

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION
November 17, 2022 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Colleen Truppo called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. in Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building. Chrmn. Truppo stated that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Names	Present	Absent
Colleen Truppo, Chrmn.	X	
Kristy Chmura, Vice Chair	X	
Fran Drew		X
George Sweetin	X	
Dean Wilson	X	
John Tortorella		X
Patrick Florentino	X	
Beverly Klepper		X
Council Member Karen Koronkiewicz	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Chrmn. Truppo read aloud the STC Mission Statement.

Public Comment

Sunny Shakhawala, the owner of 39 Washington Ave., explained that a Borough tree, a Maple Shade Tree, is in the way of the construction working currently being done on his property. The foundation of the new home cannot be installed with this tree in the way. The crane operator informed him that he cannot proceed with his work with this tree in the way. Mr. Shakhawala stated that he was willing to do a compensatory planting if the STC allows him to remove the tree.

Mr. Shakhawala and Chrmn. Truppo discussed the trees that had already been removed on the property, not Borough trees. Chrmn. Truppo noted that his neighbors have expressed concern over these tree removals.

Mr. Sweetin asked Mr. Shakhawala why he didn't realize this tree was going to be a problem in the very beginning.

Mr. Shakhawala answered that the crane operator had just informed him of this problem tree.

Mr. Florentino asked if there would be any other way to install the pre-cast foundation without removing the Borough tree.

Mr. Shakhawala answered no. He and the contractor have not looked at other types of foundations that could be done.

Chrmn. Truppo stated that the STC could give him information on how to maintain the tree so the roots will not get compressed.

Mr. Shakhawala reiterated the difficulty the crane operator has with this tree. Also, the drip-line of the tree is over the driveway.

Mr. Sweetin stated he and the other Commissioners would very much like to see the plans for this construction project.

Mr. Shakhawala offered to run home, retrieve the plans, and return to the Commission. Chrmn. Truppo said that would be fine. She and the STC could continue with other business until he returns.

Mr. Shakhawala and his father temporarily left the meeting.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Chrmn. Truppo made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2022 STC meeting as amended. Mr. Florentino seconded the motion. The October 27, 2022 minutes were approved as amended.

Update on Tree Plantings for 2022

Chrmn. Truppo reported that 55 trees have recently been planted in the Borough.

Commissioners discussed how to put the Jaycees donation to the STC to good use. There were some open areas in the Borough that would have rooms for new trees.

Mr. Sweetin noted that the trees on the grassy island on Coleman Avenue are not in good condition. Commissioners pointed out that the neighborhood kids use that island for informal sports.

Mr. Sweetin brought up one spot in town where 15 to 20 trees could fit in. However, he would need time to work it out on paper. Mr. Sweetin pointed out that grants could always be applied for trees. Also, people can make memorial donations to remember a loved one or friend.

Mr. Shakhawala and his father returned to the meeting with the plans and the property survey for 39 Washington Ave. He explained in more detail the driveway and the tree in question.

Mr. Florentino was interested in seeing the email from the construction company. Chrmn. Truppo distributed copies of this email to Commissioners.

Mr. Sweetin questioned why this tree was labeled as an ash tree on the plans, when it's a maple.

Chrmn. Truppo and Commissioners indicated that they would like to reach out to the Madison Building Department to review the permit applications submitted for this project.

Mr. Shakhawala brought up how expensive it becomes for him if this project is delayed for too long. Commissioners indicated they understood this situation and sympathized.

Referring to the plans, Mr. Sweetin felt that the proposed driveway apron would impact the tree in question.

Commissioners told Mr. Shakhawala that they will look at his permits from the Madison Building Department and try and get back to him as soon as possible.

Mr. Shakhawala thanked the Commission for their time and left.

At 8:50 p.m. the Commission went into Closed Session to discuss this tree situation at 39 Washington Avenue.

At 8:57 p.m. the Commission returned to Public Session.

Attendance was again taken:

Present: Chrmn. Truppo, Vice Chrmn. Chmura, Mr. Sweetin, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Florentino, Council Member Kornokiewicz

Absent: Fran Drew, John Tortorella, Beverly Klepper

Mr. Wilson made a motion that the Shade Tree Commission make an offer to Mr. Shakhawala that he can remove the Borough tree at 39 Washington Ave. IF Mr. Shakhawala agrees to do a compensatory replanting cost of \$2,500. This money would be placed in the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission's Escrow Account to be used for planting trees on public property, in the rights-of-way in Mr. Shakhawala's neighborhood and surrounding area. Also, the tree stump of the removed tree must be grounded up and smoothed over. Mr. Sweetin seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye. The motion passed.

Chrmn. Truppo will reach out tomorrow to Mr. Shakhawala with this offer. If he refuses this offer, or makes a counter offer, he can return to the Commission at their December 22nd meeting.

Before adjourning, the Commission discussed attendance problems.

At 9:05 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 22, 2022, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary