

CHATHAM BOROUGH SHADE TREE COMMISSION

September 28, 2023

7:30 p.m.

Chrmn. Colleen Truppo called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting 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	
John Tortorella		X
Patrick Florentino	X	
Beverly Klepper	X	
George Sweetin	X	
Gina Viola	X	
Miles Gilmore	X	
Council Member Karen Koronkiewicz	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

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

Public Comment

There was none.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mr. Sweetin made a motion to approve the August 24, 2023 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Florentino seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The August 24, 2023 minutes were approved.

Discussion Items

September Tree Walk

Chrmn. Truppo noted that the Commission held a Tree Walk on Elmwood Avenue on September 21st. Commissioners remarked on the abundance of flourishing trees on that street.

Mr. Gilmore suggested the STC award a certificate to homeowners who have exceptional trees. Also, Commissioners discussed putting an additional sign under official street signs giving recognition to the road as a model Shade Tree street. Chrmn. Truppo will talk to Mr. Torello, Public Works Director, about this possibility.

Council Member Koronkiewicz brought up the idea of designating a “Shade Tree Street of the Year”.

Sustainability Fair

Chrmn. Truppo reported that the Sustainability Fair will now be held on Saturday, October 14th, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Mr. Sweetin said he had pin oak seedlings. He suggested a raffle could be held for them.

Commissioners discussed the time slots to staff the STC table at the Fair.

Mr. Sweetin offered to look into the pricing for a table covering for the STC table, with the Commission's name on it. He will also have copies available of tree planting instructions that he has given to local Scouts.

Chrmn. Truppo suggested that a pre-meeting be held on October 9th to finalize the plans for the STC table. Commissioners reviewed what materials they will bring to the table.

Fall Tree Plantings

Chrmn. Truppo reported that she has had a meeting with Mr. Torello. The list of tree requests have now been compiled. Mr. Sweetin has a list of addresses that could use a tree. He noted the Windshield Survey has identified 58 spots for possible tree plantings.

Chrmn. Truppo reported that the DPW has reached out to Halls Gardening Center in Berkeley Heights for tree plantings. Halls will be supplying 70 trees. Chrmn. Truppo reviewed the species of trees.

Using his spreadsheet, Mr. Sweetin reviewed the expected height of each tree species.

Chrmn. Truppo pointed out that sometimes a Borough right-of-way is too narrow for a tree planting to survive.

Ms. Holler will find the Tree Requests from last year that did not make the 2022 deadline and give them to Mr. Sweetin.

Mrs. Klepper asked if Tree Requests Forms could be available at the STC table at the Sustainability Fair.

Commissioners felt that would be a good idea.

Miscellaneous

Chrmn. Truppo reported that John Linson had inspected the tree at 22 Garden Avenue. The homeowner had been concerned about its condition being dangerous. Mr. Linson recommended that the tree just be trimmed.

Mr. Florentino distributed copies of the comparison he had done on the comparison he did of the Madison tree ordinance to the Chatham tree ordinance, public trees versus private trees. He suggested that Chatham Borough could consider revamping their tree penalty fees. Mr. Florentino pointed out that compensatory tree procedures for Madison are different from

Chatham Borough. Designations for different trees, like landmark trees, in Madison are treated a little differently and receive a little more protection.

Mrs. Viola brought up a recent tree removal on Hillside Avenue for a construction project. How can someone find out if the necessary permission was given by the Borough to remove a tree?

Chrmn. Truppo answered that DPW had told her that the construction company had damaged that tree when they were digging for the water-line. Unfortunately, a huge pin oak had been damaged. The construction company was fined \$350. They had obtained the necessary permits.

Mr. Sweetin and Chrmn. Truppo felt that the STC should have a say on Zoning Bd./Planning Bd. plans, as does the Historic Preservation Commission.

Commissioners discussed the trees on private property, very close to the Exxon property. Mr. Sweetin noted the particular trees in that vicinity that are in poor condition or are hazardous to overhead wires.

Mr. Sweetin and Mr. Florentino felt that the Tree Protection Ordinance needs to be better enforced with construction projects in the Borough.

Commissioners discussed a recent private tree removal at 185 Hillside Ave. where a fine had been imposed. Mr. Sweetin pointed out that a fence is needed to be installed around that tree during construction work. Chrmn Truppo felt that fence requirement was not being enforced with Borough construction projects.

Mr. Sweetin explained how the utility mark-outs are done on a property, and how future construction and future tree plantings must be mindful of these mark-outs. He explained what the different colors used for mark-outs on properties.

Ms. Viola suggested the tree violations be reviewed.

Chrmn. Truppo will ask the DPW for the paperwork filed for 185 Hillside Ave. It can be reviewed at the next STC meeting. She will also make additions to Mr. Sweetin's spread-sheet for tree plantings.

NJ Tree Federation Conference

Chrmn. Truppo asked Commissioners to let her know if they still want to attend this conference. Please contact her tonight or tomorrow, in order to have their attendance fee to be reimbursed by the Borough.

At 8:35 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2023, 7:30 p.m., has been cancelled.

The next Chatham Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 16, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Upper Level, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Minutes Secretary