

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of January 26, 2021
Virtual Meeting, Zoom Conference**

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 on 1/26/21 at 5:00 pm by Ainsworth.

OPENING STATEMENT: Read by Ainsworth.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MINUTES: The minutes of the 12/15/20 meeting were approved with corrections by a motion made by Airgood and seconded.

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

Motion carried.

REORGANIZATION

1. Election of Chairperson

Motion by Frawley and seconded to elect Ainsworth as Chairperson of the PSTC for 2021.

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

Motion carried.

2. Election of Vice Chairperson

Motion by Frawley and seconded to elect Krauss as Vice Chairperson of the PSTC for 2021.

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

Motion carried.

3. Designation of Secretary

Motion by Frawley and seconded to designate Janice Most as Secretary to the PSTC for 2021.

Discussion followed regarding duties of the secretary, specifically Minutes, with motion called.

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

Motion carried.

4. Review of 2021 Members List

Chen indicated that her term should indicate position to be held through 2026.

REPORTS

1. Arborist Report

--A new tree care position is posted.

--Spring planting will be advertised next week with 60 to 70 trees to be planted. Block planting will occur in "A" neighborhood, which includes Cuyler, Dempsey, and Walnut. On Spruce, adjacent to the cemetery, trees will be planted to compensate for ash tree removal as part of the Linden Project. Small block pruning will occur also.

--The RFP for the Tree Inventory will be posted in February. Bok van and Radbil requested an opportunity to review the RFP which took place in 2019.

--Engineering is resurfacing a path near Johnson Park School that now serves as a popular walking trail. There are an extensive number of ash tree, so the whole path will have the ash trees removed. Sapudar asked that the STC establish a subcommittee to work with him on a design for the nearly ½-mile stretch of walking path. Airgood, Bok van Kammen

and Stern volunteered for this project. Sapудар has applied for a \$30K 5 Star Urban Waters grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to assist with funding for this process. The need is for native sustainable shade trees to be replanted by fall of 2021. In the event that Princeton is not awarded the grant, funds are available in the municipal ash tree removal budget. The path is used by students, parents, the bike community, and the residents of an adjacent housing development. Sapудар would be able to facilitate the contracts generated by the STC design and plant list; the list needs to be completed by August 2021. Krauss, Airgood, and Ainsworth volunteered to work as a subcommittee on this project.

--The holiday trees have not yet been planted but are stored safely. Planting will likely take place by the end of February. Right now most will go to Community Park and some to Smoyer Park, Greenway Meadows, and Quarry Park, as per multiple resident requests.

--Krauss asked about the planting called for on the corner of Hulfish and Witherspoon Streets. She said that space is inadequate for the trees and asked if Sapудар could change the way that developers think about street tree planting. They generally need bigger squares than they are allotted.

--Sapудар is working on the website and has received Bok van Kammen's notes. He has had some training and is meeting with the webmaster soon. He has created a graphic on how to avoid damage to trees during construction; it will accompany Airgood's TPZ document for the website. Also included will be a PDF from ISA describing the impacts of construction.

--Re the website, several other suggestions were offered regarding the number of tabs and the navigation issues. Sapудар suggested changing "Caring for Trees" to "Information about Trees," which would include links to deer, diseases, and invasive material. Information from USDA, ISA, and other reputable organizations can also be linked.

--Devoe's volcano mulch flyer will also be added to the site after a JPEG format is uploaded.

--The inventory link has been removed and will be replaced upon completion of the new inventory.

--Under the Pests and Alerts tab, the spotting of SLFs by residents goes to a report in Access that Sapудар runs on a regular basis. Since SLF has been spotted throughout Mercer County, the state will no longer respond to reports of sightings. There are now videos related to egg scraping and

links to websites about the SLF that supply updated information to residents.

--The Town webmaster has indicated that there is space on the homepage for news and events.

--As per the town attorney, Princeton is now under the State NJ LTCO law and need not require tree care companies to register individually with Princeton; the state licensing oversees and subsumes this. When permits are submitted, a license number must be included, which Sapudar monitors. A link to the state LTCO website is provided.

--The updated STC ordinance has been added to the ordinance tab.

--A tab to the Commemorative Tree Planting procedure will be added to the website when the procedure is finalized.

--FAQs have been updated and a new tab has been created.

--Sapudar suggested the possibility of establishing a website subcommittee that can discuss needed changes, with one member reporting to him with concerns. Bok van Kammen, Radbil and Frawley volunteered for this sub committee

2. Council Liaison Report

Tonight the report on the bike study solicited by Princeton will be reviewed by Council. There are many concerns about this report, with the focus on where the bikes will be allowed and the impact on parking.

Ainsworth again noted that it would be helpful if the STC were part of the process earlier in planning rather than later. There are concerns from the business, residential, and environmental communities. Bok van Kammen asked if any residents of the affected streets were part of the discussion. Airgood asked what percentage of the Princeton population would be using the proposed corridor. Lambros would like to see a task force composed of the various stakeholders in the area.

Lambros noted that on Feb. 11 there would be a Council retreat, so she would like the STC's input on goals. The inventory is at the top of the list, in addition to the website and Nassau streetscape. Ainsworth raised the issue of the holiday tree project, noting there was minor vandalism. Overall the project went better than expected. Lambros again congratulated the STC on the project for the enthusiasm it generated.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion with Mayor Mark Freda

Mayor Freda joined the discussion at 5:28; Ainsworth introduced the STC's work by discussing the CFMP. Environmental Justice in addition to other components was noted. Ainsworth stated that we were fortunate to have a town arborist who is so knowledgeable and reflects the town's investment in new trees and tree care.

Krauss stated that we work hard to manage the trees in Princeton. Our volunteer time this year was over 900 hours, with members Radbil contributing both time and CEU hours. Airgood seconded Krauss's comments and noted that our urban forests have many pressures, not just from insects and disease but also from development and the aging of our tree canopy.

Stern asked the mayor how he saw the operation of BCCs in relation to Council. Freda responded that all the commissions play an important role in the town, offering their expertise and knowledge. In an ideal world, all parties work together to make it easier for Council to consider topics as they arise. For the most part the process works well.

Bok van Kammen asked about the disparity in STC responsibilities between what is listed in the BCC Handbook and those enumerated in the ordinance. Freda responded that the handbook is being revised. Lambros noted that the PSTC is a very knowledgeable, hard-working group.

(Freda left at 5:42.)

OLD BUSINESS

1. Proposed 2021 Goals (Ainsworth)

Ainsworth and Sapudar produced goals for the upcoming year. The first goal is the inventory, which needs to be undertaken.

Airgood, having seen many shade trees removed due to age or other factors, asked whether there is a process for reviewing locations where trees were removed and then creating a replanting plan. Sapudar has given priority to many sites of block planting where trees have been removed. When a tree is removed, it is placed on a spread sheet and then replaced as soon as possible. He also talks to the residents about replanting. Some plantings are prompted by requests to the mayor's office. Residents reach out to Sapudar frequently to ask about plantings.

Sapудар indicated that a better process could be put in place. Stern asked if there was a better way to get different neighborhoods to seek more planting. Bok van Kammen noted that we need to look at neighborhoods where trees are being planted or not being planted.

Sapудар has asked the STC to suggest areas for tree planting. He will be happy to meet with neighbors to see who will be willing to have a tree planted. Radbil suggested bringing all the stakeholders together to address issues related to trees and tree planting.

Lambros indicated that she was aware of the goals as established and would entertain any further information.

(Lambros left at 6:20.)

Re the goals, Airgood suggested that an overall understanding of where trees have been lost and a plan for replacement would be important. Chen asked if there was a plan to remove Tree of Heaven from public areas. Stern suggested that the item “Spring Planting” in the goals be broadened to “Planting Projects,” so as to fully reflect how the total plantings will shape the budget. Radbil offered to revise the tree planting section of the goals and will work in conjunction with Sapудар to review the different initiatives for tree plantings. The CFMP item needs to be adjusted to include environmental justice.

2. NJ Div. of Forestry Proposed CFMP Additions (Radbil/Stern/Bok van Kammen)

The Subcommittee name has changed to Environmental Justice and the Urban Forest, henceforth referred to as EJUF.

Stern said that the subcommittee met three times and prepared a document that addresses EJ. It compels us to look at the whole community to see, e.g., where trees are needed. Perhaps the STC should work with other organizations to address EJ. Radbil added that education should be part of the task force goals. Airgood suggested that the STC could do a thorough review of where EJ can be promoted. Bok van Kammen added that she has maps that can be circulated that identify areas where trees need to be planted. Chen suggested that we should be alert to initiatives that are being presented so we can share information. Those who are affected by a policy should be the ones who are part of the policy development. This discussion will be continued in February.

3. Commemorative Tree Planting Plaque Mockup (Lambros/Art Committee. Still in process.

4. Climate Action Plan 2020 (Sapудар). No update.

5. Website Update and Addition of TPZ to Website (Airgood/Sapудар).

Addressed earlier in the meeting, with Stern suggesting that there be a sentence making it clear who physically erects the TPZs.

--Bok van Kammen indicated that her comments need to be included, too. Ainsworth asked that Bok van Kammen and Stern get their comments and edits to Airgood so that the TPZ document can be put on the website ASAP.

--Bok van Kammen addressed the issue of how the website content is displayed, with Ainsworth indicating that the new format is a dramatic improvement. Bok van Kammen stated that she had made many comments about the site that have not been addressed. Sapудар has updated some of the items but not the items from the TPZ doc. Other items will be added soon. Before winter is over, more information on the SLF will be linked.

Bok van Kammen suggested that a subcommittee be set up to address issues related to the website. Each month there would be a report for review by the STC and forwarded to the webmaster. The subcommittee will consist of Bok van Kammen, Radbil, and Frawley.

6. Holiday Tree Project Review (All). To be reviewed in February.

7. ISPs for STC Members' Email Addresses (Devoe). Moved to February.

8. Webpage (Bok van Kammen). Addressed earlier in the meeting.

OTHER:

Stern noted that the Johnson Park trail was originally part of the trolley line that went to Trenton.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Radbil and seconded.

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

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.

Addendum: Action Plan

ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
Rank Long-Term Goals	February STC meeting	STC members
Holiday Tree Project Review	February STC meeting	STC Members
Research into ISPs for STC Members' Email Addresses	February STC meeting	Devoe
Commemorative Tree Planting Guidelines	February STC Meeting	Lambros/Art Public Committee
Zoom Use by Sub Committees	February STC Meeting	Ainsworth
RFP for Tree inventory	February	Sapudar/Bok van Kammen/Radbil
Environmental Justice, Minority Involvement, and the STC CFMP (EJUF)	February STC meeting	Radbil/ Bok van Kammen/ Stern
Johnson Park Trail Tree selection Committee	Ongoing	Sapudar/Krauss/Ainsworth/Airgood
Comments/edits on TPZ doc. For website	February STC Meeting	Bok van Kammen/Stern
Items/Content on website to be reviewed	Ongoing	Sapudar/Radbil/Bok van Kammen/Frawley