

Princeton Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of June 28, 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

Radhicka Pola 2nd Alternated

Council Liaison:

Mayor Mark Freda

Town Arborist:

Taylor Sapudar

Guests: E. Mosner

The regular meeting of the PSTC was called to order on 5/28/22 at 5:01 pm by Ainsworth.

Opening Statement: Read by Ainsworth.

Roll Call: Radbil, Stern, Devoe, Frawley, Chen, Ainsworth, Krauss, Pola, Freda, Sapudar

Public Comment: none

Minutes: The minutes of the May 24, 2022 meeting were approved with correction by a motion made by Stern and seconded.

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

Motion carried.

REPORTS

1. Arborist Report

- Tree inventory plan has been approved. Davey Resources Group will likely start work in August/early September with nineteen thousand ` sites to be inventoried.
- Sapudar would like to put together a 'Wet-Site Tolerant" tree list for residents who are looking for such information. STC members are encouraged to assist by offering suggestions.
- Tree Of the Month continues to be well received with the paw paw tree selected for July to be followed by the hop hornbeam and shingle oak.
- Infographic series will start in July focusing on the benefits of trees followed by young tree establishment and topping. Sapudar is looking for a catchy title for the series with TREE-MENDOUS facts the current title. STS members are urged to offer additional title options.
- The tree removal contract is open for bids as of July 1st.
- Sapudar is taking the lead on 'line of sight plantings' which obscure crosswalks and roadways. If any STC member notices a situation where line of sight is obscured, they are encouraged to notify Sapudar.
- Princeton University donated ten containers planted with crape myrtle for Witherspoon Street. They will be removed later this year and will be replanted on university property.
- A \$50k Resiliency Grant has been submitted to the state with results to be posted in August.
- Block pruning on John Street with take place in the near future.
- Radbil asked about guidelines for rain gardens. Sapudar will share the information with the STC.

New Business:

1. Win Development-SLF Drone Detector-(Radbil)

Radbil described project created by Princeton student. If student is still working on the project and would like to offer it to the public next season, Radbil suggested that STC and/or municipality might consider publicizing this as a service to homeowners to help them identify and eradicate SLF egg masses. Devoe commented on several projects that were underway at PHS in conjunction with the community. Sapudar

reported on his knowledge of these projects. Krauss asked if this student could identify SLF nymphs. Sapudar noted that they are also on red and sugar maple and river birch.

Ainsworth responded that next year would be a good time to initiate this project. Freda indicated that town approval isn't needed to pursue this. Sapudar offered to reach out to the student to check results and offer STC assistance next year. Radbil offered to work with Sapudar on a work plan.

Old Business

1. Senator Smith Task Force on Stewardship of Public Lands-(Ainsworth/Chen/Sapudar/Krauss)

Senator Smith Task Force on Stewardship of Public Lands

Chen reported on the Senator Smith Task Force on Stewardship of Public Forest Lands. The Task Force has asked that participants sign up for one, or both, of two workgroups: the Climate Workgroup and the Ecological Health Workgroup. Chen has signed up for both. The Workgroups will meet every two weeks throughout the summer.

So far, two meetings have been held for each Workgroup, the 1st on June 6 & 7 and the 2nd on June 20 & 21. At these meetings the Task Force Co-Chairs have explained the procedures the Task Force will follow. They are using a "bottoms-up" approach. Participants in both Workgroups are asked to submit proposals by the end of June. From the proposals submitted, the Co-Chairs will plan agendas for future Workgroup meetings, sufficient to ensure that all proposals submitted will be discussed over the course of the summer.

The Princeton Shade Tree Commission (STC) sub-committee has met to consider which proposals that it might recommend. It agreed on five proposals which were circulated to all STC members. Chen, as sub-committee chair, asked for the STC to approve them for submittal to the Task Force for its consideration. These five proposals (full drafts attached) were:

- Ban the sale or import of invasive species
 - Establish an Ecological Forestry Center at Rutgers
- Tax-exempt non-profit lands should be subject to the same standards as those for public forestlands

- o Considerations that should be addressed If Forest Stewardship Plans are recommended for municipalities' public forest lands (standards not lesser than those for private forest lands, clarification of what lands qualify to have a plan, monies to municipalities to relieve costs of a plan)
- Train municipal fire personnel as prescribed burn managers

After discussion the STC approved four of the five proposals for submittal. With respect to the proposal pertaining to tax-exempt non-profit lands, Mayor Freda questioned whether we wanted added bureaucratic burdens to be placed on non-profits. **Chen agreed to take this proposal back to the sub-committee for further consideration.**

The Task Force Co-Chairs will look over the proposals initially submitted, encourage parties with similar proposals to merge them, and plan the agendas for future meetings based on the topics of the proposals submitted. As new information emerges, proposals can be amended. Later, perhaps in early fall, the Task Force will carry out some kind of voting procedure to determine which proposals have consensus support and which do not. The results will be conveyed, in a final report, to be transmitted to Senator Smith by December of this year.

Also, while the Task Force Co-Chairs had initially asked that proposals be submitted by the end of June, they subsequently indicated that they would accept additional proposals submitted later. Chen invited STC meeting attendees to forward any ideas they may have for additional proposals so they may be considered at the next Sub-Committee meeting. If recommended by the Sub-Committee, the additional proposals will be brought to the STC at its July so that the STC can consider whether to approve them for submittal to the Task Force.

Following Chen's review the five proposed plans the STC was asked for their approval. Stern questioned some definitions in addition to inclusion of urban forest lands. Chen urged everyone to consider adding any ideas to these proposals including environmental justice noted by Stern. Radbil noted that she was impressed with the scope of the proposals. Freda commented that when the state sets standards for nonprofits, the outcome can have an adverse effect. Members agreed to hold the proposed Standards for Tax-Exempt Non-Profit Forestlands.

Motion: to support four of the five proposals (Ban the Sale of Invasive Species, Stewardship Plan Provisions, Establish Ecological Forestry Center at Rutgers, and Train Municipal Fire Personnel as Prescribed Burn Managers) made by Chen and seconded.

Ayes: Kraus, Radbil, Ainsworth, Devoe, Stern. Frawley

Motion carried.

2. **Environmental Justices**-(Radbil/Sapudar/Stern)

Stern reported that after the May 21 meeting with the WJNA, when she and Radbil heard concerns from residents about tree-related sidewalk issues on John St., costly sewer pipe blockages, and limbs that needed pruning, she and Radbil walked John St. with Sapudar to see the municipal street trees for themselves. They found at least 16 sites where remediation was needed: repaving, sidewalk repair, limbing up, pruning, and open spots where trees could be planted. They also looked at the Red Oak on Quarry St., which has a 32" DBH and is causing the owner annual problems and expense that prompt her to want to have it taken down. As noted in Sapudar's report, in-house staff will do block pruning in the WJNA, starting with John St. Radbil also asked if Sapudar could write up a list of the problems found and remediations he suggests (included for the Quarry St. oak) and send it to Leighton Newlin, so that he can convey to the residents how the municipality is responding to their concerns. Stern asked Mayor Freda and the STC if a fund could be set up to help lower-income residents with their sewer pipe blockage remediations.

Princeton desperately needs to increase--not decrease--its tree canopy and needs to balance residents' problems with and fears of trees with the inestimable benefits that trees provide, especially in climate crises. Mayor Freda said that he would try to find out which department might be able to respond to this idea. Stern said that she and Radbil had other streets on a list of neighborhoods needing more trees (from their original survey) and would like to walk those streets as well and talk with residents about municipal tree planting.

3. **Member at Large Proposal**-(Radbil)

Radbil reported that after the Witherspoon/Jackson meeting Christine Symington of Sustainable Princeton requested tree-related project ideas she might propose to corporations seeking volunteer opportunities in the Princeton community. Radbil and Stern provided her with a list of the projects outlined at a **previous STC about possible Member at Large projects: tree tender/steward** (survey a neighborhood, ID potential tree sites and tree issues), sick tree day event, and tree info distribution (mulch hangers, tree and shrub ordinance, etc.).

OTHER

1. Proposed collaboration with PEC and Sustainable Princeton on Bamboo:

Ainsworth reported that she has been contacted by Tammy Sands, Princeton Environmental Commission regarding a proposal to education residents about invasive bamboo. Christine Symington, Sustainable Princeton will also be involved in this effort. Ainsworth suggested that if the STC is supportive, perhaps bamboo could be a topic for an upcoming "infographic" item on the website. Members expressed support for the collaboration and suggested the scope of the initiative be broadened to include other invasive plants like barberry. Krauss noted that she previously developed a PowerPoint on invasive plants. Stern suggested the real estate professionals might be able to assist in sharing the information. It was agreed that Ainsworth, Krauss and Frawley would develop the concept further.

2. Riverside School ID/mapping proposal:

Devoe reported that a teacher from Riverside School wants to generate a tree ID program including a tree map and a plan for future tree planting. Sapudar will reach out to her.

ADJPOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Devoe and seconded

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

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Addendum: Action Plan

ACTION	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY`
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
Member at Large proposal	omgoimg	Radbil
Sen. Smith sub committee	Ongoing updates	Chen
Articles for newspaper	Ongoing	Stern/ Krauss
EJ plantings	Ongoing	Sapudar//Stern/Radbil
Nassau St replanting update	Ongoing	Sapudar