

City of Plainfield
Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 28, 2018 - 7:30 pm
Plainfield City Hall, 515 Watchung Ave., Second Floor Conference Room
Plainfield, New Jersey 07060

Regular Monthly Meeting:

Standing Agenda:

Call to Order and Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mary Burgwinkle, Barbara Spellmeyer, Vanessa Doman, Holly Hoffman and Ron Johnson. Oscar Riba arrived shortly after roll call.

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

Minutes of February 28, 2018 Meeting: The minutes were approved with no changes.

CEU Count and Review: Ms. Burgwinkle reported that she and April Stefel each obtained 1 CEU for attending a webinar on CSIP Grant applications presented by NJ Urban & Community Forestry on March 23, 2018. Ms. Doman reported that she attended a 1 CEU webinar presented by USDA Urban Forest Connections concerning trees and heart health. She commented that it was very interesting and would be a good thing to cite when and if people have issues with shade trees.

Budget uses this month: Budget uses did not change from the last meeting.

Business Agenda:

Arbor Day: Discussion ensued about the April 27th Arbor Day Celebration. Commissioners reviewed the draft program and the draft community notice of the event, as well as the coloring page to be given to the children. Regarding recognizing a specimen/historic tree or trees, Ms. Spellmeyer brought large color images of three candidates. First is the very large old Sycamore at the end of the Brook Lane cul de sac. That tree has already been honored in an early Arbor Day. Next was the Allee of London Plane trees along Cedar Brook Road. Finally, there is a very large Ash tree on the front lawn of 1236 Denmark Road. The Commissioners selected that tree. Regarding planting locations, Mr. Johnson brought six suggestions for planting locations in the downtown area to the last meeting. One of the locations is within the municipal parking lot at 35 Watchung Avenue. After discussion, the Commissioners decided that the location may be inhospitable. In the discussion of species for the plantings, the Commissioners discussed the fact that trees that become very wide tend to obscure signs for merchants. Species suggested were Ginkgo Princeton Sentry or European Hornbeam, trees that

tend to grow vertically and can be trimmed to accommodate a narrower shape. DPW Superintendent John Louise could not attend the meeting but emailed that DPW would continue to help with Arbor Day. Commissioners discussed announcing the sites at Arbor Day, but giving the DPW time to prepare the sites and plant later in the Spring, given the weather related issues that are keeping them so busy. Ms. Burgwinkle advised the Commissioners that the Rotary Club of the Plainfields may become involved in Arbor Day by making a contribution toward trees.

CSIP Grant: Because Brian McDonald from NJ Urban & Community Forestry will be in Plainfield on May 18 to look at the CSIP Grant trees that were planted last Spring, we need to remove the stakes and wires and adjust mulch if necessary. Ms. Stefel has provided maps of the tree locations. Ms. Burgwinkle visited trees on Grant Avenue between W. Third and W. Second and commented that the stakes removed relatively easily but the wires are heavy and require strong wire cutters. She will pick up a few of those. Commissioners will go out on Sunday April 8th at 8:00 am. She will circulate locations and we will see how many can be done that day.

Other Business: Ms. Doman gave Mr. Riba the Ward 1 maintenance spreadsheet that she compiled. Ms. Burgwinkle briefed the other Commissioners on a call that Planning Division received from 720 Richmond that the city tree was leaning and insurance would not be renewed. Ms. Burgwinkle and Ms. Stefel visited the site and took photographs. The tree is very straight with a well shaped crown, and so the STC and Planning will not recommend taking it down. Ms. Burgwinkle also noted that she and Ms. Hoffman attended the Joint Land Use Boards meeting on March 10th. Ms. Burgwinkle was given a few minutes to discuss STC and focused on the formation of STC, getting approved status from the state and the state statute that gives the City liability protection if it has an approved STC. The meeting chair expressed interest in that fact.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

The next meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2018 at 7:30 pm.