

FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION
April 5, 2023 Meeting - 7:30 PM
1st Floor Mayor's Conference Room 110

MINUTES

1. **Meeting Called to Order** – 7:34 p.m. Alan Walker, Thom Ritchie, Bill Brash, Mark Taylor, Kurt Davis, David Novak, Stacey Ehling
2. **Salute to the Flag** - done
3. **Announcement of Open Public Meeting Act** – done
In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law, (c231, P.L. 1975) this meeting was announced by posting a notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building reserved for that purpose, by mailing such notice to the offices of the official newspapers and the Township and filing such notice with the Township Clerk.
4. **Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2023** – Bill motion, Mark second, approved with no changes.
5. **Greg Hanley report on site plan reviews and Tree Removal Permits & Applications**

Revision of review 2 for Golden Meadow – All done except for appraised value of the heritage trees. Paul Cowley inspected the trees, but no appraisal was done. Conditions and some of the ID's were wrong. Didn't provide what was requested so getting sent back to them to address the appraisal and Greg's issues.

A2 Solutions at Wemrock Hills (Rt. 33 and Wemrock Rd.) – 20-acre subdivision to 9 building lots and one utility lot. Tree clear and tree save plan and landscape plan provided. Inventory done years ago for a sample area. Heritage tree on the plan should have protective fencing as well as any wooded areas not to be disturbed. Need an updated inventory 100x100 submitted with permit to commission and site inspection prior to removal work.

Rt. 9 and Throckmorton - Near Dill's, want to clear out some trees. Someone needs to call them and state they need an LTE do a tree inventory and then Greg can go out and check the area. Don't know what the clearing is for at this time.

Siloam and Eli Harmony Rd – North of 29 acres want to use property for cemetery and want to clear and grade the property for stated storm basin, lighting, and other planned improvements. Tree list did not include genus and species. The tree removal permit was signed off Feb. 17 and approved for removals – application said it was an open field and it was approved. The issue is that there are heritage trees on the application tree number 9 14.5 DBH American Holly is 14 or greater, qualifies and listed to be removed – need to protect it and not remove. Appraisal needs to be submitted by LTE and total trees to be removed greater than 4" DBH. All White Oaks in landscape plan need to diversify species to avoid monoculture planning. Commission discussed the requirement for planting trees near power lines/overhead wires -- no closer than 20 feet. Pre- and post inspection should be required for planting.

Brief discussion by the commission about revising the ordinance for removals and making a tiered rate system for removals like other towns have.

6. Shade Tree Appeal Hearings – No appeals.

7. Unfinished Business:

- a. Remove dead and at-risk trees in Right-of-way, elevate & structural prune trees along Stillwells Corner Road. Discussed if there is possibility for DPW to take down any trees that are a danger during the brush collection. If not, possibly a job for an intern once hired.
- b. Hiring a Rutgers Student as seasonal worker for pruning Street trees and DPMA – Draft job description revised, notice sent to students and one person is interested. Bill is following up.
- c. Tree replacements, maintenance and improvements at DPMA – 2 big sugar maples need to be removed, intern can possibly do inventory. Kurt will create a “priority list” of items to be addressed and provide to the committee to review and submit to DPW.
- d. April 25 – 8 p.m. Arbor Day presentation Twp. Committee – if any members can attend please do.
- e. Arbor Day at WFS 4/28/23 10 a.m., (Note this time has been changed to 8:30 a.m. as of 4/20 STC was notified by email. DPMA 4/29/23 10 a.m.
- f. Updates to Shade Tree Website – Discuss at next meeting or over the summer. Contact Pete Valessi about online forms.
- g. Guidelines for Tree Preservation Ordinance – Need to add fines/consequences or just do Best Practices. Failure to comply may result in fine. Vandalism ordinance. Bill created a draft and circulated to STC members to review and comment for next meeting.

8. New Business:

- b. Shade Tree Monthly Report - No comments
- c. Correspondence - Tree City USA approval.

9. Open Public Discussion – none.

10. Good and Welfare

Discussion about the shade tree conference and new findings about chemistry in trees and how they are resistant to some diseases, that antibiotics are in some, that woodchips are better than mulch. Willow trees have aspirin and seems to help struggling trees.

Parks and DPW work on Durand – can we meet with Scott and Chris to see what they can get done this year? Come up with what want to see done. List to give them direction. Bring it next meeting.

11. Adjourn – 9:12 Stacey first, Bill second. Adjourned.