

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission  
Minutes of October 26, 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

**Town Arborist:**

Taylor Sapudar

**Council Representative**

Michelle Lambros

**Guests:** B. Hvozdovic, M.Martini, D.Stockton

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order on 10/26/21 at 5:05 pm by Ainsworth.

**OPENING STATEMENT:** Read by Ainsworth.

**ROLL CALL**

Radbil, Stern, Devoe, Krauss, Frawley, Chen, Airgood, Ainsworth.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 28, 2021 meeting were approved with correction by a motion made by Radbil and seconded.

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

**Motion carried.**

**REPORTS:**

**1. Arborist Report**

-The fall planting contract was awarded to Sunset Creations and included the planting of 72 trees with planting finished on 10/2/21.

-The town has purchased a resistograph that measures the amount of dead wood or decay exists in the interior of a tree. . Sapudar is excited about being able to use this tool to resolve tree discussions.

-Sapudar is meeting with Princeton U :D Levi exploring the idea of offering- more shared services on environmental issues

-TOTM is continuing to get good press and positive feedback from residents. The November tree will feature the Sweetgum with narrative by Frawley. Chenn has

volunteered for January which will highlight the river birch. December TOTM will likely be a native evergreen.

-Witherspoon Streetscape is still in the design process with removal of the BCP trees of issue. Sspudar is in favor of removing them before construction starts. Some of the BCP tree have included bark with trees at risk for disintegration. Sapudar is in favor of a diverse streetscape having seen too many examples of an allee of trees being planted only to need removal at a later date;

-At the NJ Shade Tree Conference, SLF was discussed.. If treatment on the municipal side is needed, we have licensing to handle the issue with varied chemicals discussed.

-A grove of trees was planted in Harrison St Park . The donor worked with Radbil to secure the site and plan which included 4 sweetgums, 3 yellowwoods, 2 dogwoods and provision of a retaining wall.. There will be a plaque installed at a future date. Stern asked if we could have a recognition when the plaque is installed. At the end of the year, all donors would be recognized. Lambros suggested we do both to encourage other donations

Radbil offered to get in touch with the donor to arrange some publicity. .

-Airgood asked about a tree on Jefferson Road tree that needs to come down. Sapudar will investigate and see if a letter needs to be written to the homeowner.

-Chen asked if the guidelines for CFMP have been issued. Sapudar did not have a chance to attend that portion of the conference but will investigate.

-The Open Space manager will begin working the first week of November/

## **2. Council Liaison Report**

-The meeting link should be on the website and will be investigated by Lambros for clarity.:

- Lambros thanked Sapudar for overseeing the rain garden at the EMT site which looks quite nice.

-Lambros mentioned the BCP trees and public outcry if all the trees come down at one time. The alternative is to take some down. Stockton indicated that the plan is to have 22 ft wide roadway reducing the area for vehicles and widening the sidewalks. The plan includes moving the curbs out 14 ft from the buildings with one of the goals to mitigate storm water impact on Harry's Brook Other options include installing porous pavers on the sidewalk area and building a new soil section to help detain the water. It would be a challenge to maximize porous pavement while protecting trees . The concern is that we cannot work around existing tree roots to provide storm water management that needs to be undertaken. The benefits of saving the trees hurts the chances of ensuring storm water management for Harry's Brook.. Ainsworth cited the fact sheet prepared by Chen which indicated that the trees were at the end of their life cycle.. Radbil indicated that the trees were not all planted at the same time followed by instating that the plan could be explained from a more mitigating perspective. A public campaign that presented information as provided by Stockton would be helpful. Airgood suggested that the public could have information about what would be planted, and the soil structure under consideration.

- Stern and Airgood had a list of topics to be addressed for Town Topics. The articles could include input about storm water and the need to address the tree issues. In

addition it is important to address a vision about the awareness of the decline of the tree population and lack of biodiversity. \-

-Radbil will work with the Town Topics writer .

-Sapudar has a list of proposed trees and approved cultivars for urban business district trees.

## **DISCUSSION WITH BERNIE HVOZDOVIC, ADMINISTRATOR**

Hvozdovic shared background information and his prior experience.

### **1. Shade Tree Ordinance Awareness and Enforcement-(Ainsworth/Airgood/Chen)**

Based on his experience in South Brunswick, Hvozdovic is familiar with the workings of the STC. Ainsworth sketched a brief history of the establishment of the STC from the statutory authority perspective. The 2021 BCC Handbook was reviewed and compared with the State Statues. The sidewalk statutory authority and planting plans relative to building plans were reviewed.. Even without planning concerns, there is still STC authority involved. Hvozdovic asked if the handbook accurately tracks what the code says . If yes, then the changes are what the STC needs to be done.

-The special powers listed for the STC were incomplete in the handbook according to Airgood. An accurate statement should be outlined.. Following a review, a list was prepared . Airgood added that the language and changes are within what the municipal ordinance says.

She then summarized what the changes are and indicated that Council would need to approve the changes. The powers should be correctly stated. Hvozdovic will update the handbook.-

-Ainsworth asked if Lambros wanted to add anything. Stern asked about the sidewalk issue. Hvozdovic says if it is not in the code, then council would need to approve additions. Chen indicated that the sidewalk authority is part of state law. Ainsworth asked Chen to share the statement of authority. 40:64-10 , and read the section of the law that was pertinent to the discussion. Airgood added that this involvement is not inconsistent with the existing ordinance and, historically, involvement has existed but has fallen away due to personnel changes and unification.

-Airgood asked Radbil to share a recent experience on Jefferson Road where a sidewalk was being put in with obvious damage to an existing tree. Any future sidewalk activity should include prior analysis of potential damage to trees involved in sidewalk construction. ----Stockton was asked to outline the an educational process to be put in place for any further construction.

- Chen indicated that there is a need for a process to be put in place for sidewalk construction in the future.-Radbil hoped there is a record keeping system to protect the homeowner whose trees have been damaged. Sapudar acknowledged the difficulties involved in sidewalk construction and agreed that contractors need more education in terms of protecting trees.

### **2. STC's Statutory Authority on Sidewalks-(Airgood/Chen) discussed above**

### **3. ISP's for STC member Email Addresses-(Devoe)**

Devoe reviewed the ISP's for STC members and indicated that he would like to work with Hvozdovic to obtain ISP's . Hvozdovic responded with concern from the town's perspective. Devoe clarified and questioned the concerns expressed. The town is not looking to expand the number of people who have official email. Devoe asked if the town could assist in establishing a separate gmail account for STC members. Hvozdovic indicated that he would check to see what options were available. Radbil stated that part of the email question was to make the use of email more professional. -Stern cited the concern that developers have to notice neighbors' with noticing not being undertaken . Hvozdovic was thanked for his input.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. STC Partnership with Princeton University Best Practices Program-(Ainsworth)**
- 2. Nassau Street Holiday Tree Project-(Lambros)**

Lambros said there was a lot of enthusiasm for the project and hopes that we can do this again. Airgood asked what the cost was for the event. Sapudar said the cost was just over three thousand dollars. Frawley asked how the trees were doing now. Seven trees recently died due to storm damage.

### **OLD BUSINESS**volunteers.

- 1. Nassau Street Replanting Update-(Sapudar)**
- 2. Witherspoons Street Landscape Update-(Sapudar)**
- 3. Witherspoon Street Redesign/Bradford Callery Pear Tree Removal-(Lambros)**  
discussed above
- 4. Fall Fest Update(October 16,2021;11:00-3:00)-(Krauss/Stern)**

Stern reported that many residents visited the STC display with no volunteers coming forth.

### **OTHER**

-Chen presented a mailing from Sustainable Princeton.

We may want to commend the work they are doing which is very beneficial to trees in Princeton. Ainsworth offered to send an email to Sustainable Princeton to commend their efforts.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

**ADDENDUM: ACTION PLAN**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
Follow-up for ISPs for STC members' Email Addresses	November STC Meeting	Devoe/Radbil
STC's Statutory Authority on Sidewalks	November STC Meeting	Airgood/Chen/Lambros
Johnson Park Walking Path Project and Planting List for Review/spring weeding	Ongoing	Sapudar/Ainsworth/Krauss/Airgood
STC Review of Proposed Plans for Witherspoon St. Redesign (with particular focus on the Bradford/ Callery Pear tree removal)	November STC meeting	Lambros and STC
Bullet List of Topics Related to Tree Ordinance Enforcement by Municipal Departments and Boards	ongoing	Airgood (for Discussion with Mayor and Town Administrator)
Nassau Hoiday Tree Project Discussion	October STC meeting	STC and Laambros

Noticing letter to news outlets	ongoing	STC
Website link consistency	November STC meeting	Sapudar/Ainsworth
EJ plantings	Nov-Feb	Spudar/Radbil/Stern
Best Practices with Princeton U	November STC	Ainswortj
Urban tolerant trees spreadsheet	November STC meeting	Sapudar
Nassau St. Replanting Update	November STC meeting	Sapudar
Input from Municipality on STC Sidewalk Powers	November STC meeting	Ainsworth/Lambros