

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission  
Minutes of March 23, 2021  
Virtual Meeting: Zoom Conference**

**Members**

**Voting:**

Sharon Ainsworth

Victoria Airgood

Patricia Frawley

Lily Krauss

Alexandra Radbil

Janet Stern

**Non-Voting:**

Sandra Chen: 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate

Ray Devoe: 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate

**Council Liaison:**

Michelle Lambros

**Town Arborist:**

Taylor Sapudar

**Guests:** None

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order on 3/23/21 at 5:00 pm by Ainsworth.

**Opening Statement:** Read by Ainsworth.

**Roll Call:** Radbil, Frawley, Chen, Krauss, Stern, Ainsworth, Sapudar.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the February 23, 2021, meeting were approved with corrections by a motion made by Krauss and seconded.

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

**Motion carried.**

**REPORTS**

**1. Arborist Report**

--Spring plantings will consist of planting 75 trees; the contract was posted on 2/11/21.

Block planting is in the "A" neighborhood and Spruce Street adjacent to the cemetery, as

noted in prior reports. Small block pruning will take place on Western Way. The low bidder for the project is on the council agenda for approval on 3/23/21.

--The Johnson Park Walking Path project is progressing. Justin's Tree Service has removed the larger ash trees that had EAB damage. DPW has started the smaller removals and deadwood pruning. DPW will also grind and remove stumps. Multiple ash trees with no substantial dieback will be injected for EAB. The walking path reconstruction should be done by late spring/summer of 2021. Planting with sub-committee recommendations will take place in fall 2021.

--Sapudar has applied for a 40K grant from Fish and Wildlife Management to supplement funding on the Elm Road path; he is awaiting results.

--The Ash injection contract will be sent out in March. Sapudar asked the STC for any recommendations for injections. At present, the volume of trees to be injected is in Harrison Street Park and on Vandeventer Ave.

--Public Works and the Health Department offices have switched places while both remain in Monument Hall.

--The Davey Tree Inventory specs pertaining to Princeton are written and will be posted in April for bidding. Specs include surveying twenty thousand trees and their current conditions. Radbil noted that the survey has additional features that allow incorporation into a master plan and iTree.

--Witherspoon Street is being redesigned. A subcommittee will need to form to review the green infrastructure proposals when they are ready.

--Stern brought the STC up to date on the property on Knoll and Lake Drive where a corner house on a wooded lot is problematic. There are dozens of trees, including many huge, three-trunked specimens, and every tree has a ribbon around it signaling potential cutting. Sapudar has seen no applications and has no knowledge of what is happening. Some of the trees are in the municipal right-of-way. He will visit the property and leave a door note, and will also let the STC know if he hears from the Engineering Dept. of any building plans. Krauss asked if the STC can see what the trees look like.

--Stern questioned what the ribbon markings on trees mean, and Sapudar indicated that they could signal many issues, including surveying. Stern noted Princeton's big push toward sustainability and improving storm water management, and that part of our job should be to monitor and recommend other alternatives to removing such enormous trees, with storm water, CO2 sequestration, wildlife habitat, and other environmental protections in mind.

## **2. Council Liaison Report--No report.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. Planning Board Review: Landmark at Princeton, Snowden Lane: Block 4502, Lot 5 Preliminary/Final Major Subdivision and Site Plan**

Krauss noted the plan is well done, but there is no notation of how many trees are coming down, the condition of the trees, or where any replacement number is coming from.

Krauss cited the ordinance related to trees. The plan has been in the works since 2008

and has yet to be approved. The Princeton Environmental Commission is not in favor of the plan. This is a wetlands area with additional problems that have not been addressed. Stern asked why the area has been clear-cut before getting approval. Chen noted that she thought the plot might be under a forestry management plan that could allow for the cutting of some of the trees. Krauss will follow up to see if the lot is under the Farmland Assessment program, which would allow for cutting some of the trees.

## **2. Sustainable Princeton's Sustainable Landscaping Expo, Saturday, April 24 (Ainsworth)**

Ainsworth reviewed the materials and invitation to attend this event and asked if we were interested. We would need to set up a table and provide materials to hand out. Krauss indicated that she felt we were stewards of the environment and should be involved in this event in that regard.

Chen wondered if this would be an opportunity to distribute tree seedlings. The free seedlings are gone, but we could purchase the seedlings. Chen noted that there were a number of native seedlings that were available for distribution through other sources. Chen asked if the town could purchase these trees. Sapudar indicated that he could submit the order, pick up the seedlings, and drop them at Ainsworth's home.

Krauss, Chen, and Stern volunteered to work at the event. Krauss suggested that we should have posters of areas where we have planted trees and made a difference. Stern, Chen, and Krauss will be the main participants. Sapudar has the materials that are usually handed out at public events. Fifty seedlings will be ordered.

(Devoe joined the meeting.)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Commemorative Tree Program (Radbil)**

Radbil indicated that she hoped everyone had reviewed the documents and steps to be followed to get the trees ordered. Ainsworth stated that she hoped we have options for planting other than in public parks; we might also consider other public places. Radbil agreed that we can add to parks other public places for planting options. Ainsworth then suggested that donors either be able to make a donation to the Princeton Shade Tree Trust Reserve (PSTTR) or plant a tree for the \$500.00 amount. For a lesser amount one could still get the tax deduction. Items yet to be addressed include who will process the request and who will send a thank you letter to the donor. Janice Most would be the logical person to administer the clerical portion of the donation and implementation.

Radbil will draft a sample thank you letter based on municipal example provided by Lambros Sapudar will provide the tree species selection to be inserted into the document. Radbil suggested that we could list the donations on the website or publish a list at the end of the year.

**Motion** by Krauss and seconded to accept the Procedure to Donate a Commemorative Tree, the application, and other changes as discussed and amended.

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

**Motion carried.**

## **2. ISPs for STC Member Email Addresses (Devoe)**

Devoe explained the process, which would cost about \$130.00 a year for a modest number of emails per year per person on a hosting service. Other alternatives were mentioned. Several names were suggested, including PrincetonShadeTree.org. All will be sent out for review. Payment would be through the DPW budget. Ainsworth will follow up with the town to determine the procedure.

## **3. Environmental Justice (EJ) and the Urban Forest in Princeton (Radbil/Stern)**

Stern reminded all that we were to think about first steps in EJ. Chen, who initially questioned whether there was a need for a particular EJ, introduced the idea of contracting with the NJ Tree Foundation, whose base mission is to plant trees in underserved neighborhoods. The Foundation has a Green Streets program in which they are hired to carry out tree planting projects, employing persons who are in re-entry programs. Hiring these workers not only results in trees being planted but also helps to employ those who are underserved and, more generally, supports a non-profit that plants trees in the State's most disadvantaged neighborhood. The Foundation, in cooperation with PSE&G, also conducts Right Tree/Right Place workshops throughout the State. Chen will send information to STC members on this organization.

Radbil referenced tree planting at Princeton Community Village. In addition, Griggs Farm has to take down 50 ash trees and needs to replant. Radbil then reviewed the composition of Griggs Farm residents, which is a mixed-income community. Working with this community would address issues of EJ. Both projects could serve as educational and publicity pilot projects of the STC.

Stern stated that STC will be doing a landscape walk-around at Princeton Community Village after the construction project is approved by the Planning Board.

Radbil asked if STC thought these projects were appropriate for the PSTTR. Radbil then asked what we use the fund for. Radbil read the guidelines for the fund, which, she noted, were both broad and narrow. Sapudar noted that the Griggs Farm project was already funded but said that there are also other streets, like Juniper Row, in PCV, across from the skate park, which could use plantings.

Krauss asked whether, since we have never done anything like this before, the Tree Foundation that Chen brought up is the best group to do this. Stern asked if the group brings the trees as well as plants them. Chen explained that we would have to ask the Foundation what range of services they offer and talked about the benefits of working with this group. Krauss suggested going to Juniper Row and then contacting the Tree Foundation. In addition, the residents of the area need to be included in any discussion of plantings. Radbil indicated that, following a meeting with residents and a tour of the area, the STC should revisit funding options.

## **4. STC Statutory Authority (Airgood/Chen)**

Ainsworth suggested that Chen put this information into a document for consideration next month. Chen asked that all look at the document that will be sent.

**OTHER**

--Ainsworth asked if the STC was open to doing the holiday tree project again next year. There was little opposition. This year's trees will be planted soon, according to Sapudar.

--Ainsworth asked Radbil to put her notes from Core Training into a document to be shared in April.

--Radbil noted that the plaque for Bernie Miller is completed and awaiting pickup. Lambros will make arrangements for the plaque to be picked up and dedicated.

--Stern asked if the STC were getting a new member. Ainsworth said that there are several candidates but no decision made to date. Members can make suggestions.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** to adjourn made by Krauss and seconded.

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

**Motion carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 pm.

**ADDENDUM: ACTION PLAN**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
Long-term Goals, Municipal Budget, and Tree of Heaven Removals	April STC meeting	Lambros
Language for Commemorative Tree Fund Application	April STC meeting	Radbil/Stern
Followup with Town for ISP for STC Members' Email Addresses	April STC meeting	Ainsworth
Tree City Webinar Review	April STC meeting	Radbil
STC Statutory Authority	April STC Meeting	Chen/Airgood
Zoom Use by Sub-Committees	April STC Meeting	Ainsworth
Making Contact with Green Streets	April STC meeting	Chen
Environmental Justice, Minority Involvement, and PCV Project	April STC meeting	Radbil/ Stern
Johnson Park Walking Path Project	Ongoing	Sapudar/Ainsworth/ Krauss/Airgood

Comments/edits on TPZ Doc. for Website	April STC Meeting	Airgood/Sapudar/Stern
Items/Content to Be Reviewed for Addition to or Removal from Website	Ongoing	Sapudar/Radbil/ Frawley