

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission held on September 10, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Chambers. Present at roll call were:

Present: Mrs. Margaret Law
Mr. Donald Salerno, Vice Chairman
Mr. Lawrence Travaglia
Mr. C. David Visscher
Mr. Lloyd Williams, Chairman
Councilwoman Laurie Fu

Absent: 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, 2015 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. Seeing no one, he closed this portion of the meeting.

BUDGET

Mr. Williams stated there is \$17,763.40 left in the budget at this time.

RESOLUTION

Councilwoman Fu provided details about this Resolution. The Sustainable Jersey Program is suggesting the Shade Tree Commission set a goal for maintaining the Borough's increasing tree coverage. There is no penalty if this goal is not met and there is nothing legally binding holding the Commission to the goal set. Setting this goal will allow the Commission to receive points toward the certification and will provide credit in three different categories: (1) planting program (10 points), (2) adopting a Community Forestry Management Plan (20 points), and (3) tree maintenance (10 points). With this helping with the Certification, this means the Borough will have a better likelihood to be eligible to future funding and educational programs.

Cross discussion about the provisions contained in this Resolution, including criteria that would assist in helping the Borough know that its goals are being met and that trees are being successfully maintained and providing all that they should be as expected by the various plantings over time.

Mr. Williams read the following resolution that addresses the specifics as to what is anticipated by the Resolution's goals and the specific benefits to the Borough, its residents, and wildlife.

RESOLUTION

Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission Community Forestry Tree Canopy Goal

Whereas the Borough of Morris Plains has been certified as a Tree City USA for 38 years, the Mayor and Borough Council have long supported the care and well-being of our Borough's trees, and the Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission is charged with managing and protecting the Borough's shade trees and its green infrastructure in an effort to preserve our community's environmental resources, and

Whereas the Borough supports the International Society of Arboriculture's statement that: "The urban forest serves a wide variety of functions that promote the health, safety and general welfare of residents. These functions include:

- Conserving energy by providing shade and evaporative cooling through transpiration;
- Improving local and global air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and ozone, absorbing particulate matter, and producing oxygen;
- Reducing wind speed and directing air flow;
- Reducing noise pollution;
- Providing habitat for birds, small mammals and other wildlife;
- Reducing storm runoff and the potential for soil erosion, increasing real property values;
- Enhancing visual and aesthetic qualities that attract visitors and businesses and serve as a source of community image and pride." and

Whereas "American Forests" recommends that areas east of the Mississippi River maintain an average tree cover of 40% and further recommend a tree cover goal of 50% for suburban residential zones, 25% for urban residential zones, and 15% for central business districts. These are general guidelines and tree cover goals should also take into account the climate, geography, land cover and land use patterns of each municipality, and

Whereas data on existing tree coverage for NJ municipalities from 2009 can be found on USDA Urban and Community Forests of the Mid-Atlantic Region, NY, NJ and PA, and

Whereas, although the US Dept. of Agriculture Urban Tree Tables estimate the Borough of Morris Plains canopy to be ~53.5%, which qualifies as a "good" rating, the Shade Tree Commission believes it is in the best interest of the community to maintain and improve upon this canopy, especially in light of recent losses of shade trees due to highway access redevelopment and substantial storm damage.

Now therefore be it resolved that the Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission, in order to support the goals and purposes of its Community Forestry Management Plan, establishes a goal of achieving a Tree Canopy of 56% through completion of its ongoing No Net Loss

Reforestation Project, through a concerted effort to replace fallen, diseased or hazardous trees, and to maintain a healthy tree cover for years to come.(The goal should be reassessed as updated data become available.)

Mrs. Law moved this Resolution, seconded by Mr. Salerno. Voice vote. All in favor.
Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

FORESTER'S REPORT

6 Mayfair Road – Forester's report stated (1) 12"-24" tree needs to be pruned. Mr. Salerno commented that the primary reason the acorns are dropping is because the weather is so dry.

7 Kosakowski Drive – This tree is on the list for pruning PO#98603. Mr. Williams requested the Commission Secretary to contact the Department of Public Works (DPW) requesting that they remove this small tree.

46 Watnong Drive – This tree is on the list for pruning PO#98603.

One Greenwood Road – This tree is on the list for takedown PO#98602.

155 Mountain Way – Tree is already on the list for pruning PO#98603.

330 Mountain Way – Newly planted tree on tree replacement list for Fall '15.

168 Mountain Way on Idlewild Drive – Newly planted tree on tree replacement list for Fall '15.

22 Keenan Place – To be placed on Fall tree mailing list.

55 Granniss Avenue – Resident is J. Primtzt and she states her tree is dead. Mr. Salerno stated this tree is not a Borough tree. This resident has complained to the Mayor about this tree. Mr. Salerno measured it and determined that her trees are 35' from the curb. Mr. Salerno advised the Mayor of this; he is uncertain whether he contacted this resident with this information. Councilwoman Fu will check with the Mayor as to whether he notified this resident. Tree to be placed on worksheet.

18 Wynwood Road – Forester's report states that tree looks healthy and driveway is fine. D. Salerno will look at driveway conditions. Tree to be placed on worksheet.

35 Beech Drive – There is no response from Mr. Dubee yet; tree to be placed on worksheet.

37 Janeway Place – Forester's report stated no tree at 37 Janeway Place. The Commission Secretary advised the address should be 37 Canfield Place not Janeway Place. Tree to be placed on worksheet.

40 Janeway Place – Forester's report stated that (1) 12"-24" no stump should be taken down.

22 Diana Road – This situation has been taken care of.

15 Davis Avenue – Forester's report stated (1) 12"-24" tree needs pruning.

25 Davis Avenue – Forester's report stated (1) 12"-24" needs pruning.

32 Headley Avenue – Forester's report stated (1) 12"-24" and (2) 24"-36" trees need pruning.

22 Greenwood Road – Forester’s report stated (1) 24”-36” locust tree w/stump be removed.

62 Franklin Place – Councilwoman stated that tree was removed by DPW but (1) 12”-24” stump needs to be removed.

5 Malapardis Road – Forester’s report stated (2) 12”-24”and (2) 24”-36” trees need to be pruned. These trees are on Borough property.

2 Northview Drive – Raised by the Commission Secretary. Apparently the resident wants this tree taken down, and he has been calling “all over the place”.

The consensus was that the Mayor is taking care of this matter.

Mr. Salerno stated he believes Greenwood visited this site several times with the recommendation always being that the tree is fine. He believes this tree was pruned in the past. For some reason the resident continues to insist this tree is dead even though the Forester is indicating the opposite.

Cross discussion about the 2 Northview Drive issue.

Councilwoman Fu will check with the Mayor tomorrow to determine what the status of this situation is.

Cross discussion about newly-planted trees along Tabor Road. Watering is being done as frequently as possible, but some of these trees are not necessarily looking as well as hoped for. Councilwoman Fu wondered if there might be some specific reasons affecting the trees such as the environment in this area, mulch in the area, not getting sufficient light or other reasons. Councilwoman Fu believes most of the residential trees that were planted are doing well.

Councilwoman Fu provided a list for the Fall planting. There are only seven (7) trees in front of residences and are trees requested by residents; the remaining trees are to be planted in parks and on Borough property. She and the Commission members reviewed the planned work contained on this list. She also discussed issues relating to Davenport Village, the affordable housing site. She expects that 15 to 20 trees will be planted here after the buildings go in/are started. A suggestion was made to her that the planting be extended to next Spring if Barbato’s is willing to accept this. Barbato’s would hold back 20 trees for planting in the Spring.

Mr. Salerno commented that generally when there is a new project such as Davenport Village the site plan is circulated to the Shade Tree Commission.

Cross discussion about trees for planting at Davenport Village, including what kind of soil is there; details of the site plan and whether there is any statement about the Shade Tree Commission being involved with a landscaping plan; issues relating to the number of trees included in the contract with Barbato’s; back-up plan if Barbato’s does

not agree to hold back 20 trees for planting in the spring; and that this would also include shrubbery and general landscaping.

Mr. Williams offered to contact Barbato's about the Commission's desire for 20 trees to be held back until spring.

Councilwoman Fu advised that the Mayor has requested that several Spruce trees be planted across from the 9-11 Memorial along the railroad tracks where there is a grassy area be planted. The Beautification Committee previously planted grasses, but they did not thrive over time. She is thinking that perhaps six (6) trees can be planted in this area. Roberts Garden will advise the Commission as to what varieties they want – they need four (4) more trees – the two (2) they did not receive during Spring planting plus two (2) more to replace taken down trees.

Mr. Salerno advised that there may be a "blacktop" problem that negatively affects plantings in this area near the tracks.

Councilwoman Fu and Mr. Williams agreed that the Fall planting trees would be best planted prior to the beginning of November. Councilwoman Fu advised that letters should be sent to the residents who will receive new trees; no need to send letters to the businesses.

Cross discussion about any letters to be sent – send letters only to those who are not highlighted in yellow. Also included discussion about some of the trees that were planted earlier this year and are not thriving so far. Gold Spire Sugar Maple trees were specifically mentioned.

APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDERS

The Commission Secretary reviewed the work projects listed on the Work Sheet.

Mr. Salerno moved that the Purchase Orders be approved, seconded by Mr. Travaglia. Voice vote. **All in favor. Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilwoman Fu advised of a conference being held October 23, 2015. She and Mr. Williams are planning to attend. She asked if anyone might be interested in attending. There was also discussion about a conference to be held in Atlantic City in October. This conference will provide credits.

The Commission Secretary will follow up on the conferences and prepare any Purchase Order(s) that may be necessary.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Karen M. Coffey
Commission Secretary

Maureen Sullivan
Recording Secretary