



BOROUGH OF SHREWSBURY

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

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Minutes of Regular Meeting
Shrewsbury Shade Tree Commission (STC)
August 8, 2015
Municipal Hall, Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury, New Jersey

Present

Don Burden (Mayor)*
Bill Gerth, Chairperson
Doug Keiper
Stuart Minis
Lynne Royce
Betsy Wattley

Absent

Mike De Nofa (Council Liaison)*
Mary Russell
Steve Skop
Patrick Slattery

*Non-voting member

Chairman Gerth began the meeting at 8:30 a.m. by leading the Pledge of Allegiance and reading the Presiding Officer's statement in compliance with the P. L. 1975 c. 231, the Open Public Meetings Act. Mr. Gerth took roll call.

I. POSTING OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETING

July's meeting minutes were reviewed and will be posted to the Borough's web-site.

II. CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Mr. Gerth alerted STC to an upcoming NJ Tree Federation/PSE&G Seminar titled 'Planting the Right Tree in the Right Place, the Right Way in a Post-Superstorm Sandy World. It will be held September 9 from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon at the PSE&G Southern Division HG in Moorestown. Attendants will receive 3 CEU credits. Mr. Gerth encouraged STC members to attend.
- B. Mr. Gerth alerted STC to the new design/layout of the Borough's web-site and in particular to web-page for STC. He complemented the Borough for the integration of colorful pictures of blossoming trees on the STC web-page and its overall clean layout.
- C. Mr. Gerth reviewed various resident inquiries and actions as follows:
 - o S. Cullinane (80 West End) - letter sent to Mr. Cullinane by Mr. Seaman (Borough Administrator) with STC Guidelines on Shade Tree Definitions and

Responsibilities. Letter clarified that trees on private property in the Borough are the responsibility of the homeowner.

- D. Reilly (218 Williamsburg) - STC members inspected 2 declining Red Maples planted by STC in 2010. Bark on lower portion of both trees is flaking off. Exact cause unknown but may be attributed to poor planting stock or installation. Mr. Gerth agreed to replace trees.
- S. Sprech (21 Parker) - STC asked to inspect swamp white oak (maple?) for possible galls. Mr. Gerth asked homeowner to follow-up with Mr. Slattery for diagnosis.
- J. Doody (23 Trafalgar Place) - seeking a replacement tree from STC for one taken down due to lightening strike damage. Tree previously inspected by STC and confirmed eventual demise of tree give extent of damage. Mr. Gerth will consult with resident on suitable replacement.
- ML Brooks (65 Patterson Ave) - seeking advise from STC on declining sweetgum tree (estimated to be over 50 years old), whether recent road construction is the cause of the decline, and options for removal. Mr. Gerth and Mr. Minis plan to visit resident immediately following the STC meeting. (Post STC Meeting Note - Mr. Gerth and Minis determined upon inspection that the tree was in decline prior to road construction and that pattern of remaining leave growth [on street side of tree] suggests that while road construction may have accelerated the decline of the tree it was not the cause. Mr. Gerth will provide resident the names of three reputable tree services so that competing bids can be obtained for resident to choose from.)
- F. Arance (112 East End Ave) - sought advise from STC on declining, listing tree that may pose hazard to the public. Mr. Gerth inspected and confirmed tree had an unstable root structure with severed roots observed at the surface. Mr. Gerth requested DPW place safety cones on the street to prevent cars from parking directly underneath the tree. Homeowner took quick action and had tree removed. STC agreed that Mr. Gerth should send a letter of commendation and thank you to the homeowner for their concern, follow-up and action.

III. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Business/Resident Recognition: Criteria, Frequency, Process** - STC initiated discussion on setting up a process to recognize businesses and residents that contribute meaningfully to the Borough in relation to trees and landscaping. Mr. Burden offered that in the past STC would issue a Blue Certificate of appreciation/recognition to business and residents. STC agreed to integrate some type of recognition process into the next CFMP update. STC members also discussed the sustained efforts by The Grove management team to beautification and eduction with trees and landscaping. Ms. Royce proposed that STC award a plaque to The Grove in recognition of their sustained commitment over 20+ years to landscaping and education The Grove, The Grove West and the Newman Springs property. Ms. Royce proposed that STC be authorized to spend up to \$400 for the plaque. STC unanimously agreed to the proposal. Mr. Gerth will follow-up with exact wording and coordinate with supplier, STC and The Grove.
- B. Esther Hymer Nature Preserve Initiative** - Ms. Royce secured initial schematics by E. M. Waterbury & Associates from 2003 that provide a potential vision for the preserve. Mr. Burden shared that little thought was given to the long-term maintenance of the preserve at the time of its creation following the death of Ms. Hymers. Mr. Burden shared old news clippings with Ms. Wattley who in turn will

provide copies to STC members. Mr. Gerth developed and shared the attached outline for a plan to gain buy-in and alignment from community stakeholders in maximizing the educational and recreational use of the preserve. Mr. Gerth will continue to organize field visits to the preserve with interested stakeholders. Mr. Burden suggested that scheduling a community workday sometime in the fall may be worthwhile to clear trails. STC agreed.

- C. **Heritage Green/DPW Complex Project** - Mr. Gerth provided landscape plans for the DPW entrance. The plans have been agreed to by the Homeowners Association (HOA). Ms. Wattle expressed concerns over lack of water. Mr. Gerth acknowledged this planting limitation and suggested tree gators may help to ameliorate limited water access. Mr. Gerth will follow-up on soil amendment options and meet with DPW to finalize plans for soil preparation and installation of plants.
- D. **Shrewsbury Volunteer Brigade** - Mr. Gerth asked for help in pruning the White Pines along Heritage Drive along with the Heritage Green HOA. (Post STC Meeting Note - Saturday August 22 at 8:30 am is the selected work date).
- E. **2015 Tree Plantings Wish List** - The wish list for 2015 now includes the following:
 - two London Planes for the Burden residence
 - one London Plane for the Beechwood Triangle
 - two Crimson King or similar reddish leafed trees for the Ernst residence
 - one unspecified tree for the Luckinbill residence on East End Avenue
 - one unspecified tree for the Doody residence on Trafalgar Place
 - two Red Maples for Reilly residence on Williamsburg
 - one Korean Stewaria for the Gazebo area at the Municipal Complex
 - one *Syringa reticulata* for the Shrewsbury Borough School.

IV. **CFMP STATUS, IMPLEMENTATION, & UPDATES**: No updates

V. **PLANNING/ZONING BOARD**: No plans to review

VI. **MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC**: No public comment

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**:

Mr. Keiper made a motion, Ms. Royce seconded, to adjourn meeting.

VIII. **NEXT MEETING** - Saturday, September 12, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.

Bill Gerth, Chairperson

Esther Hymer Nature Preserve/Wetlands Access/Utilization Planning

Shade Tree Commission

Draft Outline

July 2015

1. Historical Background on Esther Hymer and Creation of Preserve
2. Observations of Current Condition
 - Deteriorating signage on West side entrance
 - Non-existent signage on East side entrance
 - Signage for other wetlands access points non-existent
 - Signage on West side indicates no bikes and no dogs. Seems out of touch with current standards for trails/preserves
 - Entrance is not marked. Original mulched pathway into the preserve has long since disappears and weedy shrubs have overgrown it. The residents on both sides seem to have over extended their boundaries.
 - Boundaries of Preserve and Wetlands not well marked (if at al).
 - Trails are blocked and overgrown.
 - Pond is stagnant. Streams have fallen timber in the water.
 - Trash and trash dumps throughout the preserve/wetlands
3. STC Preparatory Action Steps
 - STC Members inspected preserve with Councilwoman DerAsadourian
 - STC Chairmen spoke with the Mr. and Mrs. Genarro (neighbors immediately west of preserve entrance) about their perspectives on access and utilization
4. Community Interest in Opening/Maintaining Access
5. Access/Maintenance Requirements/Needs
6. Proposed Short-Term Actions (2015-16)
7. Proposed Longer-Term Actions (2017 and beyond)
8. Appendices
 - Maps of Preserve and Wetlands