



Meeting Minutes

BB Shade Tree Commission – March 3rd, 2021

1. Call to Order – 7:05 PM
2. Roll Call
 - Vice Chairperson - Shana Greenblatt
 - MJ Corkery
 - Ravi Maruvada
 - Larry Bagwell
 - Council Liaison - John WeberAbsent:
 - Chairman – George Heflich
 - Secretary – Summer Deaver
3. Ratification of Minutes
 - 2-17-21 Larry motioned to approve; Ravi seconded. All in favor.
4. Ordinance revision update – status?
 - John Weber indicated that the Ordinance changes have gone through the requisite hearings, review and final official adoption.
 - Shana – requested copy to post on website. Team – Discussed other items to be posted to website such as Phrase – “Check before you chop,” and “Tree City USA” status when we receive notification.
John to follow up with Word & PDF document for STC.
5. Organizations
 - Tree City USA Virtual Conference - 3rd session
 - Topic: Engaging community: “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second-best time is now.”
 - You want to form a participatory democracy and leverage diverse perspectives
 - Invest in the livability of the community
 - The urban forest provides for community well being
 - Don’t forget youth – Shana suggested that perhaps a BBES student from the Environmental Club (formerly Young Scientists Club) to participate as a student liaison. John to touch base with faculty advisor for club
 - Arbor Day Foundation - Alliance for Community Trees
 - We submitted membership for ACT; they’re a national version of the NJ Shade Tree Federation. Membership allows access to this national network and information in managing our tree resource.

- Sustainable Jersey certification
 - BB is Sustainable Jersey certified – 2016, 2019, 2021 and will need to renew in 2022. The Environmental Commission is responsible for this designation by meeting a set of rigorous sustainability standards. These *certifiable actions* allow points to be earned towards certification include activities like a recycling program, drug take back days, and other qualifying initiatives. Now that we have an approved community forestry management plan through STC, it will serve as a qualifier in renewal.
 - This will be useful when we apply for a CSIP grant for tree inventory. This and (hopefully) becoming a Tree City USA will give us credits that are favorable in our application.
 - John indicated that he would like to go for renewal early (in 2021) as it is cumbersome and would prefer not to be bogged down with this during an election year.

6. Grants

- Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) Grant
 - Tree Inventory projection
 - The RFP will publish 4/1 and the deadline is 60 days ahead, June 1. It's a lengthy application process, the state awards the grants probably by August. Grants that are awarded then go through a review process by the municipality and probably borough attorney. Funds would likely not be accessible until 2022
 - These grants are *reimbursements*. We have to put out the money upfront, complete the state paperwork and then get reimbursed. Typically, the tree inventory grant is about 10 – 12K. Per CTE Brash, this should cover the cost of a full tree inventory in town, perhaps including parks.
 - It is doubtful that this we will be able to accomplish the inventory until 2022. Good for 2 years from award.
 - It was suggested that we consider reaching out to Rutgers to see if it is appropriate and possible to get a graduate student to perform this service.
- The William J. Porter Community Tree Project Award
 - Ravi to research what/how/when. Ravi will present ideas by 4/1
 - Deadline for applying is June 30

7. Applications

- New
 - 21-007 508 Third
 - Swamp white oak in 93" (7-3/4') planting strip, per Tree Guide.
 - Motion to approve – Larry, second – Ravi. All approved Final Disposition: Send approval notification to applicant.

- Existing
 - 20-018 518 Newark
 - Commission approved the removal of tree in planting strip based on its impact on the sidewalk and driveway apron. They indicate they're not planning to replant and will submit \$250 to the Shade Tree Trust. FYI – no vote needed. Final Disposition: Send approval notification to applicant.
 - 608 Third (21-008)
 - Tree application for property that removed trees without a permit. We had sent two official notifications and just received tree application (21-008). They indicated that their contractor was not aware of permit process, that they removed one Mulberry and one spruce. Replaced with 3 9' spruces in back of property.
 - Motion to approve – Larry, second – Ravi. All approved Final Disposition: Send approval notification to applicant/satisfied tree replacement requirement.

7. Phase II-

- Outreach to Borough and Outside Organizations
 - DPW - 3/10 - George and Shana are meeting with DPW on Wed. 3/10.
 - Planning/Zoning Boards/Engineer/Zoning Officer Presentation
 - Thanks to Larry for preparing Power Point presentation for Planning/Zoning. George and Shana both added to the presentation and it looks ready to go. Larry to share final version to Shana/George.
 - George to schedule meeting(s) for Larry and George to meet with above groups.
 - Verizon
 - Jennifer Young- new contact
 - 616 LaReine Pole/ 2 trees removed (no update)
 - Tree Removal Companies
 - Local Contractors

8. Phase III-Community Outreach

- Arbor Day- April 30th
 - Tree Planting/Proclamation
 - While the Red Oak is the NJ state tree, due to Bacterial Leaf Scorch (BLS) NJ does not recommend the planting the Red oak group. Brash suggested we plant of a Swamp white oak. It brings all the benefits of an oak, does not have the susceptibility of the Red oak group and responds better than most Oaks to transplanting

- Where to plant? (need DPW input, 7 Main, BBES? 2/3 near Main, Riley Park)
 - Who will plant? Class of 2021 & Mayor/Council/students?
 - Time? Late afternoon 5:30 start-time suggested
 - What to plant? Swamp White Oak (per Brash)
 - Publicity (area papers, Soc. Media, borough) Maybe get a newspaper photographer to come and take photos. Or we can take photos and submit to local papers (Coaster, CoStar).
 - Need event communications plan; write a press release on event.
 - Suggested having graduating BBES students participate by reading a passage on trees, or the student article that is being written.
 - Earth Day
 - Students' Art Exhibit in Riley Park
 - April 24th– BBBC Alliance / aka -"Green Fair"
 - STC table – materials for table (foldout on STC protocol, tree guide pamphlets (George has about 50 from County), launch tree memorial/dedication program?)
 - It was suggested that we run an educational workshop for residents, e.g. Tree Pruning workshop by Forester Bill Brash.
 - Summer working with BBES Art teacher for displaying artwork from students
 - Community Tree Recovery Program - Seedling Give away?
 - We decided not to go forward for this year. Per Biagio, the program did not garner a lot of interest. Perhaps plan for next Arbor Day, if the program is still available and invest time to develop marketing and give us time to determine interest.
- Initiatives
 - Dedication/Memory Trees
 - Specific Tree vs. Donation to Fund
 - Pricing - \$250/tree? (DPW planting) 2x yr
 - Need to decide what to give to requester – certificate?
 - Need to identify location(s) for planting
 - John will request potential locations for trees from the Council
 - Shana/George to discuss locations at DPW meeting
 - Planting Strip Donor Sites for replants (DEDICATION)
 - If we plan to launch this at Arbor Day, we need to pin down details for Dedication/Memory trees, with application, certificate for requester and determine fee. AND, consider offering a list for residents to sign up who are interested in a tree in their planting strip. The commitment would be that they would be required to take care of tree, water it, etc.

- We may plan to plant trees for this program 2x/year, spring and fall, assuming there is interest.
- Ravi to investigate potential use of Survey Monkey (or similar tool) to query public interest. Per John, Google forms may be best as it aligns with Borough's software.

The Council discussed options for dedication trees and whether to provide a plaque or identifier, as well as determine appropriate locations. There was some discomfort expressed in planting dedication trees in random planting strips based on those interested in receiving a free tree, that it may not serve the donor well, or that the tree may not be accessible for a donor when it's on someone's "property." This requires further discussion.

It was discussed that trees provided to residents in planting strip come with tree information and care instructions.

Look at other town's Tree Dedication programs to analyze best practices.

9. Continuing Education

- NJ Forest Service Urban and Comm. Core Training
 - 4 Shade Tree Commission members and 2 DPW staff have registered. Runs March 11 – March 31 with 6 recorded modules that you watch at your own pace, and then 2 required live panel sessions: 3/22 and 3/29. You must attend these until the end to receive the CORE credits.

10. Commission Comments

- Larry and Ravi to work on a Follow Up Process for Shade Tree Applications (to ensure work has been completed. Shana to distribute Shade Tree Application Spreadsheet to Ravi.

11. Liaison Comments

12. Public Comments

13. Close – 8:52 PM - Motion to close – Larry, second Ravi.

*Submitted by Larry Bagwell
3/10/21*