

CRANBURY TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES

June 2, 2022

The regular meeting of the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Cranbury was held on June 2, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. by remote access videoconferencing in response to COVID-19 and the updated Open Public Meeting Act guidelines.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Ms. Kathy Easton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and Jean Golisano acted as Recording Secretary of the meeting.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) was provided on January 5, 2022 of this meeting's date, time and place, and the agenda was communicated to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

Ms. Golisano read into record the following statement:

Cranbury Township Statement on Public Comment during Remote Meeting

The public may electronically submit questions or comments to igolisano@cranbury-nj.com or in written letter form via mail to Cranbury Township Town Hall no later than 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled Committee Meeting. Name, address and phone or email must be included. Timely submitted questions or public comment shall be read aloud and addressed during the public meeting. Duplicate written comments may be summarized and noted for the record in a consistent manner.

To eliminate background noise so that all meeting participants may hear, please mute your microphone and remain in listening mode only. The Board Secretary will place all remote attendees on this platform on mute as well and will manage the order of the remote participant's comments. During public comment period(s), the Board Secretary will make an announcement that any remote participant seeking to comment must signify their intent by using the "raise hand" feature on Zoom. The Board Secretary will then unmute each participant individually when it is their designated time to speak. If you do not have a question or comment, please keep your microphone muted. Please unmute yourself only at the direction of the Board Secretary. All remote users must state their name and address at the beginning of his/her public comment. Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to comment.

Should a member of the public using the Zoom platform become disruptive, that individual will be kept on mute and receive a warning that continued disruption may result in their being prevented from speaking or removed from the meeting entirely. If time permits, the disruptive individual shall be allowed to speak after all other members of the public have been given the

opportunity to speak. The Commission will facilitate a dialogue with all commenters to the extent permitted by Zoom technology

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Kathy Easton, Jessica Irons, Jackie Johnson, Bonnie Larson, and Lee Nissen were present.

NONMEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

None.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the April 7, 2022 meeting were reviewed and an edit made. On a motion by Ms. Easton and seconded by Ms. Larson, with all members present agreeing, the amended Minutes of the April 7th meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP)

Volunteer Work Hours – For the April 7th to June 2nd time period, STC members reported the following volunteer hours (including 1.5 hours for today's meeting): Ms. Easton – 35 hours; Ms. Johnson – 6; Ms. Larson – 9.5 hours; Ms. Nissen – 3.5 hours; and Ms. Irons – 3.5 hours.

Status of "Do Not Plant" and Recommended Tree Exhibit Lists

Ms. Johnson and Ms. Easton will continue to work on the lists, and updated materials will be posted on the Shade Tree website. Ms. Easton reported the New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team sent an e-mail containing an updated list of invasive species. Members agreed to post a link to that list on the Shade Tree website. Ms. Easton and Ms. Johnson will also work on editing the Recommended Tree Exhibit.

Spotted Lanternfly Management in Village Park

Ms. Easton reported female ailanthus trees were removed from Village Park and that cleared area is now being covered by invasive species. Members agreed an environmental consultant that works with municipal governments is needed to advise how to create a sustainable area in that location as well as other areas in the township. Management of the area is beyond Shade Tree's experience and is too difficult for Public Works to manage. The goal is to make the restoration of Village Park a sustainable wooded area and not a field of invasives. Ms. Johnson suggested asking the Parks Commission to develop a long-term plan for the area. Ms. Easton and Ms. Johnson will work on a presentation for Parks concerning the future plans for the area. Ms. Easton will also follow up with Ms. El-Badawi concerning continuing use of Sav-A-Tree to treat the remaining ailanthus trees in Village Park.

Memorial Trees

Ms. Easton reported on May 22nd the Golisano Family planted a white oak tree in memory of Mr. Sal Golisano near the historic 1700's house in Millstone Park. She reported this morning the Weidner Family planted a native sweetbay magnolia in Heritage Park in memory of Mr. Tom Weidner, former Chair and long-time member of the Parks Commission. The tree was planted near the ornamental crabapples near Judy's Meadow. Plaques will be selected by both families for approval by the Parks Commission. Public Works will keep the trees watered.

Community Education Program

As part of the Mayors Wellness Campaign, Ms. Easton presented the “The Benefits of Trees” via Zoom on Wednesday, April 20th at 7:00 p.m. The program was well attended and well received.

Cranbury 325th Anniversary – Fall Walk Event

Ms. Easton and Ms. Irons will work on a fall event walking in Heritage Park and identifying trees. The Walk is scheduled for Saturday, September 17th (rain date of September 18th) at 9:00 a.m. in Heritage Park.

Replacement of Evergreen Tree in Heritage Park

Shade Tree will not be purchasing an evergreen tree for Heritage Park. Ms. Denise Marabello Township Administrator stated Public Works will not be decorating a tree in Heritage Park. Ms. Easton will notify the Parks Commission.

Heritage Tree Ordinance

Members discussed immediate measures that could be taken to protect trees of a certain size, whether champion, heritage or historic. Ms. Easton stated she would like to speak to the Township Planner, with the Township Administrator’s approval, to discuss how to strengthen control of needless removal of healthy trees. Ms. Easton recommended that removal of trees of a certain size, even on private property, would require Shade Tree Commission permission. She clarified that dying, dead or hazardous trees could be removed. Ms. Easton and Ms. Nissen will work together on this. Ms. Johnson stressed that street trees cannot be removed, and Ms. Easton agreed that the current ordinance addresses the protection of street trees. However, currently Shade Tree does not have authority over trees that are not in the public right-of-way. It is important to get ordinances in place to protect trees.

Arbor Day

Arbor Day was celebrated on April 29th. Ms. Easton reported a great attendance, which included the Cranbury School second graders, School Administrators and teachers, Cranbury Township Police Chief Michael Owens and police officers, Town Hall employees and a representative of every Township Board/Commission. The tree was planted on the east side of Main Street near the dam. The students assembled in Memorial Park, sang a song, recited a poem and shared drawings about trees. Shade Tree Chair, Ms. Easton, spoke about trees and Mayor Barbara Rogers read a proclamation. Red bud tube seedlings were distributed to the students at the school. The weather was beautiful and the students were very excited to participate in the event.

NEW BUSINESS

Tree Inventory

Ms. Easton reported a webinar on tree inventory grants was being held today, and she encouraged members to participate. She stated \$7,500 was already allocated in this year’s budget for the inventory and additional grant funds could mean the entire inventory could be completed. Ms. Irons emailed the webinar link to members.

Tree Maintenance

Ms. Larson asked that the two stumps in front of Heritage Park be ground down. Ms. Easton stated a flush cut would suffice or the stumps could rot naturally. Ms. Easton will follow up with Public Works.

Cranbury Day

Cranbury Day will be held on Saturday, September 10th. Ms. Easton will reach out to members closer to the event to determine who can represent Shade Tree at the event.

Tree Canopy Goal

Ms. Easton reported that part of Cranbury's Sustainable Mission is to support a 30% tree canopy in the Township. Ms. Easton made a motion, seconded Ms. Nissen with all members agreeing, to support a goal of a 30% tree canopy in the Township.

Review of Landscape Plans

Ms. Easton reported the Shade Tree Commission is responsible for reviewing applicant's landscape plans and submitting comments to the Planning Board. Shade Tree can agree to the plans as submitted, or can reject plans that include trees on the "Do Not Plant" list. Shade Tree can only comment on species and size of trees to be planted, and cannot comment on removal of any existing trees.

Tree Planting

Ms. Easton requested members to advise if they notice any gaps on Main Street. She reported there is still room in the budget to purchase trees to fill in the gaps.

Tree Maintenance

Ms. Easton will follow up with Public Works concerning pruning up the young trees on Main Street. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Easton will check for hazardous trees in the Parks. Ms. Easton stated pruning in Heritage, Village, Millstone and Barn Parks has been done in the last couple of years; however, because the parks are heavily used, they will do a safety check. Ms. Easton will follow up with Public Works concerning the stumps on South Main Street near Heritage Park.

Tree Inquiries

There were no tree inquiries to report.

Salem Oak

Ms. Easton reported she picked up the Salem Oak from the nursery, and it will remain potted under Ms. Nissen's care for the next couple of years until it is mature enough to be planted.

Summary of "To Do" Action Items

Ms. Easton

- Talk to Parks Commission about evergreen tree.
- Tree inventory Grant due July 10th
- Check Sav-A-Tree "certified" status not posted on website.
- Follow up with Public Works about stumps on Main Street by Heritage Park.
- Work on history of trees for fall walk.
- Safety check of parks' trees
- Work on Heritage Tree Ordinance

Ms. Irons

- Work on history of trees for fall walk.
- Tree inventory grant.

Summary of "To Do" Action Items (cont'd)

Ms. Nissen

Work on Heritage Tree Ordinance

Ms. Johnson

Safety check of parks' trees

Tree Inventory Grant

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, motion duly made by Ms. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Larson and unanimously carried, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed Secretary of the Cranbury Township Shade Tree Commission, and that this document, consisting of five (5) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the monthly meeting held on June 2, 2022.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 2nd day of June, 2022.

Jean Golisano
Board Secretary