

**City of Plainfield
Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of Meeting of June 24, 2015
Planning Conference Room, City Hall
515 Watching Avenue
Plainfield, New Jersey 07060**

1. Roll Call and Call to Order: Chair Peter Simone called the meeting to order at 7:35. Present were Mr. Simone, Barbara Spellmeyer, Mary Burgwinkle and Lynne Wallace. Oscar Riba attended the meeting beginning at 8:15. Jan Massey and David Frost were not present. Also present: April Stefel (Shade Tree Commission Liaison, Planning Division).

2. Open Public Meeting Act: Publication was handled by the Planning Division.

3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the April 22, 2015 meeting were approved by the Commissioners with one editing change and the minutes of the May 27, 2015 meeting were also approved.

4. Shade Tree Commission Items:

STC Community Forestry Management Plan (CSIP Grant)-April

Ms. Stefel has applied for the grant. Mr. Simone reminded everyone that he emailed a template for a time log for Commissioners to use so that we can use the time for in-kind match for grants. He has asked everyone to send the logs to him at the end of June and the end of December each year.

Public Works Tree/Stump Removal-Jan Massey

Ms. Massey was not at this meeting to update STC on her progress getting DPW to work on tree/stump removal.

STC /Public Works/Stake removal

Commissioners were reminded that there are many trees that are still staked after 2 to 4 plus years. The stakes can be removed by STC Commissioners, with a wire cutter. If Commissioners decide to make requests of DPW, the request should be emailed to John Louise and copied to Carmen Louise and Eric Watson and the City Administrator. Ms. Burgwinkle requested permission to ask for a truck and a DPW worker to remove a number of dead hornbeam trees and stakes on Leland and Watson, she will copy all of the above.

Tree Maintenance, Pruning & Tree Removal/Stump Grinding.

This year, STC will spend only about half the money it has spent on planting trees in the past, in order to be able to hire professionals to do tree pruning and maintenance in the fall. Many requests for tree pruning and removal are coming in from citizens and discussion ensued about handling those issues. Commissioners can take down small trees that are dead on their own if they want to do it, Ms. Burgwinkle reported on taking down a young dead tree at 308 W. 8th Street with Ms. Massey and the homeowners; DPW came to get the tree the next day. There is another similar tree in that neighborhood. Commissioners should report dead trees to DPW using the email process described above.

2015 Roadway Improvement Projects

Mr. Simone has consulted on the Union County College rehab project on E. Second Street and vicinity. Existing trees will be taken down because they will be compromised by the work on the sidewalks and roadway. They will be replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio. Mr. Simone has consulted with engineer Remington Vernick and is recommending a pattern of London Plane Trees over a 5 block area.

In addition, there is a roadway improvement project for a number of streets in the Coolidge, Linabarger, Maxson, Jean, Shirley area. STC will need to look at existing trees, make a "stay or go" recommendation, and then suggest replacement (small to medium sized) trees. Mr. Simone suggested that all of the Commissioners meet on a Saturday or Sunday morning to walk the streets and come to consensus on those decisions. He will contact us with the date and time.

Greening of Union County 2015-Tree Selection, Site Selection

STC expects to use between \$10,000 and \$11,000 of the budget for trees this year. This will mean planting of about 60 trees as compared to 124 last year. Mr. Simone reminded everyone that the Ward Assignments are as follows: Barbara Spellmeyer and Oscar Riba-First Ward, Peter Simone-Second Ward, Jan Massey/Lynne Wallace-Third Ward, Mary Burgwinkle-Fourth Ward. He requested that each ward be completed in 30 days. He requested a chart with columns for address, comments on existing trees, pruning/stump issues, straps still on, and suggestions for planting of new trees. He does not want us to select areas where only one tree needs to be planted, would prefer a block that needs a number of trees that can be coordinated with the existing trees.

We have citizens who would like to plant trees themselves, they need STC's express permission. We will handle requests for trees as they come in and will document them. We also have a balance in the trust fund that we can use to plant trees. Ms. Burgwinkle reported that the LLC that owns a residence at 314-316 Terrill Road had appeared at Zoning Board of Adjustment for approval of renovations. The Applicant agreed to pay \$300 into the trust fund if STC does not approve the site for a tree (Terrill is a busy county road with large utility poles on the Plainfield side of the street, small tree lawns, very few trees at the curb mostly on property). She will send photos of site and let commissioners decide. There is a request for trees in the 900 block of Stelle that Ms. Burgwinkle volunteered to handle, and there are a number of other requests.

STC Planting Policy & Public Notification (Public Ordinances/STC website/Public Works Department Bulletin

Ms. Burgwinkle is still working on this project, apologized for not finishing it sooner.

NJ Shade Tree Federation Conference

Ms. Stefel needs to attend the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation Conference in October (23rd and 24th), Mr. Simone will likely go for one day, not stay over. Others who would like to attend should let Ms. Stefel know as soon as possible as she needs to start processing the purchase orders this summer.

5. Adjournment and Next Meeting:

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. Next meeting is July 22, 2015 at 7:30 pm.