

CRANBURY TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES

February 6, 2020

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

A meeting of the Cranbury Township Shade Tree Commission was held in the Gourgaud Gallery in Town Hall, 23A North Main Street, Cranbury, on February 6, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Secretary Jean Golisano called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and acted as the 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 December 16, 2019, of this meeting's date, time and place, and the agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

OATHS

Ms. Golisano, Deputy Clerk, issued the oaths of office to members Bonnie Larson and Jessica Irons.

REORGANIZATION

A motion was made by Ms. Larson, seconded by Ms. Johnson, to nominate Ms. Easton as the Chairperson of Shade Tree for 2020. All members agreed, and the motion was passed.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

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

NONMEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Dr. Barbara Rogers, Liaison

MINUTES

The amended minutes of the November 7, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Irons, and seconded by Ms. Easton. On a voice vote of all members present, with Ms. Johnson and Ms. Larson abstaining, the November 7th Minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP)

Volunteer Work Hours – For the November 7, 2019 to February 7, 2020 time period, STC members reported the following volunteer hours: Ms. Easton – 26.5; Ms. Johnson – 10; and Ms. Larson – 13.5; Ms. Nissen – 2.5; Ms. Irons – 4.5 volunteer hours.

Ms. Easton, earned 2 CEUs for participating in the NJUCF December AAR webinar and also the I Tree Webinar.

CFMP Objectives and Tasks – Ms. Easton reported Cranbury is in the third year of the five-year plan and stated Shade Tree is on target with accomplishing its tasks. Ms. Easton requested members bring their CFMP books to the meeting, and stated the plan will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Budget

Ms. Easton reviewed the budget with the members, including Membership (\$100); banner (\$150); training (\$750); tree pruning (\$15,000); and tree planting (\$10,000). Ms. Easton stated the trees will be planted on Main Street to fill in the gaps.

Four Seasons Planting

Ms. Johnson reported the trees planted in Four Seasons have now been properly pruned by the contractor, and now Ms. Johnson stated they look more like trees than bushes. Ms. Easton stated a further assessment of the trees will be done in the spring when the trees leaf out.

Community Education Program

Ms. Easton requested members bring ideas for programs to future meetings. She stated she would like to do an outdoor activity for family program to get families outside to identify trees and their value. Dr. Rogers suggested partnering with the Board of Health's NJ Healthy Time Initiative. Ms. Easton stated she would have to check if Shade Tree would receive credit for a shared program. Members agreed to hold some type of outdoor education program in either the spring or fall.

Annual Report to Township Committee

Ms. Easton presented Shade Tree's annual report to the Township Committee on November 25th. The Township Committee approved posting the updated tree lists on the Township website.

At the Township Committee meeting, Ms. Easton reported Shade Tree would like to be notified on Planning Board applications to review proposed tree plantings and landscape plans. Ms. Easton reported the Alfieri Cranbury South Brunswick development on South River road is proposing a species that is on the Do Not Plant list, and Shade Tree will recommend a replacement species.

At the February 13th Planning Board meeting, Alfieri is requesting an amendment to the original approval, seeking a design waiver regarding tree caliper/size deviation. Ms. Easton will contact Ms. Josette Kratz, Planning Board Secretary to compare original resolution and amended application. Shade Tree members discussed caliper sizes and agreed large calipers do not plant successfully.

Members discussed the necessity of changing the current tree ordinance which states 3-inch tree caliper to a now recommended 1-1/2 to 2-1/2-inch tree caliper. Members agreed Ms. Easton made a motion, seconded by Ms. Larson, to request amending Chapter 150, Article 5 from a 3-inch tree caliper to a 1-1/2-inch caliper. On a roll call vote, all members agreed to the motion and it was passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Committee – Ms. Easton reported on the next Township Committee Meeting Agenda, there is a resolution to create a Zoning Committee, which will be an advisory board to the Township Committee.

Tree Pruning in Heritage Park

The tree pruning in Heritage Park is complete. Ms. Easton reported Save-A-Tree was very responsible and did a good job trimming up the oak trees. Ms. Easton reported the funds in Shade Tree's budget is different than Public Works' budget. She stated Shade Tree is in the Public Works budget; however, Shade Tree has control over its budget amount. This year, Shade Tree will focus its efforts on Village Park. She will call three contractors to come look at Village Park to determine what work needs to be done. Ms. Easton stated the next area to concentrate on will be the Preserve before working on Millstone Park.

2020 Calendar

The 2020 dates for Shade Tree Meetings are April 2, June 4, September 10 and November 5.

Employee/Board Member Manual

Ms. Easton advised members to read over the Employee/Board Member Manual. She recommended members pay specific attention to only using the Township e-mail and not personal e-mail.

Annual Reports – Annual Accomplishment Report and Tree City

Ms. Easton reported the Annual Accomplishment Report is due on February 15, and reported the Tree City Report will be filed first. Ms. Easton report Dr. Rogers, Shade Tree Liaison for the Township Committee, would like all Boards' certifications/emblems posted on the website. Ms. Easton reported this will be Cranbury's 32nd year as a Tree City Township.

Tree Inquiries

Ms. Easton reported a follow-up inquiry was received from 61 South Main Street. A tree had been removed by the Public Works vendor, who will be coming back to grind the stump. The resident would like another tree planted in the strip. Shade Tree will look to see if the strip is suitable for planting a tree.

Tree Inventory

Members discussed the many environment benefits realized from trees, including the effects of carbon storage, and air and hydrology benefits. There are websites that can calculate the benefits from tree canopies, including I-Tree Canopy, Eco-Tree and the Watershed's National Tree Benefit Calculator at Benefits.com. Members agreed there is a lot of valuable data available and would like reach out to tree inventory company to do the inventory for Cranbury. Ms. Easton requested members research tree inventory companies for further discussion at the next meeting. Members discussed the possibility of hiring a company, utilizing volunteers or possibly hiring a company to train volunteers. Ms. Easton recommended starting small by completing an inventory of the trees in the Village and then go out to developments.

Ms. Larson and Ms. Nissen will update the Main Street "Empty Hole Survey" and will give report at the April meeting.

Village Park Pruning

Ms. Nissen or Ms. Johnson will work with Ms. Easton to determine work needed in Village Park. Ms. Easton will also contact the Parks Commission.

Arbor Day

The Arbor Day Celebration will be on April 24th and will again include the Cranbury School second graders. The last few years trees have been planted in Village Park and on Main Street. Shade Tree members will look at possibly planting a tree on Main Street near an empty hole. Ms.

Easton reported the trees will no longer be shipped and must be picked up, and requested that DPW pick up the order. She reported there are 45 second graders, and members agreed to order 25 white oak and 25 willow oak seedlings. Ms. Johnson recommended starting the seedling in a pot first and members agreed instructions on how to care for the seedling would be helpful.

Salem Oak Seedling

The Township will receive a seedling from the Salem Oak, and members will determine where the seedling will be planted. Ms. Easton will consult with Parks and DPW about suggestions on planting location.

Heritage Tree Ordinance

The Heritage Tree Ordinance will be discussed at a future meeting.

Shade Tree Banner

The banner will be discussed at the next meeting before the order is placed.

Summary of Action Items

Ms. Johnson will prepare a summary of action items.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, motion duly made by Ms. Easton, seconded by Ms. Larson and carried, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 11:28 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 four (4) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the monthly meeting held on February 6, 2020.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this day of June, 2020.

Jean Golisano

Jean Golisano
Board Secretary