

City of Plainfield
Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of Meeting of November 16, 2016 7:30 pm
Plainfield City Hall, 515 Watchung Ave., Second Floor Conference Room
Plainfield, New Jersey 07060

1. Call to Order and Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Peter Simone, Mary Burgwinkle, Barbara Spellmeyer, Kelley Boreo and Oscar Riba. Jan Massey did not attend. April Stefel, Liaison to Shade Tree Commission from Planning Division also attended.

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

3. Approval of Minutes: The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the September 28, 2016 Regular Monthly Meeting and they were approved with two editing changes. There were no minutes for the October 26, 2016 meeting. The meeting was cancelled shortly before meeting time because regular attendees planned to attend a conflicting community meeting.

4. Shade Tree Commission Items:

STC Application

Lynne Wallace submitted her resignation from Shade Tree Commission. As a result, there is one vacancy.

2016 Community Forestry Accomplishments

Ms. Stefel is preparing and submitting this report to the state. She asked Commissioners to double check their attendance at CEU events and send certificates to her.

2016 Tree City USA Recertification

Ms. Stefel has completed this and sent it to Arbor Day Foundation.

NEW Plainfield Roadway Improvement Projects (Doug Johnson-Remington Vernick & Arango Engineers)

Cambridge Avenue and Gresham Road were included in the Roadway Improvement program because of some extra money. The trees for Cambridge were Redbuds (Cercis Canadensis "Appalachian Red") and have been planted after removal of some large trees where root system would be compromised if they were left up. Large London Plane and Red Oaks were removed from Gresham, and the road repair is underway. Redbuds and Little Leaf Lindens will be planted.

2016 Plainfield Roadway Improvement Projects (Philip Wolf –Remington Vernick & Arango Engineers)

Mr. Simone advised that the Roadway Improvement projects are near complete and that 161 trees were replanted in the following neighborhoods with the following species:

Coolidge Street / Frances Lane / Linbarger Avenue / Loretta Terrace / Maxson Place / Salem Road / Shirley Street - Cercis Canadensis "Appalachian Red"

Adam Circle - Quercus palustris, Pin Oak

Salem Road - Platanus × acerfolia London Planetree

East 2nd Street (Leland to Terrill) – Little Leaf Linden and Amur Maples

Citizens are generally being cooperative, however four called and asked to be taken off the tree list. City Administrator Rick Smiley, who is also the acting Director of the Department of Public Works and Urban Development made an executive decision that no citizen would be forced to take a tree. Discussion ensued about the public policy in the STC ordinance, and that STC will need to meet with the administration to go over the need to make such decisions after consultation with STC. Ms. Burgwinkle will work on that.

Grants:

NJDEP CSIP Grant: \$27,900 was awarded (\$25,000 was requested). Ms. Stefel reported that we have the documents and that she needs to get three independent quotes for trees. STC needs to decide whether to plant in the spring or fall.

Greening of Union County: Our tree request has been submitted, but the Union County vendor has a backlog and is not being responsive. Several Commissioners attended a recent Right Tree Right Place seminar where they were told that it is hard to get trees because of the replacement that had to be done as the result of Sandy and other catastrophic storms. Ms. Stefel believes that there are vendors with trees in other locales however Union County has contracted with L Barbato.

American Water Company: Mr. Simone reported that trees were available for Schools from this entity. Despite that STC does not have jurisdiction over school board property, he consulted with Stillman, Evergreen and Barlow and trees have been planted. The other schools in the district did not take participate in the grant, so far as he knew.

St. Mary's Church-50 trees:This is a grant to the extent that benefactor Dr. Clemente is applying for a grant to test air quality management at the site, however, he donated the trees. Ms. Stefel commented that a nice planting job was done in the re-paved parking lot.

Community Forestry Management Plan

STC's next 5 year Community Forestry Management Plan was submitted by the consultant early in October. Ms. Stefel commented that we are showing on the state report as "received". We have not heard any feedback from either the consultant or the state. Ms. Stefel has again received the invoice for the project from CME. STC has determined that we will pay the invoice when the report is accepted and complete.

STC Planting Policy & Public Notification (Public Ordinances)

Ms. Burgwinkle will work on the ordinance revisions and notices when the draft CFMP has been accepted in final with no further work to be done. Ms. Spellmeyer and Ms. Boreo presented a draft of a pamphlet to be published and posted and distributed to citizens about the care and value of trees. Mr. Riba offered to format the pamphlet for them. They asked Commissioners to review and provide feedback at the next meeting.

Citizen Requests for Trees

Mr. Simone once again noted that citizens who call to request trees will be told that requests will be taken between January 1 and August 1 of each calendar year. Ms. Spellmeyer suggested that that information should be placed on the City website. Ms. Burgwinkle will work on that. Meanwhile, Ms. Massey has been compiling lists of requests received from citizens for follow up next year.

STC / Planning Board Site Applications

Mr. Simone has been asked to consult with the YMCA about landscaping needed as the result of the alterations that they are working on. Discussion ensued about whether STC should be acting as consultant. There was discussion about advising applicants that they need to find a landscaper and get plans, then seek approval.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m. Next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2016.