installation. This application was approved with the agreement to plant an additional tree bringing the total replacement trees owed to nine. The Contractor also stated that a Landscape Plan was being developed. Also at this site meeting the Contractor verbally indicated that the property owners were interested in removing an additional three trees from the Lilac Lane side of the property – one 13” Norway Maple in fair condition, one 11” Norway Spruce in fair condition, and one 14” Norway Spruce in fair condition. The root systems of these trees had been negatively impacted by the construction traffic and soil disturbance associated with the new construction. L. Konopka told the Contractor that a new Tree Removal Application would need to be submitted even though she would be denying the request due to the quantity of trees already removed and an appeal to this denial would have to be made to the Shade Tree Commission. The new application for the additional three trees was received in the office on June 23, 2015. The replacement plan that was submitted shows only six replacement trees; this is three short of the required nine replacements and if approval is granted for the latest request it would require another three replacements. Also, there have been concerns made by neighbors to the Engineering Department about this construction site. A meeting was held of June 25, 2015 with Princeton Administration to review concerns of the neighbors. Issues discussed were: the condition of the construction site, the condition of the three trees requested for removal, TPZ fencing, and the condition of the large Ash tree that has not been properly protected along Hodge Road. L. Konopka also stated that tree protection is lacking and trees have root damage due to equipment, Port-A-John installations and construction vehicles driving over the root systems.

Present were the homeowners Jill Mitchell and Dean Mitchell. J. Mitchell stated that their plan is to have more replacements trees than those being removed. D. Mitchell stated the replacements will be Native Trees and they are willing and committed to working with the Municipality to make the site attractive. Also, they have spoken to several neighbors and have gotten positive responses to their plans. D. Mitchell also stated that one neighbor never responds to requests to talk about the project.

Discussion ensued concerning: needing a comprehensive replacement plan which would include the driveway reconfiguration in plan form, not a sketch and tree protection during construction. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Landscaper for 45 Hodge plans to attend the July Shade Tree Commission meeting to discuss trees to be replanted and will submit a full size/comprehensive plan including hardscaping.

TASK LIST/WORKING GROUPS

Discussion ensued concerning: review of the Management Plan to incorporate into Task List – S. Ainsworth will review the Management Plan and make recommendations at the next meeting; review of the list with Members volunteering for specific items; S. Hiltner stated he is compiling a tree attributes list to go on the website along with a general list for information purposes and suggests having a “tree link” to pictures/information/specific website links for additional information; formation of a Tree List Committee includes S. Hiltner, J. Diez, L. Konopka.

Tree Inventory Update

A. Radbil stated that a call will be made to Davey Tree to have corrections made to the Database to include street name and street ownership (State/County/Municipal); gathering information from the Engineering Department and working with the new laptop. Volunteering for data entry were A. Radbil, J. Diez, V. Airgood.

Website

J. Stern stated that a new platform has been instituted “Oldest Trees in Princeton” and the committee is working on the link. Work is continuing on the Arborist link and pictures from the 2015 Arbor Day celebration have been added.

Photographic Record of Trees during Site Visits by Arborist

L. Konopka stated this is being done.

Site Visits Prior to Meetings

S. Hiltner stated the importance of Members visiting sites before meetings.

Realtor Brochure

Working on the Realtor Brochure is S. Ainsworth, J. Stern, P. Frawley, V. Airgood. When complete the Brochure will also be on the Shade Tree Website and Municipal Website.

Establishment of STC Speakers Bureau

Discussion ensued concerning: when opportunities arise speaker seminars can be coordinated for public education awareness.

Other

L. Konopka stated that there have been 182 Tree Removal Applications with 458 trees removed due to development, dead, and general conditions. There will be tree replacement follow up. There was brief discussion on how Commission Members can assist in the process.

L. Konopka stated that the Shade Tree Conference will be held in October in Atlantic City.

L. Konopka stated that the Mayor received confirmation that Emerald Ash Borer has been found in West Windsor.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:40 p.m. J. Stern moved to adjourn the meeting. A. Radbil seconded.
The Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted October 20, 2015
Janice S. Most

Adopted: October 27, 2015