

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of April 28,2020
Monument Hall--East Conference Room
1 Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540**

Members

Voting:

Sharon Ainsworth
Victoria Airgood
Welmoet Bok van Kammen
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: Mark Freda

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order on 4/28/20 at 5:02 pm via Zoom by Ainsworth.

Opening Statement: Read by Ainsworth.

Roll Call: Bok van Kammen, Radbil, Lambros, Krauss. Sapudar, Devoe, Frawley, Airgood Chen, Ainsworth.

Public Comment: Mark Freda in attendance to hear what was happening on STC.

Minutes: The minutes of the February 25, 2020, meeting were approved as amended with attachments by a motion made by Devoe and seconded.

Ayes: Bok van Kammen, Radbil, Frawley, Airgood, Ainsworth.

Motion carried.

REPORTS

1. Arborist Report

Sapudar reviewed the spring plantings and ash contract which was approved by Council. The ash contract includes removing 25 trees in Fieldwood , 8 on Ridgeview Road and 8 in Quarry Park. The reforestation project in Mountain Lakes includes planting 50 2 gallon

native trees placed throughout a fenced in area and including Eastern red cedar, red maple, white oak, nyssa and Hackberry. Spring town wide contract included planting 4 trees in Grover Park, 3 in Caldwell Park, 2 in Harrison Street Park, block planting on John Street, planting 1 Nyssa- Black Gum adjacent to the play area at Marquand. The tree was a Commemorative Tree Donation by Ellen Koch. The town wide planting contract also included a landscape design installed at 14 Terhune in order to assist in screening the resident from the fuel station at the request of the mayor.

Radbil referred to the donation of the whips and asked who would determine the type. Sapudar has asked for native trees to be planted in a protected area in Mountain Lakes. Sapudar recommended Pinelands Nursery for native whips.

Bok van Kammen asked for a list of trees that had been planted so she can update the inventory. Airgood asked whether the western edge where many trees are down was part of the restoration project. Sapudar explained that there are two restoration projects with one that is fenced where the whips are being planted. The other fenced in area is awaiting a grant for work to be undertaken.

Sapudar then outlined a plan for Davey Tree to inventory the town trees beginning in the former borough and working out from there. (proposal attached).

Devoe referred to the Communiversity seedlings and wondered if there was anything that could be done but no decision has been made regarding their disposition. The state wants to distribute them but no decision has been reached.

Sapudar has reached out to the state for CSiP inspection. The contractor has replanted declining trees. If all trees survive after three years, the municipality will be reimbursed thirty thousand dollars. Also, according to the town attorney, tree donations are tax exempt. A potential donor is interested in donating a grove of trees in Harrison Street Park with a goal of fall planting.

2. Council Liaison Report

Lambros noted that Council has worked on communication to the community. Affordable Housing is an issue at present. Items moving forward are areas of progress which has been noted. Hopefully strengthening the TPZ will help to offset future tree loss.

OLD BUSINESS

1. TPZ Ordinance-(Ainsworth)

Ainsworth noted that STC is an advisory body to Council. The ordinance's Tree Protection Zone provisions have been researched and discussed by the STC for more than a year. The STC submitted its recommended ordinance changes to Council member Lambros in January. In early April Lambros shared a document developed by legal counsel with Ainsworth and requested comment. Ainsworth reviewed the sequence of items raised by counsel. First was the need for an industry standard for the executive officer's decision-making regarding exemptions to the use of the "drip line" to determine a TPZ. The second dealt with the legal constraint on the contractor and EO to enter a non-construction site to establish a TPZ. Ainsworth noted suggestions to add a "root zone" definition plus changes to Sec. 22.2s and Sec. 22-20 c and (2) and Sec. 10A-7 A (d) were offered and accepted to address these concerns. Members offered no added suggestions on these items.

The third issue related to an item not initially addressed by the STC; increasing the current \$400 tree replacement fee to \$550. Sapudar estimates \$500 is the current cost and that he and Jack West (Engineering) reviewed the proposed increase and feel it is a fair price. Ainsworth asked if there were any comments on the proposed fee increase. Bok van Kammen sought clarification about the price related to the tree replacement ratio. Airgood suggested that consideration be given to stronger measures. Lambros offered to investigate other towns' charge for replacement trees. Chen asked whether there has been consideration to differentiate between contractor removal and homeowner replacement. Ainsworth suggested a return to the issue at hand, that of raising the replacement fee. Ainsworth further noted that if the STC pursues a change in policy regarding the number of replacement trees in Schedule A, it will require considerable research and STC discussion and will substantially delay action on the proposed TPZ ordinance. Ainsworth again reminded members of the many months of work that has gone into the TPZ revision and the goal to protect trees on and adjacent to construction sites. Lambros agreed with Ainsworth that we did need to move forward with the ordinance.

Motion by Krauss and seconded to support the increase of the tree replacement fee to \$550.

Ayes: Krauss, Radbil, Bok van Kammen, Frawley, Ainsworth

Motion carried with notation that further study of the ordinance will be undertaken.

Airgood then referenced several sections in the ordinance sec. (22.20) and construction site maintenance (22.20c1) with several changes noted from the original draft to allow enforcement officer and contractor to have a plan approved by the enforcement officer that will protect the surrounding trees.

Enforcement consequences were also addressed to strengthen the compliance by the contractor related to strengthening the enforcement provision which Airgood indicated was in the original draft. Ainsworth suggested that this language be shared with Lambros who can share with legal counsel. Ainsworth suggested that Airgood make 'red line' comments to be shared with Lambros who will consult with legal counsel. Agreement was reached by voice vote.

2.Tree Inventory Contract Proposal (Sapudar)

Sapudar reviewed the Davey Tree proposal to inventory all town trees in the municipal right of way to be done within four to six weeks at a cost of approximately sixty-seven thousand dollars. Chen asked if Sapudar would be guiding Davey regarding the inventory process with Sapudar indicating that he would with inventory updates to be part of the process. Ainsworth asked if this would be undertaken quickly with an affirmative response. Bok van Kammen asked whether this would be a new inventory or access of the old inventory. Sapudar indicated this would be a new inventory with access to the old inventory. Bok van Kammen stated that this was a problem since there are errors in the old inventory. Sapudar indicated it would be a new inventory with access indicating location. Bok van Kammen stated the need for an entirely new inventory. Lambros noted that there was a need to be specific with justification for any expense. Radbil reinforced the idea that there should be a clear statement of what would be included in any inventory undertaken. Ainsworth asked Sapudar to clarify how this inventory would be of assistance with Sapudar indicating that he would forward the proposal to the STC and include updating. Ainsworth asked whether the current conditions allow for Davey to work quickly. Radbil stated that

that the inventory must require commitment of municipality to maintaining the integrity of the new inventory.

Meeting terminated due to electronic errors at 6: 28

3. Status of Commemorative Tree Planting Protocol and Shade Tree Trust Fund(Lambros/Radbil) not able to be addressed

OTHER

ADJOURNMENT see above

Addendum: Action Plan

Action	Due Date	Responsibility
Commemorative tree planting	May	Lambros/Radbil