

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION

Tuesday, August 21, 2018

7:30 p.m.

Chrmn. Colleen Truppo called this Regular Meeting of the Shade Tree Commission to order at 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Upper Level, Chatham Borough Hall. The Open Public Meetings Act was read aloud.

Name	Present	Absent
Colleen Truppo, Chrmn.	X	
Fran Drew	X – present by speaker phone	
Ken Fekete	X	
Dean Wilson	X	
Kristy Chmura	X	
Ken Chmura	X	
Council Member James Collander		X
John Tortorella	X	
Tony Torello, Shade Tree Enforcement Officer		X

Also present:

Two interested residents: Marian Kristoff & Judith Zappata

Public Comment

There was none

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mr. Wilson made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes of June 19, 2018 as submitted. Mr. Chmura seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The minutes of June 18, 2018 were unanimously approved. Mr. Fekete abstained from voting because he was absent from that meeting.

New Business

Review of 27 North Summit Ave. request by the developer

Chrmn. Truppo noted that Commissioners should have the paperwork concerning this request. She pointed out that the major concern is the existing maple tree which sits in the middle of where the proposed driveway would run through. Chrmn. Truppo reported that Mr. Torello has looked at this tree and deemed that it was healthy. The developer wants to remove this Borough tree to put in this driveway. Chrmn. Truppo noted that the developer's plans are attached.

Mr. Fekete brought up another tree on the property, an ash tree, as shown on the plans. He questioned who determined that the ash tree was dead. It didn't look dead to him when he visited the site. Mrs. Drew and Mr. Chmura agreed with this point. Chrmn. Truppo pointed out that the ash tree was on private property, not public.

Chrmn. Truppo reported that the builder had met with Mr. Torello. The builder had told him that the Planning Board had approved his removing this tree near the curb. Mr. Torello had informed the builder that the Planning Board does not give approval for the removal of Borough trees. The Shade Tree Commission has to give that approval.

Mrs. Drew pointed out that the new Borough tree ordinance stated that a Borough group has responsibility regarding private trees. John Linson, the arborist, is in that group. Chrmn. Truppo agreed. The Commission can ask this group about the decision on the ash tree. However, the Commission is asked to consider this maple tree which the developer wants to remove for the placement of a driveway.

Mrs. Drew pointed out that the other Borough trees on the same side of the street as the maple tree provide excellent shade. Mrs. Drew suggested that one of the proposed garages be moved to the south side of the property and leave the maple tree alone. Chrmn. Truppo and Ms. Chmura suggested that the developer design a new driveway to allow the maple tree to remain standing.

Mr. Fekete made a motion that the developer return to the Shade Tree Commission with revised driveway plans to allow the Borough maple tree to remain. Mrs. Drew seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fekete made a motion that the Department of Public Works re-evaluate on who owns the ash tree on the plans. If this tree is a Borough tree, have John Linson, the Borough arborist, determine whether this tree is dead or alive. Mr. Chmura seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fekete felt it was upsetting that red Xs had been put on the trees in question.

At this point in the meeting, the two visitors introduced themselves:

Marian Kristoff – 12 Hedges Avenue

Judith Zappata – 13 Hedges Avenue

Mrs. Kristoff reported that an ash tree had been removed on her property. She and her husband are willing to donate a new tree to be planted in its place.

Chrmn. Truppo noted that she had recently received Mrs. Kristoff's Tree Service Request Form. She explained how the Commission's tree planting program worked. Chrmn. Truppo told Mrs. Kristoff that she would keep her posted on the tree planting progress.

Discuss the 49 Fairmount Ave. Request

Chrmn. Truppo reported that she had spoken to Mr. Torello about this ash tree on the corner of Second Street and the side of 49 Fairmount Avenue. The homeowner had safety concerns about this particular tree because it leans towards the tennis courts of Fish & Game Club. There is currently a summer camp going on for young people at the club. The homeowner had also reported that an arborist felt that something was wrong with this tree. She asked if it should be removed.

Chrmn. Truppo reported that Mr. Torello had the DPW recently trim dead wood from this tree. The DPW will come out again in the spring to check on the tree for any additional trimming. Chrmn. Truppo noted that the DPW felt that the tree is still healthy at this point. Mr. Torello didn't believe this tree was an immediate risk. Other ash trees have had dead wood removed. The tree can be taken down in a year or so if need be.

Mr. Fekete and Mr. Tortorella suggested that the Commissioners ask to see the report from the homeowner's arborist on this tree.

After further discussion, Chrmn. Truppo made a motion that the Department of Public Works evaluate this ash tree again in the spring. Based on these findings of this evaluation, the Commission can decide on bringing in an arborist, or having the tree removed. Mr. Chmura seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Old Business

Follow-up on the Library of the Chathams project

Chrmn. Truppo thanked Mrs. Drew for obtaining a larger version of the Library's proposed project for Commissioners to review. Mrs. Drew had also submitted notes to Chrmn. Truppo on further information that she had obtained regarding the Library project. Chrmn. Truppo then explained to Commissioners that the large black dot showed the location of the Library's gingko tree. The gingko tree will come down for the new handicap ramp to be installed and enclosed. Chrmn. Truppo noted that Mr. DeNave, the Borough Engineer, has specified that no permit will be given to the contractor until all construction permits have been obtained. The Library is still in a funding cycle for this project. Chrmn. Truppo pointed out that there is no guarantee that this project will go through.

Mrs. Drew reported that she had met with the architect when he was at the Library. Mrs. Drew and Chrmn. Truppo felt that the proposals for the gingko tree and the evergreen tree should come before the Shade Tree Commission, only if the necessary funds had been raised by the Library for this project and the appropriate approvals had been obtained from the Planning Board. Mrs. Drew believed the evergreen tree could be moved now, if need be.

After further discussion, Chrmn. Truppo made a motion that the gingko tree and the evergreen tree not be taken down or moved until the Library of the Chathams obtains the needed funding for their project and obtains approval for this project from the Borough Planning Board. Mr. Tortorella seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion was unanimously approved.

Miscellaneous

Mrs. Drew asked if she could, at a future meeting, present the major pluses of having JCP & L install their wiring underground, in place of telephone poles, on Borough streets.

Commissioners agreed to have Mrs. Drew give her presentation at either the September or October Commission meeting. Mr. Chmura recommended that Mrs. Drew first watch Robert Walton's recent JCP & L presentation at the Borough Council Meeting held on August 13, 2018.

Mrs. Drew agreed to watch a recording of that presentation. It was decided that Mrs. Drew will give her presentation at Shade Tree's October 16th meeting.

Mr. Chmura asked Chrmn. Truppo to explain the recently formed Tree Advisory Committee.

Chrmn. Truppo explained that this advisory committee was formed by the Mayor and Borough Council as a result of the newly adopted tree ordinance for privately-owned trees. She noted that the people serving on this committee would be John Linson, the Borough Arborist, Borough Administrator Steve Williams, Borough Engineer Vince DeNave, and the Chairperson of the Shade Tree Commission. Mr. Chmura noted to Chrmn. Truppo that the Tree Advisory Committee is an item in the recent Consent Agenda from the last Borough Council meeting.

Chrmn. Truppo reminded Commissioners that the Shade Tree Federation Conference will be held on October 18th & 19th. This conference would be a great educational opportunity for Shade Tree Commissioners. She discussed the core educational courses and the CEUs that were available.

On other events, Chrmn. Truppo reported that St. Paul's Church is planning a Sustainability Picnic in October. Ms. Chmura suggested ways the Shade Tree Commission could participate in the picnic.

Mr. Chmura suggested ways to improve the Shade Tree Commission web page. He felt a method to contribute funds to the Commission, as well as educational material could be included in the web page.

At 8:20 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Shade Tree Commission meeting will be on Tuesday, September 18, 2018, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Upper Level, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

