



# BOROUGH OF SHREWSBURY

## SHADE TREE COMMISSION

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Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Shrewsbury Shade Tree Commission (STC)  
April 11, 2015

Municipal Hall, Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury, New Jersey

### Present

Mike De Nofa (Council Liaison)\*  
Bill Gerth, Chairperson  
Doug Keiper  
Stuart Minis  
Lynne Royce (STC Nominee)  
Betsy Wattley

### Absent

Mary Russell  
Steve Skop  
Patrick Slattery

\*Non-voting member

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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**

March's meeting minutes will be posted to the Borough's web-site.

## **II. CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A. Mr. Gerth introduced Mrs. Lynne Royce as a nominee to STC. Mrs. Royce is an avid photographer and tree lover. She will be a welcomed addition pending official appointment by the Mayor.
- B. Mr. Gerth announced Shrewsbury has been recertified as a Tree City USA for the 17th year. He will present his annual 'State of the Trees' presentation to Borough Council at an upcoming council meeting around Arbor Day.
- C. Mr. Gerth reminded STC of the upcoming Shade Tree Spring Forum - Wednesday April 29 from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm at the Monmouth County Fire Academy. Continuing education units (CEUs) from the NJ Shade Tree Federation will be awarded. STC members will carpool.
- D. STC agreed to cancel the May 9th meeting due to conflicting schedules.
- E. Resident/Business/Utility Inquiries/Actions
  - o Heritage Green - Mr. Gerth met with representatives of the Home Owners Association (HOA) on April 4. HOA seeking input on beautifying area

immediately in front of DPW facility and surrounding areas. Mr. Gerth proposed and STC agreed to authorize spending up to \$500.00 on plant materials. HOA will be responsible for maintenance of plantings.

- S. Cullinane (80 W. End Avenue) - STC reviewed letter to Mayor regarding tree buckling driveway. STC members inspected property. Agreed tree is homeowner's responsibility.

### **III. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. STC Ordinances** - Mr. Gerth and Ms. Russell met with DPW representatives (Mr. Wentway and Mr. Neis), Borough Administrator (Mr. Seaman), and Borough Councilman (Mr. DeNofa) on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Discussed concern about definition of Borough and Right-of-Way (RoW) trees and delineation of Borough/Homeowner/Business responsibilities. DPW wants homeowners to take responsibility for trees in RoW. Mr. DeNofa expressed concern about liability to the Borough if DPW prunes/removes trees in RoW but are owned by the resident. Mr. Gerth agreed to draft language that defines Borough/RoW trees and Borough/Homeowner/Business responsibilities.

STC reviewed draft language at the meeting and made recommendations for improvements. The revised language is attached at the end of these minutes. As next steps STC will review again along with DPW. Mr. Gerth will take into consideration any input received and forward final draft to Mr. DeNofa. Mr. DeNofa will work to gain consensus from the Mayor and Borough Council on proposed language. Once endorsed by the Mayor/Council, STC will put on its web-page and in the next community newsletter.

- B. CFMP Preparation for 2016-2020** - Mr. Gerth informed STC that they will begin organizing for and drafting the next 5-year Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP) at their June meeting. The updated plan is due end of 2015.
- C. Shrewsbury Volunteer Brigade** - Immediately following the STC meeting, Mr. Gerth and Mr. Minis will visit RareFinds Nursery to purchase Winterberry Hollies to be planted at the front north side of Borough Hall. Mr. Gerth will send out an email to STC with a date/time for the volunteer brigade to plant.
- D. 2015 Tree Plantings Wish List** -
- two London Planes for the Burden residence
  - one London Plane for the Beechwood Triangle
  - two Crimson King trees or similar reddish leafed tree for the Ernst residence
  - 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. Whattley seconded, to adjourn meeting.

### **VIII. NEXT MEETING - Saturday, June 13, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.**

Bill Gerth, Chairperson

# STC Guidelines on Shade Tree Definitions and Responsibilities

## Draft Post 11 April 2015 STC Meeting

The purpose of this document is to clarify what shade trees in the Borough of Shrewsbury are the responsibilities of the town and of residents.

### Definitions:

- A 'borough' tree is one that is on property owned by the Borough. Examples of borough trees are those at the Municipal Complex, various parks (i.e., Patterson Field, Sickles Field), on the island running down Park Avenue.
- A 'right of way' (RoW) tree is one that is on property owned by a business or resident that the Borough has jurisdiction over but no ownership rights or responsibilities. The RoW is defined by the distance from the street curb towards the residence and varies street by street. It is driven off the tax map for the Borough.

### Rights and Responsibilities:

- The Shrewsbury Department of Public Works (DPW) maintains trees that are on property owned by the Borough.
- Homeowners/businesses are responsible for maintaining the trees/shrubs on their property, consistent with the Borough ordinances related to property maintenance and shade trees, including those trees/shrubs that are within the RoW. This includes trees that may have been given to the resident/business free of charge by the Shade Tree Commission. These responsibilities include:
  - Pruning and trimming trees to ensure safety and tree integrity
  - Promptly removing trees that are hazardous to the public and grinding their stumps
  - Maintaining tree branches at least 8' over sidewalks and walkways and 13' over roadways. Shrubs need to be maintained to at least 3" away from sidewalks/walkways.
- The Shrewsbury Shade Tree Commission (STC) should be consulted before removal of any tree in the RoW except under emergency conditions when trees have been damaged by storms or other acts of nature.
- The homeowner/business is responsible for removal of trees that are considered hazardous by DPW/STC.