

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of June 22, 2021
Virtual Meeting, Zoom Conference**

Members

Voting:

Sharon Ainsworth
Victoria Airgood
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 6/22/21/at 5:02 pm by Ainsworth.

Opening Statement: Read by Ainsworth.

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

Public Comment: None.

Minutes: The minutes of the May 25, 2021, meeting were approved with corrections by a motion made by Krauss and seconded.

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

Motion carried.

REPORTS

1. Arborist Report

- There will be a fall planting contract. Sapudar asked members of the STC if they had any preferred locations. Planting will occur on Spruce and Linden, the Johnson Park Trail, and miscellaneous locations throughout the town.
- The ash injection contract was completed by Wells Tree Service on 6/10/21.
- The English ivy document has been posted with some substitute pictures used.
- Sapudar has reached out to the state regarding the CSIP contract, with a meeting scheduled for July 14 to inspect the CSIP trees.
- Cicada damage is starting to appear. After the cicadas have died off, the tree crew will be pruning all newly planted ROW trees to remove the damage. Residents are advised to do the same.
 - To encourage plantings on private property, a “Tree of the Month” will be featured on the website. The webmaster will post the tree on the municipal website and have it cycled on the home page. The TOTM for July is a swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*). If an STC member is interested in helping with this project in a particular month, please contact Sapudar.
- SLF nymphs are out and are a nuisance.
- The Commemorative Tree document has been finalized by the administration and will be posted on the website after the STC has approved the document. Sapudar will deal with the plaque vendor, not residents. He’ll look for a bedifferentplaque vendor. Stern reiterated that one of the donors should work her way through the documents to determine if the process is clear and works well.
- Sapudar alerted Chen to his meeting with the municipal CFO to discuss submitting a grant application related to inventory assistance.
- The Witherspoon St. project includes the possible planting of medium shade trees that can tolerate urban conditions. Trees suggested include the fruitless sweetgum taxodium and fruitless honey locust among others, in addition to understory vegetation. Sapudar suggested that a subcommittee might be formed to review recommendations. Ainsworth asked when the trees would be planted. Airgood asked who is involved in designing the infrastructure. Sapudar will send plans of what is proposed.
- Ainsworth asked about the status of Nassau Street. Sapudar will get back to the STC on what is happening.
- Radbil asked how the injected ash trees fared. Sapudar said that the ones that were injected were injected again. Some in the Harrison Street Park did not go as well as hoped. Some decline is noted. Ash trees on Vandeventer are looking good, with most having taken the injections well.

(Devoe arrived at 5:17 pm.)

2. Council Liaison Report: None.

NEW BUSINESS

Radbil noted that municipal trees planted this spring appear to have had too much mulch piled up the trunk of the trees.

OLD BUSINESS

1. STC Statutory Authority (Airgood/Chen)

Chen noted the items that needed to be discussed. Chen and Airgood are not seeking new powers but are clarifying what is in state law and municipal ordinance.

--STC has policy making responsibility. The Sidewalks Subcommittee met and examined statutes and found that the authority related to sidewalks can be found in state law. The subcommittee met and reviewed aspects of this authority. An email was sent to Lambros inquiring about the next step. How should the STC proceed? Lambros wrote back that she would try to get something together prior to this meeting. Ainsworth suggested that the town is reaching out to Sapudar. Sapudar said the contractor on Mountain Avenue. was reprimanded for his work that impacted trees. Ainsworth asked if there was anything we should do as an STC when there are projects that would impact street trees. Airgood suggested that those projects that impact trees should go through a review that includes STC review of the impact. Routine practice should include the STC. These questions should be reviewed in the development phase of any construction. Chen cited the law, which is saying that the STC should consider the project and be included in the process. Krauss asked if there had been a plan for Mountain Avenue. Chen said what we are asking is to be involved in the construction plans for the future. Valid points need to be addressed.

--Further concerns were identified and clarified by Airgood and Chen.

--Chen summarized the changes to the proposed wording in the initial document for final review.

Motion: Proposal to adopt as amended made by Airgood.

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

Motion carried.

2. ISPs for STC Member Email Addresses (Devoe)

--The municipality should determine email addresses for commission members. This does not have to be as a group; each member can set up his or her own account.

--Radbil indicated that the professional approach is for the municipality to provide email accounts for professional work.

--Devoe stated that he would pursue the possibility of setting up these accounts.

--Devoe and Radbil will follow up.

3. Donation Funds (Radbil/Stern/Sapudar)

There are 3 documents, and a donor should be engaged to follow this process to see if the process works. Radbil noted that the person who is donating the grove of trees is looking at a long-range donation. How to publicize the tree planting in the fall was briefly discussed.

4. Engineering Department Discussion/Possible Ramifications of STC Municipal Trees (Airgood/Chen/Krauss). Blended with item #1, above.

5. Johnson Park Walking Path Project (Ainsworth/Airgood/Krauss/Sapудар)

The path was walked today. The understory growth has exploded with the removal of the ash trees, but there are places to do planting. The terrain is tough, but there are pockets of space. The areas that can be planted can use flowering small trees such as viburnum. Sapудар will make a plant list to send to the subcommittee for review.

OTHER

1. Stern raised the topic of developers and owners not “noticing the contiguous neighbors” with a copy of their tree removal application before the application is submitted to the DPW. She spelled out the rules of noticing, referencing the part of the ordinance dealing with notification. She said that as long ago as 2014, she has been proposing new wording for the tree removal application that would be consistent with the ordinance and draw more attention to the requirements of noticing. Sapудар asked her to send him a copy of that proposed wording.

Motion: Made by Stern and seconded that a letter be written to local newspapers delineating the notification process.

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

Motion carried.

Stern will write the letter which will then be reviewed by Airgood and forwarded to the STC members for final review.

2. Ainsworth suggested canceling the July meeting. Discussion followed; it was decided not to cancel the meeting. There is no meeting scheduled for August. It was decided not to cancel the meeting due to assignment that needed to be completed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Airgood and seconded.

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

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm.

ADDENDUM: ACTION PLAN

ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
Followup for ISPs for STC members' Email Addresses	July STC Meeting	Devoe/Radbil

STC's Statutory Authority	July STC Meeting	Airgood/Chen
Johnson Park Walking Path Project and Plant List for Review	Ongoing	Sapudar/Ainsworth/Krauss/Airgood
Noticing Letter to Local Newspapers	July STC meeting	Stern/Airgood
Commemorative Tree and donation forms and procedures	ongoing	Sapudar
STC to Review Plans of What Is Proposed for Witherspoon St. Redesign	July STC meeting	Sapudar
Nassau St. Replanting Update	July STC meeting	Sapudar
Input from Municipality on STC Sidewalk Powers	July STC meeting	Ainsworth