

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Morris Plains Shade Tree Commission held on November 6, 2013 at 2:00 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

Mr. Robert Dubee, Forester
Councilwoman Laurie Fu

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

The matter of property ownership of property near the water department property was raised.

Mr. Salerno stated this matter has been taken care of. It is water company's property. They requested a letter/e-mail providing information about the situation. They will be taking care of it. However, for some unknown reason the Borough does mow the lawn there; he does not know why the Borough is mowing the lawn. Mr. Welsh was contacted about his tree-related question/concern.

Mr. Travaglia moved that the minutes of the Commission's October 2, 2013 meeting be approved, seconded by Mr. Visscher. 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 the budget is currently -\$15,000. However some money will be coming into the budget soon.

Mr. Salerno advised some monies came through FEMA that are being used to take care of areas where there is damage. He provided details about a document that was distributed and how the current process was being handled.

Mr. Williams has the budget paperwork for next year's budget; this will be reviewed during the Commission's December meeting.

Mr. Salerno advised that the Mayor has authorized work to be done at the end of Forest Drive, between there and the Pool house; in the woods where there was significant tree damage from Sandy. There are some trees in this area that are very precarious and could fall down.

FORESTER'S REPORT

Mr. Dubee presented his report.

Court Road - Councilmember Coogan reported a situation that needs work. There are some Pine trees at the side of the entrance to the park that need to be sprayed and fertilized. The trees are 24" to 36". The Forester explained why they need to be sprayed.

44 Sylvan Drive – Forester stated that (1) 24"-36" tree needs to be pruned.

69 Watnong Drive – Forester stated (1) 24"-36" tree w/stump needs to be taken down. Mr. Salerno advised this is a tree at the corner of Cleveland Avenue. The root structure of the tree is not only tearing up the driveway, but also is under the resident's garage floor. The resident has complained about this several years ago.

161 Granniss Avenue – The tree at this site needs to be taken down. He had hoped to be able to check this tree prior to this meeting, but was unable to locate a tree at the address.

Mr. Williams advised he will follow up on this matter and see if he can locate the tree. He will call the resident who reported the tree to try to obtain more information about it. This should be placed on worksheet.

78 Maple Avenue – Forester stated that (1) 24"-36" tree needs to be pruned. ..

83 Maple Avenue – Forester stated that (1) 24"-36" tree w/stump needs to be taken down.

Sanford Court – Forester stated that (3) 12"-24" trees need pruning.

The Forester concluded his report.

Mrs. Law commented that "her" tree on Granniss Avenue has not been pruned in several years. She believes it may be time to do so. She also commented on the uniqueness of this tree as a special tree in the Borough due to its size.

Councilmember Fu advised she believes the Shade Tree Federation has a registry to recognize unique trees, very large trees, and so on.

Cross discussion about issues relating to replacement trees, exact location for such planting, and that Mr. Williams will check into this further as needed.

Mrs. Law commented on standard municipal forms used by some municipalities to conduct the business of their Shade Tree Commissions. It involves providing information in connection with a new publication. The input is due by December 31, 2013. She advised she will follow through on this.

Councilmember Fu wondered if doing this now might be a bit premature for providing such information due to the fact that so many trees are to be planted now and in the future. Perhaps it would be better to review the information first and then provide to the publication.

Mrs. Law read some of the information about the care of trees.

Councilmember Fu suggested that perhaps it would be best for the Forester to handle something like this. She asked if there should be a contact number included in case residents have any questions about the planting.

Cross discussion about issues relating to the upcoming planting of trees, including that the tree provider is responsible to guarantee the trees for two years and questions about who is responsible for watering the trees and how best to accomplish this task.

Councilmember Fu recommended talking with Cerbo about the matter of watering the trees since the responsibility is theirs to guarantee that the trees survive at least for two years prior to evaluation. They need to provide information as to how often watering should be done.

Mr. Salerno thought the matter of the possibility of the Commission having a water truck was discussed previously. He thought that once the DPW is finished with the leaf collection that they could help with the watering.

The Forester commented on various equipment/processes that might be able to help with the watering of the trees. He mentioned bags called "gators" that go around a tree and is filled with water to allow the tree to absorb it. This would save significant manpower to do the watering. He is not certain what these bags cost.

Cross discussion about the possible use of the "gator" bags; the matter of tree watering during the winter; asking Cerbo for their thoughts on the use of the "gator" bags; that Councilmember Fu offered to talk with the DPW to request assistance; the belief that the Borough does have a water truck; how much water will be need for winter watering; and that Mr. Williams will follow up with Cerbo on all the issues relating to the tree planting and tree watering.

Councilmember Fu advised that Mr. Linson will be visiting next week and perhaps he will have some additional recommendations.

Mr. Salerno raised the matter that generally plantings seemed to have been done in the spring due to the fact that this time of year is a more favorable time for the trees. He believes the tree survival rate for spring plantings is pretty respectable. He spoke about the potential difficulties of the winter watering. He also believes the DPW will be able to be of assistance.

The Forester spoke about the issues of freezing weather and freezing water.

Mr. Travaglia moved that the work discussed be placed on Work Sheet, seconded by Mr. Visscher. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Williams reported on going through the entire Borough to observe the overall tree situations.

Councilmember Fu reported another change. A resident called and requested no tree be planted at their residence. The address is 125 Mountain Way. There is also a resident at 52 Glenbrook Road who has requested a tree be planted. She believes she may have already advised of this address. A check will need to be done at 52 Glenbrook Road to determine if this site is suitable for a tree to be planted. She believes it will need to go inside the sidewalk since the space between the sidewalks is under wires.

Mr. Williams commented on five trees to be planted at Roberts Garden. He provided the desired tree species to Cerbo; they came back with five or four out of five different species for planting. He spoke with Cerbo and indicated that the original species were specifically requested by Roberts Garden. He is presuming that Cerbo will make the desired changes, but he will follow up with Cerbo again to determine exactly what the plantings will be and if Roberts Garden is agreeable to this. He also mentioned issues relating to tree identification and to flags. Mr. Williams provided information regarding work to be done on Briarcliff Road. A total of 15 trees will be planted and will generally be in one particular section. There is significant debris in this area; items that have been cut down, and it is kind of a messy situation.

Mr. Salerno advised he had had a complaint about the lighting in the Briarcliff Road area, and he asked Vornado to adjust the lighting on the buildings themselves. No more complaints have come in. He also spoke about the issue of screening provided by trees.

Councilmember Fu advised that the consultant said he could start the tree survey either Monday, November 11, 2013 or Friday, November 15, 2013. She will let the consultant know he should contact Mr. Williams and give him his contact information. She advised he will need a map at that time. Councilmember Fu advised that John Signorelli from DPW did attend the Shade Tree Federation's conference several weeks ago. She has been in touch with Johnson & Johnson to advise of the fall tree planting and possibly another in the spring indicating she would be back in touch.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

Maureen Sullivan
Recording Secretary

Karen M. Coffey
Commission Secretary

