

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION

April 27, 2023

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. Mrs. Truppo stated that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

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

Chrmn. Truppo read aloud the Mission Statement of the Shade Tree Commission.

Public Comment

There was none.

Motion To Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Klepper made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2023 STC meeting. Mr. Sweetin seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The meeting minutes were approved as submitted. The March 8, 2023 EC Meeting minutes are pending.

Discussion Items

Chrmn. Truppo recalled last month that a resident had discussed with the Commission about a tree branch that had fallen on her car, damaging it. This incident has now become a legal matter with the Borough. JIF (Joint Insurance Fund) has advised the STC not to discuss this matter any further. JIF has also instructed the resident to not reach out anymore to the STC about this situation.

On other matters, Chrmn. Truppo noted that the STC is required to give submissions to the Arbor Day Foundation, Tree City, and the NJDEP, the tree department. The Tree City submission has to be sent in first. However, problems have come up with the Tree City website. It wouldn't allow for any updates. Chrmn. Truppo noted, however, that all the paperwork is up to date for Tree City and the NJDEP.

Chrmn. Truppo thanked Mr. Sweetin for the number of CEU credits that he has earned for the STC. He has earned 82 credits.

Arbor Day 2023

Chrmn. Truppo reported that she had attended the Council Meeting last Monday and received the official proclamation for Arbor Day from the Mayor and Council. She had informed the governing body that the STC was again holding a “Celebrate Arbor Day” poster contest. The School District has given the green light to distribute info on the poster contest to local students. Also, local Girl Scout troops will be alerted to this contest. The contest will close May 12th.

Related to this, Chrmn. Truppo reported that the STC now has a new Facebook page. She asked Commissioners to share this Facebook page with other groups, individuals.

Jaycee Memorial Tree

Chrmn. Truppo thanked Mr. Sweetin for selecting a nice white oak tree in memory of Mr. Cammarata. That tree will be purchased with money from the tree escrow account. Including the generous donation from the Jaycees, the Tree Escrow Account is now \$77,275. This will provide more than enough money to plant trees. Chrmn. Truppo reported that the Jaycee trees will be planted in Memorial Park behind the Library. A “dead zone” area exists in the Park which could use new trees. Chrmn. Truppo felt another barren area, needing trees, is the North Hillside Ave. entrance to Memorial Field. Mr. Sweetin is planning a possible arboretum in that area.

Chrmn. Truppo noted that the Cammarata family is working the Jaycees to decide on a dedication date and ceremony for the tree.

Girl Scout Gold Award

Chrmn. Truppo gave an update on Scout Anna Rice’s progress on her Gold Award project. Anna is a sophomore in high school, so she isn’t pressed for time with her project. STC will identify landmark trees around the Borough. Anna will then create content for each tree using a QR code. Residents could then learn about these trees. Anna wants to make sure whatever posting website she chooses is compatible with what the Borough uses as a web server. Chrmn. Truppo stated if the STC wants to move forward with Anna’s project and the QR code proposal, she will work with Melanie Politi in Borough Hall, who is in charge of the Borough website.

Chrmn. Robertson reported that Anna does not expect this Gold Award to be very expensive. Possibly \$250. Anna is thinking of holding a car wash to raise the needed funds. Chrmn. Truppo suggested, if the STC were to approve Anna’s Gold Project, they could also donate the \$250 towards her project. Another idea is that the STC hold a dedicated walking tour of trees of a certain neighborhood, identifying and discussing these trees. The recorded tour could then be forwarded on to Anna. A decision will have to be made on how much info should be available on a tree’s QR code.

Commissioners suggested what neighborhoods and areas in the Borough that may have interesting trees for Anna’s project. Chrmn. Truppo stated that if the STC approved Anna’s project, they should invite her to an STC meeting.

Chrmn. Truppo made a motion that the Shade Tree Commission approve Anna Rice's Tree Project for her Girl Scout Gold Project. Vice Chrmn. Chmura seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye. The motion passed.

Chrmn. Truppo made a motion that the Shade Tree Commission provide an equal match to the \$250 needed for Anna Rice's Tree Project. Mr. Sweetin seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye. The motion passed.

Tree Request for South Passaic Avenue

Chrmn. Truppo discussed a recent email sent to the STC from a resident on South Passaic Avenue asking for tree plantings. Her side of South Passaic Ave. is totally devoid of trees, The resident has sent a photo of how the curb side currently looks, her Borough Right-of-Way. There is the possibility that this right-of-way is too narrow to install a tree and have it successfully live.

After further discussion, Chrmn. Truppo will reach out to the resident and inform her that the STC cannot guarantee tree plantings on her right-of-way. Perhaps a legal agreement could be arranged for a tree planting and care on such a narrow strip. Chrmn. Truppo will check with the DPW on the measurements of the measurements of this right-of-way on South Passaic Avenue, and if a tree could successfully be planted there.

On other matters, Mr. Sweetin brought up the Model Tree Ordinance that has come from the State. He will make copies for the Commissioners.

Chrmn. Truppo will forward the STC's Arbor Day flyer to Commissioners by email.

STC Donation to the Library of the Chathams

Mr. Wilson gave an update on a tentative decision made by the STC recently to donate \$1,000 to the Library of the Chathams to purchase tree books for young children and teens. Karen Brodsky, the Director of the Library, has since sent a 7-page letter giving the Library's criteria on accepting books. If the STC makes a cash donation, a 40% discount will be given. However, the STC must fill out a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials. Unfortunately, the Library will accept the STC's cash donation, but not necessarily use it to buy books on trees.

Mr. Sweetin had a list of excellent tree books.

After further discussion, Commissioners indicated that they did not want to turn hand over the money blindly to the Library.

Mr. Wilson will re-visit Karen Brodsky the Library Director to discuss this further. Commissioners wanted to be involved in the purchase of the books from their donation. They liked the list of tree books recommended by Mr. Sweetin.

Future Tree Walks

The Shade Tree Commission decided that their next Tree Walk will be on Sunday, May 21st at 3 p.m. Mr. Sweetin suggested Commissioners park on Weston Avenue, between Coleman Avenue

and Van Doren Avenue. Commissioners could then try and inspect the remaining trees on Weston Avenue.

At 8:32 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 25, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary