

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission  
Minutes of March 22, 2022  
Virtual Meeting/Zoom Conference**

**Members**

**Voting:**

Sharon Ainsworth  
Victoria Airgood  
Raymond Devoe  
Patricia Frawley  
Lily Krauss  
Alexandra Radbil  
Janet Stern

**Non-Voting:**

Sandra Chen: 1st Alternate  
Radhika Pola: 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate

**Council Liaison:**

Mayor Mark Freda

**Town Arborist:**

Taylor Sapudar

**Guests:** E.Mosner, C.Taylor

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order on 3/22/22 at 5:00 pm by Ainsworth.

**OPENING STATEMENT:** Read by Ainsworth.

**ROLL CALL:** Radbil, Stern, Devoe, Krauss, Frawley, Ainsworth. Sapudar, Freda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** E.Mosner, who had spoken at the February PSTC meeting, is seeking advice on how to encourage wildlife in her setting when building is completed. Ainsworth sought input from Freda and Sapudar. Freda suggested asking about a landscape plan. Sapudar offered to follow up with resources and additional information that would be suitable.

Radbil suggested Friends of Princeton Open Space as a resource.

-Chen and C. Taylor joined the meeting. Taylor indicated that she would work with Sapudar on suggestions for Mosner.

**MINUTES:** The minutes of the February 22, 2022 meeting were approved by a motion made by Devoe and seconded.

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

**Motion carried.**

## **REPORTS**

### **1. Arborist**

Sapudar noted that BCP removal started last Friday and will be completed at the end of the week..

-NJ Tree Recovery Seedlings have been ordered and will be distributed at Porchfest this year which will take place on Saturday, April 23, 2022 from 12-6. Sapudar offered to assist the PSTC in any way needed. He could supply FAQs, Construction Dripline documents, Tree Facts, EAB kit and a tent if needed.

-Arbor Day presentations have been scheduled. The first Arbor Day presentation will be April 8th at Littlebrook School followed by Johnson Park on April 29<sup>th</sup>; Riverside on April 27<sup>th</sup> and Community Park on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

-The Tree of the Month for March was the Redbud with information provided by Chen

-The Tree of the Month for April will be the Flowering Dogwood with information provided by Frawley.

-Bartlett Tree Experts donated a micronutrient feeding to the 3 oaks in the Mount Lucas Island in addition to their donated ash injections.

-The 1st Community Outreach Meeting was March 19<sup>th</sup>. The Public seemed engaged. The presentation was in conjunction with a Witherspoon Street redesign meeting.

-Marquand Park is currently under maintenance by VJ Landscaping who have been mulching and overseeing work.

-Spring Planting will be on the next Council agenda. New Dawn was the low bidder and will be awarded the contract.

-Tree City USA status was maintained with Sapudar in the process of applying for the Growth award.

-The NJ Urban and Community Forestry accomplishment report was submitted to the State of NJ.

-Infographic series will be discussed with Devoe and Frawley and undertaken soon.

**2. Council Report-(Mayor Freda)** will be integrated into other areas of discussion.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. Clarify Ordinance Applicability-(Freda/Ainsworth)**

Freda had sent an email addressing the ordinance in relation to Affordable Housing. Stern expressed concern about this process. Freda suggested that the PSTC might send a letter to Council Members relating concerns.

Airgood asked about ‘areas in need of redevelopment’ and questioned how this happens. Freda indicated that law cases have reshaped the initial idea to encourage development and a way around zoning. Ainsworth asked if there was any interest in sending a letter to Council. Airgood replied that this was a good idea and volunteered to work with Krauss and Stern on this task.

**2. Community Forestry Management Plan Renewal-(Chen)**

Chen reported that she had contacted Carrie Sargeant, head of the State’s Urban and Community Forestry Program, and that Carrie had confirmed that the State will be issuing new Guidelines for Plan development sometime this summer.

Chen recommended therefore that the STC postpone its development of a new plan until those Guidelines have been issued. This recommendation was accepted.

**3. Task Force on Stewardship of Public Forest Lands-(Chen)**

Chen explained that Senator Smith was establishing a Task Force on Stewardship of Public Forest Lands. Senator Smith wants to introduce a bill in early 2023 on such stewardship. He had found that past legislative efforts had been unsuccessful due to the conflicting view of various concerned parties. The purpose of the Task Force was to bring the table all interested parties. The Task Force would consider all issues and proposals and prepare a report, by the end of 2022, listing all areas of consensus and all areas where consensus could not be reached. Chen thanked STC Chair Ainsworth and Mayor Freda for supporting her participation as a Shade Tree Commission member and municipal representative in the Task Force. Chen asked for support in developing proposals for the Task Force.

- Ainsworth proposed the formation of a STC sub-committee. Krauss agreed to serve on the sub-committee. Taylor and Sapudar also agreed to participate. Chen offered to report monthly to the PSTC and bring issues to their attention.

**4. Sidewalk and Street tree Verge Standards Review-(Airgood/Krauss)**

Status of this work is that standards for sidewalk construction/reconstruction around/near street trees have been gathered from various sources and are being reviewed by Airgood and Krauss. The goal is to derive a short set of standards with references to academic or industry sources for support.

**5. Environmental Justice-(Radbil/Sapudar/Stern)**

On Saturday, March 19, Sapudar, Stern, Radbil and Pola, attended a meeting of the WJNA, organized, in part, to present information to local residents about Princeton's urban forest and the steps that are taken to ensure its care and

enhancement. Sapudar guided the audience through an effective and wide-ranging power point presentation on subjects ranging from PSE&G pruning to Princeton's related ordinances and the necessity of planting the "right tree in the right place."

Stern and Radbil handed out to each attendee a mulch volcano doorhanger and a laminated set of FAQs about Princeton's trees. Originally prompted by an EJ subcommittee survey to determine which Princeton neighborhoods could benefit from more trees in their municipal rights-of-way, we all stressed at the meeting that residents of the W-J neighborhood could request municipal trees in the spring and fall plantings, and that it was up to the residents to decide, in conjunction with STC and arborist advice, if needed, where in the neighborhood they would like to see more trees. The meeting was a big success but also a first step; it might also be regarded as a pilot program for initiating such meetings in other neighborhoods.

-The main focus was on Witherspoon St and the details of the redesign. Stockton was receptive to WJ residents.

Freda agreed that the presentation was well done and well received

## **6. Members at Large Proposal-(Radbil)**

Radbil proposed that the STC consider creating a category of volunteer to be called Member-at-large (MAL) that could carry out STC-approved activities that fit within the Goals and Objectives outlined in the CFMP but are not tied to municipal responsibilities. MALs could be either "retired" STC members or volunteers from the community (a way of tapping interested individuals). MAL efforts could be overseen either by an existing STC member, or a MAL reporting back to the STC. If MAL were an official designation, approval of Council and an Ordinance would be required.

-Objectives and municipal tree planting/maintenance priorities

– Resident resource - provide residents with tree-related information specific to their private property trees: tree id, best practices, planting suggestions.

– Advocacy group – create a group such as Friends of Princeton Trees that could stand alone or operate under the umbrella of another group with similar goals such as Sustainable Princeton (would provide non-profit status that would encourage donations).

Following Radbil's presentation, Airgood asked how this would work in relation to PSTC. Freda indicated that if there was an amendment to the ordinance, it would be given to the town attorney. He stated that there may be difficulty in using another group nonprofit organization to raise money for PSTC. Airgood asked if it was possible to get some examples of how this would work. Radbil gave one example and indicated that she would provide more. Airgood also asked for more examples of activities that could be undertaken by MALs:

– Tree Watch – conduct neighborhood surveys to identify potential planting sites, trees needing maintenance or attention, encouraging neighbors to take care of ROW trees in front of their homes

– Funding - research grant opportunities, write grants for projects aligned with STC Goals and there was a reference to how this related to PSTC. Stern asked if we are looking at one m at l who would do stuff or would that person be experienced.

**7.Seedling Distribution/Porchfest-(Ainsworth)**

The STC received a permit to use Hinds Plaza on Saturday, April 23 (noon-6pm) to distribute tree seedlings and provide related information. This initiative will coincide with, but not be part of the town’s new Porchfest event. Due to its status, Ainsworth recommends a separate publicity effort to promote the STC event. Ainsworth has requested an amendment to the permit to allow Master Gardeners of Mercer County to assist the STC. Posters featuring the new tree selections for Witherspoon Street are being developed.

-Sapudar will deliver the tree seedlings to Ainsworth on April 20; STC volunteers will be needed for the individualized wrappings prior to the event as well as for the public event on April 23.

.Ainsworth responded to questions raised by Stern, Krauss, Devoe and Chen regarding the distribution process.

**7. STC Minutes Process-(Ainsworth)**

To expedite and improve the efficiency of monthly STC meeting minutes, Frawley and Ainsworth propose a new protocol. For each monthly agenda item, the STC member (or designee for the relevant subcommittee) will provide Frawley with a brief (3-5 sentence) summary of the topic. The member summary can be submitted to Frawley either prior to or within two days after the meeting. Official motions, actions taken, or relevant member comments made during the meeting will be added by Frawley.

**OTHER**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Devoe and seconded**

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

**Motion Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm.**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
STC Review of Plans for Witherspoon St Project	Ongoing	Sapudar and subcommittee
Prepare for CFMP renewal	September 2022	Airgood/Chen
Johnson Park Walking Path	Ongoing	Sapudar/Ainsworth/Airgood/Krauss

Email addresses for PSTC members	Ongoing	Devoe
Member at large proposal	April STC meeting	Radbil
Articles for newspaper	Ongoing	Stern/Airgood/Krauss
EJ plantings	Ongoing	Sapudar//Stern/Radbil
Nassau St replanting update	Ongoing	Sapudar