

# **CRANBURY TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION**

## **MINUTES**

**September 10, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Cranbury was held 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 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. Notification of remote access meetings going forward until further notice was posted on the Township website on April 24, 2020, and sent to the Trenton Times, Homes News and Cranbury Press on May 1, 2020

### **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

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

### **NONMEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

None

### **MINUTES**

The amended minutes of the June 4, 2020 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Easton, and seconded by Ms. Larson. On a voice vote, all members present agreeing, with the exception of Ms. Nissen who abstained, the amended June 4th Minutes were approved.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP)

Volunteer Work Hours – For the June 4th to September 10, 2020 time period, STC members reported the following volunteer hours: Ms. Easton – 31.5; Ms. Johnson – 11; and Ms. Larson – 9.5; Ms. Nissen – 1.5; Ms. Irons – 16.5 volunteer hours.

Ms. Easton stated work needed to be done on the CFMP. Ms. Johnson suggested holding a special meeting or work session in October to work on the CFMP. Members agreed, and a special meeting will be held on October 1<sup>st</sup> at 10 a.m. to work on both the CFMP and the 2021 Budget. Ms. Golisano will publish the special meeting.

### 2019 Four Seasons Planting

Ms. Johnson reported the trees planted in Four Seasons are doing well. Out of 37 trees planted, only one had to be replaced and is doing well. Ms. Johnson reported the maples are doing very well.

### Community Education Program

Ms. Easton stated the education program will be temporarily put on hold due to COVID-19 and social distancing restrictions.

### "No Plant" and Exhibit Lists Status

Ms. Easton reported the lists are being used and stated in the new year, and she and Ms. Johnson will work on checking the lists for accuracy and to update information.

### Website Page Review

Ms. Easton requested members review the Shade Tree web page for content accuracy.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Tree Inquiries

Ms. Larson reported receiving an inquiry from a resident concerning the tree in front of her home on Hagerty Drive. Ms. Johnson reported Four Seasons removed the tree. Ms. Johnson stated Four Seasons will seed the area in November and will plant a new tree. She stated this was not a Township tree, and the issue has been addressed and resolved by Four Seasons.

Ms. Easton reported a hazardous tree on 4 Brainerd Drive, and stated the homeowner was advised to remove the tree because of dangerous hanging broken branches.

Ms. Larson reported there is a tree in poor condition by Brainerd Lake by the Bridge and also another tree on Main Street near Heritage Park that had dead branches. Ms. Easton thought this tree was already on Public Work's list, and requested Ms. Larson take a picture of the tree and send it to her and Mr. Thorne, Public Works Manager.

Ms. Easton reported the Arbor Day Red Bud tree planted by the Bridge was incorrectly pruned by a landscaper. Ms. Easton stated she and Ms. Johnson will prune back the branches that were not done properly.

Ms. Easton reported a West Windsor resident would like to plant a tree in Cranbury in memory of a gentleman who loved the Township. She stated he was passionate about forestry and loved Cranbury. Ms. Easton stated they would like to plant an American Beech, however, Ms. Easton was concerned about the size of that species. She reported she approached the Parks Commission about planting the tree in one of the Township parks and was met with some resistance by one member who did not want to allow an out-of-town resident to plant a tree in Cranbury. The rest of the Parks Commissioners supported the tree planting, only voicing concern about whether a plaque would be installed. Ms. Easton will obtain more information and report back to Parks and Shade Tree members. Ms. Nissen will work with Ms. Easton on the memorial tree donation.

### Spotted Lanternfly

The members discussed the spread of the destructive Spotted Lanternfly and the importance of educating the public on ways to eradicate it. Information on the Spotted Lantern was posted on the Township's website last year and needs to be updated. Ms. Irons will research the most up-to-date information and provide it to Ms. Golisano for posting on the web with e-mail blast to the residents.

### Tree Inventory

The tree inventory list was discussed. The members agreed it would be beneficial to have a professional conduct another inventory of the trees on Main Street. The original tree inventory, of 2002, included not only Main Street trees but also neighborhood trees. Ms. Johnson suggested parks and public spaces should be included on the inventory list. Ms. Easton agreed, stated the new inventory would be smaller than the original list. Mr. Johnson recommended waiting until the new year to address this, and Ms. Easton suggested putting funds in next year's budget for the inventory. Ms. Easton suggested getting quotes from Paul Cowie (who did the original inventory), Save-A-Tree, and Bartlett. Ms. Larson suggested getting two quotes: one for the village and a second to also cover other public areas and parks.

### Main Street Tree Planting 2020

Ms. Easton reported she and Ms. Johnson reviewed the Empty Hole Survey updated by Ms. Larson and Ms. Nissen in 2017. She stated they found locations for six trees; root guards will be needed. There is a \$10,000 budget for tree planting. Ms. Easton will work on the RFQ and Ms. Johnson will review it before it is submitted to vendors. Quotes will be needed soon so trees can be planted in the fall.

### Tree Pruning in Village and Millstone Parks

Ms. Easton reported she met with two vendors to look at the trees in Village Park and Millstone Park to determine what work needs to be done. Ms. Easton reported the third vendor contacted was not able to meet with her. She stated both quotes from both contractors will have to be reviewed as the work listed was different. Ms. Easton stated the trees have never been pruned, and most work done in the past was reactionary, never proactive. She stated one quote was more than the other; however, that quote may also be including more work so Ms. Easton has to really compare the two quotes. Because of time constraints, Ms. Larson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Johnson, to give Ms. Easton the authority to select the vendor for the tree pruning. All members were in favor and the motion passed.

### Parks – Miscellaneous

Ms. Easton reported the trees in Heritage Park look good. Several trees have come down in the last few bad storms, and Public Works has cleaned them up.

In addition, Ms. Easton reported part of the champion paw paw tree near the second entrance to Village Park fell down during the last wind storm. The tree will no longer be a champion because it has lost its height; hopefully, the rest of the colony will survive. The Township should remove the paw paw; however, if they cannot do it, Ms. Easton stated it will have to be added to the work being done in Village Park. Ms. Easton recommended members take a walk in Village Park, stating the trees, birds and park were beautiful.

Ms. Easton reported that she, Ms. Johnson and Township Committee member, Barbara Rogers, removed dodder from the Park. Ms. Johnson stated native dodder looks like silly string.

### Shade Tree Banner

Funds to order a Shade Tree banner were put aside in this year's budget. Members agreed that Ms. Golisano should order the banner.

### Heritage Tree Ordinance

Ms. Irons did some research on heritage tree ordinances. She reported 45 municipalities have heritage tree ordinances. Ms. Irons gave an overview of some of the NJ Heritages Ordinances and briefly summarized some standards/commonalities of the Princeton, Hopewell and Freehold

Ordinances. Ms. Johnson suggested adding this to next year's budget request. Ms. Easton stated of the two big projects being considered (Tree Inventory and Heritage Tree Ordinance), the Tree Inventory is more pressing.

#### Kudzu

Ms. Johnson reported what she thought was kudzu on Farmstead Way is actually native grape ivy vines, which is taking over the trees. She reported it looks like it is drying up now. Ms. Irons reported kudzu is in New Jersey and it takes years to kill. Ms. Johnson reported kudzu does not like the cold; however, Shade Tree should keep an eye on it. Ms. Easton stated kudzu is very prolific.

#### Education

The Shade Tree Federation is offering its 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference virtually. Ms. Irons signed up for the core training, and all four remaining members agreed to sign up for training. The training is \$125/member, and funds set aside in the 2020 budget will cover this training. Ms. Easton encouraged members to take advantage of any available education opportunities.

#### Summary of "To Do" Action Items

1. Lee – obtain access to Township e-mail.
2. Jackie and Jessica – continue to look at tree inventory options and get estimates.
3. Jessica and Kathy – obtain most current information on Spotted Lanternfly for posting on website.
4. Jessica and Kathy – compare pruning vendor quotes
5. Jean – register all members for Shade Tree Federation Conference
6. Jean – order Shade Tree banner
7. Kathy and Jackie – prepare RFQ for fall tree planting (Kathy) and review RFQ (Jackie)
8. Lee and Kathy – memorial tree request

Ms. Easton requested Ms. Golisano send the action items to the members

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

There being no further business, motion duly made by Ms. Easton, seconded by Ms. Johnson and carried, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 11:32 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 September 10, 2020.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 10th day of November, 2020.

Jean Golisano  
Board Secretary