

FAIR HAVEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

December 6, 2023, 7:30pm HYBRID: In person at Borough Hall and via Zoom

1. Call to Order @ 7:32pm

2. Sunshine Law Notice, C. Larsen

3. Roll Call:

Present: Christian Larsen, Michael D'Angelo, Leah Beganie, Peter D'Agati, Christopher McCabe, Kevin McGovern, Jill Sullivan, Bonnie Torcivia, Councilwoman Cole, Borough Secretary Krystie Larsen

Absent: Leah Beganie, Michael Hoey, Councilwoman Neff

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (November 1, 2023): M. D'Angelo made a motion to approve minutes, K. McGovern second; all in favor.

6. Project Updates

a. Updates from Borough Tree Specialist: Bill Brooks

The County is working on removing Ridge Road trees from the Bird Sanctuary to Fair Haven Road intersection. Mr. Brooks will reach out to Barlett again for an update on bacterial leaf scorch and ash borer disease. New saplings are showing up, which is good, but it is too soon to tell how they survived. Parasitic wasp treatment may work (native killer of Emerald Ash Borer) and it doesn't seem harmful to system. B. Brooks met with Taylor Robinson, the new Forrester at JCP&L, seems positive. B. Brooks let the STC know he would be leaving Fair Haven as Forrester; the Commission thanked him for his help over the years and wished him well.

b. NJUCF Tree Inventory Grant: Jill Sullivan

J. Sullivan updated the Commission on the status of the grant work. J. Sullivan and K. Larsen met with two vendors. Davey Tree prices have increased since their initial proposal, and now do not include free software for the initial year. Plan It Geo meeting was not as fruitful. Borough Tree Expert Shari Spero gave some additional vendors to research. K. McGovern asked what software Red Bank used, as he believes it is useful. J. Sullivan noted the software component is key and a Borough employee(s) will need to be trained on using the software to keep the inventory current. Davey Tree also works on Community Forestry Management plans, estimated at \$5-6,000 to complete. K. Larsen noted the CFMP guidelines are still not released and an extension has not been granted.

c. Green Team and Natural Area Update: Bonnie Torcivia

The Natural Area Committee and Environmental Commission donated bareroot trees to Third Street Trail. The Park system has done a lot of spraying to kill super-invasive species, Fair Haven is still reviewing options. Green Team is working on the pollinator garden in Third Street Trail. GT is having a sports swap for used equipment at Knollwood School this weekend.

d. Community Outreach: Leah Beganie

Absent.

e. Christmas Tree Replacement: Mike Hoey

In M. Hoey's absence, C. Larsen shared the soil sample results (adequate to poor) and recommendation of a Norway Spruce tree in this space. B. Torcivia may have a connection for a 20-foot tree. K. McGovern asked for next steps once tree is selected? C. Larsen responded that a mark-out is required.

f. Salem Oak Trees: Bonnie Torcivia

B. Torcivia is trying to coordinate with Principal Schwartz on timing. C. Larsen spoke with Shari Spero who advised that planting now may be risky. The consensus is to pick a date prior to Arbor Day and try to involve the school.

g. Tree Removal Permit Data: Krystie Larsen

K. Larsen circulated the tree removal permit data and hazard tree list. Councilwoman Cole asked K. Larsen to add a column and total for cumulative number of trees and permits. B. Torcivia asked who paid for the hazard tree removals? Councilwoman Cole responded that the taxpayers - there is a tree removal budget line item in the Borough's budget. P. D'Agati believes STC should advocate for public plantings. C. Larsen added that the resident tree buying program could be a mechanism for that.

h. Tree Canopy and Equity Data: Mike D'Angelo

M. D'Angelo summarized his research regarding tree canopy and equity data. The overlying theme is that data is difficult to determine; the American Forestry Data that shows a tree equity score is determined by a number of parameters. M. D'Angelo highlighted two websites with data/functionality: they should not be used to compare to other municipalities, but rather to use as a tool to evaluate a town's canopy coverage and where plantings should be targeted. M. D'Angelo hoped the data and maps would be more user-friendly. He will continue to monitor applications.

i. STC Annual Report: Chris Larsen

C. Larsen asked Commission members to send comments on the Annual Report to K. Larsen. B. Torcivia recommended that the contractors hired to remove trees in the Borough plant new trees at the same time. B. Torcivia suggested adding costs for CFMP and Christmas Tree to the budget section. Councilwoman Cole encouraged STC to identify concrete projected expenses in the plan. Councilwoman Cole noted that there are other tree related line items in the budget, not necessarily in the Shade Tree Budget. B. Torcivia asked for the Shade Tree Trust; K. Larsen noted the balance is \$5,889.

j. Planning/Discussion of 2024 Projects: Chris Larsen

C. Larsen suggested getting STC 2024 priorities in order to hit the ground running in 2024, as projects take time to get approval/complete. Councilwoman Cole asked the Commission to think long-term about the location of the Christmas tree: changing out the tree is just one piece of the overall picture. C. McCabe suggested McCarter Park – near the businesses, but not high-traffic. M. D'Angelo noted the visibility is not as strong. Councilwoman Cole will touch base with other stakeholders and brainstorm. P. D'Agati suggested having a STC calendar/list of events for 2024 in order to work backwards as an organizing tool; he offered to put it together and members will send him information.

k. Council and Tree Preservation Ordinance Update: Councilwoman Cole

Councilwoman Cole has faith the ordinance will be introduced first half of 2024. C. Larsen asked if there is a particular reason why it hasn't been introduced yet? Councilwoman Cole responded it is ready to go and is hoping to get it on the agenda. B. Torcivia asked if the model ordinance regarding stormwater is incorporated? Councilwoman Cole responded that Fair Haven is in compliance.

7. Proposed New Agenda Items

- B. Torcivia would like to discuss STC tree planting plans for 2024.
- Calendar Items

8. Public Participation

None.

9. Adjournment @ 9:24pm