

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of April 26, 2022
Virtual Meeting/Zoom Conference**

Voting:

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

Non-Voting:

Sandra Chen: 1st Alternate
Radhika Pola: 2nd Alternate

Council Liaison:

Mayor Mark Freda

Town Arborist:

Taylor Sapudar

Guests: E.Mosner

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order on 4/26/2022 at 5:00 pm by Ainsworth.

OPENING STATEMENT Read by Ainsworth.

ROLL CALL Radbil, Stern, Frawley, Chen, Ainsworth, Pola, Krauss, Sapudar.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

MINUTES: The minutes of the March 22,2022, meeting were approved with correction by a motion made by Radbil and seconded.

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

(Devoe joined the meeting at 5:06)

REPORTS:

1.Arborist

-NJ Tree Recovery Seedlings appear to be a success with saplings distributing to 3 elementary schools in conjunction with Arbor Day presentations.

-Tree of the month for April is the Flowering Dogwood by Frawley

-Chen is providing information on sweet bay magnolia for May Tree of the Month.

-Marquand Park is being maintained by VJ Landscaping who are doing a great job of mulching and maintaining the park.

-Spring planting will be starting next week.

- Received a letter of support from Sustainable Princeton in reference to the Inventory grant with additional support letter needed from PSTC,
- Enforcement Officer has started work with focus on the noise ordinance and tree protection ordinance.
- Princeton Environmental Commission purchased a commemorative plaque in memory of a municipal employee. The municipality will purchase the tree to be planted by an in-house crew.
- Chen commented on seedling distribution asking if it were possible to obtain smaller trees which seem to the preference.
- Stern commented on the upcoming fall planting and the need to work with related groups to identify needs.
- Pola offered to attend the tree distribution and also asked whether individuals could plant the trees. Trees are distributed through five sections of town where needed. Pola asked whether STC members could watch the process of tree planting. Sapudar noted that it was difficult for residents to time participation in tree planting.

NEW BUSINESS- none

OLD BUSINESS

1. Clarify Ordinance Applicability Letter to Council-(Airgood/Krauss/Stern)

Postponed to May

2. Task Force on Stewardship of Public Forest Lands-(Ainsworth/Chen/Krauss/Sapudar)

Chen said that the first meeting of Senator Smith's Task Force would be on Thursday, April 28. To prepare for this meeting the sub-committee had met on April 13. The sub-committee agreed that municipal forests are impacted by deer and invasive species and are in need of restoration, carried out with the effects of climate change in mind. However, restoration costs money. What could be the funding source? Public forest managers are encouraged to have stewardship plans, but some needs are obvious (invasive species) even without a plan. Funding for restoration and management is needed annually. NJDEP are sporadic, every three years. Could funding for municipal forest management be obtained from climate change funding? There are not enough qualified, certified consultants for it to be feasible to require that only they can prepare or oversee the implementation of local government plans. A multi-faceted Rutgers cooperative extension program in sustainable/ecological forestry (comparable to Rutgers' Water Resource Program for groundwater management) could help elevate forestry practice state-wide. In any case, municipalities will need incentives to encourage municipalities to seek stewardship grants (Use carrot, not stick.) Chen said these were the thoughts she would have in

mind going into the Task Force meeting and that she would report next month as to what transpires at the Task Force meeting.

3. Member at Large Proposal-(Radbil)

Radbil described 4 projects carried out by municipalities similar in size to Princeton, that might be suitable for Princeton STC to undertake. In the examples, the STC worked with local volunteers, local businesses or a combination of to accomplish certain goals: treated ash trees for EAB, under supervision; conducted a Sick Tree Day to diagnose residents' trees; developed outreach activities such as trails, materials, etc. related to local trees; planted bare root trees to save money, start trees in difficult spots, meet targets for number of trees planted. Additional details were provided in the handout included in the agenda package. In addition, Radbil described a project that STC member Radhika Pola brought to STC attention of the possibility of "saving" mature trees slated for removal by moving them to a new location.

Radbil then provided an example of how a smaller organization can be "adopted" by a larger nonprofit to provide nonprofit status. Comments following her presentation included questions by Stern regarding specific structures for programs mentioned in addition to Sapudar's question related to the Tree Tender program. Chen suggested that we could use the structures that are in place such as Sustainable Princeton. Chen then noted that we could get more support if we had a concrete project. Stern cited the Annual Breakfast that was held to honor volunteers and could be used to encourage other volunteers.

4. Seedling Distribution/Porchfest Update-(Ainsworth)

The Hinds Plaza distribution of tree seedlings and gardening advice was held on April 23 concurrent with Porchfest. Over 500 tree seedlings (6 species) were given away that had been wrapped by STC and public volunteers. Another 100 red oak seedlings were wrapped and distributed onsite that were left over from another organization's event. The Master Gardeners of Mercer County provided the tent, table, and volunteers.

It was agreed that the event was highly successful and that partnering with the Master Gardeners was helpful. Devoe suggested that next year we ask seedling recipients to share their experience and success with the seedlings including photos. It was agreed we would seek to implement the concept with volunteer participants next year.

Devoe suggested that we give out fewer small trees to individuals. Sapudar asked if there was any way to monitor results. In the past we have had people volunteer information about the success of their plantings. Ainsworth said we get reports anecdotally. Sapudar suggested maybe a one or two year follow up. Devoe suggested that we might do this on Facebook on an informal basis

Krauss asked if there were any more trees left. Stern asked if we could have a Sick Tree Day for many people stopped her to talk about their tree issues. Ainsworth asked if there were any concerns about working with Master Gardeners. Consensus was that the help was welcome and useful.

OTHER

1. Terhune/Harrison

Radbil and Stern reported that they were alerted to the upcoming special meeting of the Planning Board on May 3. The meeting is to discuss the development of the Terhune-Harrison site, about which the STC wrote a detailed report emphasizing the proposed destructive removal of over 375 trees and proposed replacement with many fewer (and many non-native) trees than required by the ordinance. They urged all members to attend the Zoom session and for Ainsworth, as chair, to take the lead in coordinating how the STC will respond at the meeting. Radbil discussed what she had learned about when to ask questions and when to make comments at the PB meeting. Krauss, who, along with Ainsworth, drafted the original STC review of the plans, which was revised and approved by the STC, will organize mini-Zoom meetings with those who plan to attend the PB meeting to determine who will speak about which aspects of the current design that entail the removal of trees.

Stern spoke about the need for PSTC members to be present at the Planning Board meeting. Krauss reminded members of the number of trees that were to be removed with replacement scheduled with fewer, nonnative specimens. Radbil and others talked about the tree water retention analysis. Krauss noted the ways to measure the benefits of trees in terms of storm water management. Radbil outlined the Planning Board meeting process. Chen mentioned the three-minute limit for public comment. Krauss brought up the idea of enlarged planting pits which Sapudar supported and urged everyone to inspect the documents provided to date.

2. Grant for inventory

At Ainsworth's suggestion, Chen informed members that NJDEP had sent out advance notice of its intent to award \$15 million Towards Blue Carbon & Forestry Projects. She suggested that the Shade Tree Commission may want to consider whether to recommend that Princeton apply for these monies. A factor to consider is that the minimum grant size would be \$250,000, so any project undertaken would need to be on that scale. Chen suggested a regional project might be a possibility to look into. Chen agreed to re-send out the NJDEP notice to members.

Airgood entered the meeting at 6:34 and commented that there are comments circulating about designating areas of town as “in need of redevelopment

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn made by Stern

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:41. p.m.

Addendum: Action Plan

ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY
STC Review of Plans for Witherspoon St Project	Ongoing	Sapudar and subcommittee
Letter to council clarifying ordinance	May PSTC meeting	Airgood/Krauss/Chen
Prepare for CFMP renewal	September 2022	Airgood/Chen
Johnson Park Walking Path	Ongoing	Sapudar/Ainsworth/Airgood/Krauss
Email addresses for PSTC members	Ongoing	Devoe
Sen. Smith sub committee	Ongoing updates	Chen
Articles for newspaper	Ongoing	Stern/Airgood/Krauss
EJ plantings	Ongoing	Sapudar//Stern/Radbil
Nassau St replanting update	Ongoing	Sapudar