

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission held on September 11, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Borough Chambers. Present at roll call were:

Present: Mrs. Margaret Law
Mr. Donald Salerno, Vice Chairman
Mr. Lloyd Williams, Chairman
Councilwoman Laurie Fu

Absent: Mr. Lawrence Travaglia
Mr. C. David Visscher
Mr. Dave Dubee, Forester

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams stated that adequate notice of this meeting has been published and posted in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Law of 1975, "Open Public Meetings Act."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Salerno moved that the minutes of the Commission's July 1, 2014 Regular Meeting be approved as circulated, seconded by Mrs. Law. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Williams opened the meeting to the public to speak on matters other than those on the agenda. Hearing none, he closed this portion of the meeting to the public.

BUDGET

Mr. Williams advised that a list was created of work that needs to be done as a result of the Tree Survey. The list has categories of Priority One and Priority Two work projects. He requested that the Commission Secretary cost out the Priority One work needing to be done. He had a number of questions about the results.

The Commission members together with the Commission Secretary reviewed these results and added further clarification as required as a double check of the estimated Priority One work projects. As part of this review, it was noted to not include the projected cost of any work that the Department of Public Works (DPW) staff will be asked to perform. An amount of \$6,880.00 was given as an estimated cost of the work. Adding in the trees for which no sizes were given most likely will bring the total closer to the \$10,000.

Mr. Salerno moved that the Commission authorize the work listed on the Priority One work list, seconded by Mrs. Law. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

The Commission Secretary asked who would provide her with the size of those trees with no sizes indicated.

Councilwoman Fu asked if the secretary could give a list of all trees to the forester to determine the sizes of the all the trees w/stumps (where needed) on priority one list.

Mr. Williams asked about those trees indicated as being ones the DPW will do.

Councilwoman Fu advised she has spoken with the DPW staff about all the tree locations except for a tree located at the corner of Watnong Drive and Granniss Avenue. She also provided information on some of the work projects that DPW has already completed. The DPW will not take down trees located on Cutler Road until the Commission is ready to plant the new trees.

Cross discussion about what tree species are planted at what locations and to what extent previous tree planting services planted specific tree species at specific locations at the direction of the Commission. In the past the Commission did not specify specific tree plantings for specific locations with Cerbo.

Councilwoman Fu advised she had no additional information regarding tree take-downs.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

REVIEW OF TREE MEMOS RECEIVED

Commission reviewed the memos with the Forester's comments. .

15 Sunrise Drive – Forester recommends (1) 24"-36" and (1) 36"+ trees be takendown with stumps. Trees are on Beaver Ridge

11 Winding Way - Mr. Williams stated that this work was not done. He will check what work has to be done also who should do it (DPW or Greenwood).

9 Wiinding Way – Forester recommends (2) 24"-36" trees be pruned.

4 Briarcliff Road – Forester recommends (2) 24"-36" and (1) 36"+ trees be pruned.

1 Brook Drive – Forester recommends (1) 24"-36" tree w/stump be takendown.

9 Sunset Road – Forester recommends (1) 36"+ tree be pruned.

16 Lindstrom Road – Forester recommends (1) 24"-36" and (1) 12"-24" takendown no stumps.

4 Greenwood Road – Forester recommends (1) 36"+ tree be pruned.

Mayfair Road – Work needs to be down on low branches along the entire roadway. Mr. Williams will notify DPW.

Mr. Salerno commented on being at the 9-11 ceremony this morning. Some trees need work and there are also some dead branches, too. The thought is that the DPW will be able to handle this work.

Mr. Salerno moved to approve the work that was just discussed by the Commission, seconded by Mrs. Law. Voice vote. All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilwoman Fu reported on the status of the grant-funded tree planting process. She advised there were only a handful of refusals/declinations for trees being planted. Additionally, there were several requests to have trees planted. She distributed a list of where the planting process stands right now. There were approximately 100 trees with roughly 50 planted in parks and 50 planted on streets. While some trees were planted a little bit randomly (a few in District One and a few in District Four), the primary focus was to plant in Districts Two and Three.

She further advised that extra letters were sent out to certain residents who have until next week to respond.

The Commission Secretary reported the resident at 22 Keenan Place called already and someone needs to get back to her concerning her request(s).

Mr. Salerno explained this resident was asking to know the exact time the tree will be planted so she can be there – this cannot be done due to the size and scope of the process of the trees being planted. She also advised one tree was fine and that she wanted the second tree in her yard, inside the fence. He advised the Commission does not plant trees inside fences on residents' properties, but apparently there is still some confusion over this request. The issue seems to be that this second tree's location may be within the 10' even though it would be inside a fence.

Cross discussion about the issue of this specific tree planting location and a tree perhaps being planted at this Keenan Place site, including that 10' is 10' and this will be what makes it a Borough tree. Councilmember Fu offered to talk with the resident about this.

Mr. Williams raised the location of 2 Cutler Road.

Councilwoman Fu advised she has not yet contacted this person, but she offered to do so. This is an uncertain tree planting location right now.

Mr. Williams offered to call this resident to determine what they would like to do. He also commented on 57 Maple Avenue. He recommended that by the end of this month the Commission should finalize what they want to do relating to all possible tree planting sites.

Mr. Salerno commented on the trees planted during the spring planting stating that he believes there are many trees that are not looking very good. To him this reinforces why the Commission stopped planting in the spring.

Councilmember Fu advised she checked what is planned for the next spring planting to determine if some of the plantings can be moved up to this fall planting, but they are all trees that will have to be planted in the spring due to their varieties being "fall digging hazard trees" – which is why the plan is to plant them in the spring.

Cross discussion about the spring-planted trees, including that Honeywell specifically asked that no trees be planted on their property since they have a landscaping plan.

Councilwoman Fu agreed that the watering of the trees could be an issue. She thinks most residents are agreeable to helping out by watering the trees, though not all are agreeable. The trees planted in the parks pose a greater concern in connection with watering. She thinks some trees (particularly those slated for planting in parks – “public trees”) may be able to be re-scheduled from the next spring planting to the 2015 fall planting to try to avoid this problem.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Williams and Councilwoman Fu discussed an upcoming meeting they are attending together with two staff members from DPW will be attending. The topic of this meeting is “The Right Tree for the Right Place.” There was also discussion about additional training meetings and who will be attending.

Mrs. Law raised the subject that their bid will be up as of December 31, 2014. She suggested that the Commission review this bid at the October meeting to determine if any changes should be made to it.

Councilmember Fu spoke about the Community Forestry Management Plan revision and that it needs to be approved so it can be given to the Borough Council to approve at its next meeting. It will then be resubmitted. She stated the Plan includes things that have been set as goals and the Commission needs to show it is working toward these goals and that it is committed to having the core training and the CEU’s needed each year. These must be done. A written report must be submitted each year to show the work being done to achieve the goals.

She would like to change the dates for the goals of performing the tree inventory – look for the funding next year and do the work in 2016.

The Commission approved of this.

Mrs. Law spoke about a 2013 survey saying that 43 trees have to be removed.

Councilwoman Fu said this is part of an overall goal for over time and some are part of the Priority One list discussed earlier during this meeting.

Mrs. Law asked whose responsibility it is to deal with sidewalk-tree issues.

It was agreed that the Commission is not responsible for sidewalk-tree issues.

Councilwoman Fu provided additional clarification and information on a number of the Forestry Plan contents and the process as it has to be done over the life of this grant.

Mr. Salerno commented on some of the items contained in the Forestry Plan such as planting recommendations – distance between trees, distance from driveway aprons, near Stop signs, and the like.

Mr. Salerno moved that the Commission approve the Forestry Plan and the change(s) discussed, seconded by Mrs. Law. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

There being no further business, Mr. Salerno moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mrs. Law. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Karen M. Coffey
Commission Secretary

Maureen Sullivan
Recording Secretary