

**FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION**  
**May 4, 2022 Meeting - 7:30 PM**  
**1st Floor Mayor's Conference Room 110**

**MINUTES**

**1. Meeting Called to Order – 7:30 p.m.**

**In attendance:** Thom Ritchie, Alan Walker, Stacey Ehling, Kurt Davis, Mark Taylor, Dave Novak.

**2. Salute to the Flag - completed**

**3. Announcement of Open Public Meeting Act - completed**

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 April 6, 2022 – Motion to approve minutes as written Mark first, Kurt second. Approved.**

**5. Shade Tree Appeal Hearings**

Mike and Maribeth O'Brien, 783 Colts Neck Road, Freehold – 732-740-3352.

Bought house in December, money in escrow to do sidewalks, 9 slabs to be replaced.

Tree is very large "London Planetree or Sycamore" and homeowner says it is dead.

London Plane Sycamore. Review of the photos show it has had some issues, some

disease problems, but that species of tree is pretty tolerant. Commission explained that

digging and cutting of the roots will compromise the tree. Commission noted, if the tree is dead it can be removed. Commission stated we would go to the site and look at the tree to make a better determination of its health before rendering a decision the permit.

**6. Unfinished Business:**

- a. Fall 2022 tree planting for street tree replacements (residents request list & Stillwells Corner Road) and DPMA replacements. Bill and Thom met and made notation on which trees needed to be removed and did some other streets nearby. There is a lot to be done. The sites were located and they also noted sites that were lacking trees. Need to approach residents and get permission to plant a tree there. Bill has created a spreadsheet.
- b. Discussed the removal of dead at-risk risk trees in right of way and the need to prune trees along Stillwells Corner Road. with 3 removals including Ash Tree on Freehold Township property – Schanck and Stillwells which are in the right of way for township. Some are also off Willowbrook Rd. Three trees were ID'd that are a public risk and should not wait to be removed.
- c. DPMA irrigation repairs, Tree replacements, Maintenance and improvements. Discussion about the need at this point for parts of the system to be replaced, since it is beyond repair. Focus should be on the section in the Hornbeam area and near the Sugar Maples on the 9-11 circle which are stressed due to not getting enough moisture. Also the Center 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> circle. Need to get an estimate.  
Commission reviewed a list of trees that need to be removed due to illness, death or because they are a public risk at Durand Park. The Commission determined that trees that

are dedicated must be a priority, and those that pose a public risk – such as the one around the picnic area or main areas. A list of possible maintenance actions was reviewed as well. Commission will develop a memorandum outlining the risk and priority actions and submit to the township with the possibility of hiring an outside contractor if doing the job in-house are not a possibility due to workforce shortages.

- d. Enforcement of Shade Tree Ordinances – No action.
- e. Review proposed landscape plans, tree removals and tree protection zones. Greg Hanley gave a presentation on two proposed development areas:
  - i. Commercial site located behind Freehold Collision on Rt. 9 North where a large number of trees were removed leaving a huge void and causing resident complaints. Commission reviewed the plans, discussed some species modifications, and asked if a soil conservation permit was issued due to the large area involved (over 5K sq.ft. it is required.) Overall feedback on the plan was positive based on Greg's recommendations.
  - ii. Holland Ridge Development 537 past 524, a 15 acre site that will be linked to a street in Holland Ridge. New housing with 11 lots. Several large heritage trees and a grove of trees in this area slated to be removed including a Black Oak and Pin Oak and Black Walnut. Greg noted the trees are in various states of health, some are in good condition and one is a perfect specimen, the White Oak. Commission was saddened that so many heritage trees would be removed since they are so vital to our town. Suggested that since plans are early that the developer should try to revise to protect as many as possible. Also noted an expert appraiser would need to be hired to determine the value of the heritage trees in question.

## **7. New Business:**

- a. Shade Tree Monthly Report – No comments.
- b. Financial report of Shade Tree accounts 2021, income, expenses and balance. – Will review at another meeting once everyone has had a chance to review.
- c. Correspondence – None other than Arbor Day and Tree City USA – but noted that Freehold Township has been a part of this for 41 years one of the longest times in the County.
- d. Stated Commission's thanks to the Monmouth County Shade Tree Commission for helping to procure extra seedlings for the children for Arbor Day.

## **8. Open Public Discussion**

- a. Arbor Day celebrations at Marshall W. Erickson School and DPMA – Great event, kids loved it. Lots of photos.

## **9. Good and Welfare**

## **10. Adjourn 9:17 – Motion to adjourn, Kurt, second Mark.**

**If you are unable to attend the meeting, please notify Thom Ritchie at 732-431-7691 or Karen Ketcham at (732) 294-2161**