

FAIR HAVEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 1, 2021, 7:30pm via Zoom

1. Call to Order 7:32pm

2. Sunshine Law Notice, D. Paolo

3. Roll Call

Present: D'Agati, D'Angelo, Hoey, McCabe, C. Larsen, Paolo, Reid, Sullivan, Councilwoman Neff, Borough Liaison Krystie Larsen

Absent: Beganie

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (November 3, 2021)

K. Larsen to correct title to "Minutes" vs. "Agenda". M. D'Angelo made a motion to approve, D'Agati seconded. All in favor.

6. Project Updates

a. Salem White Oak Seedlings (Paolo)

D. Paolo moved the seedling to a protected area for the winter. He confirmed the tree does not have bacterial leaf scorch, but rather seasonal leaf change.

b. Green Initiative (Reid)

Kelly Flanagan and the Greet Team have been working on the Sustainable Jersey certification for Fair Haven. Currently Fair Haven is at Bronze status (approximately 120 points), working toward silver (300 points). There are many tree related items that would garner points towards certification. Reid would like to add Sustainable Jersey as an agenda item to STC's next meeting agenda and will circulate the information ahead of time.

c. Social Media (Beganie)

Absent. D. Paolo asked commission members to email Beganie directly with content.

d. Tree Inventory (Sullivan)

Paolo looking for the software to send to Sullivan. Sullivan believes there are other software options as well. Sullivan recommended the Hazardous Tree Class in person March 2022. Paolo is taking it remotely Thursday and will ask course instructors for their input on software recommendations. B. Brooks highly recommends this course, as it helps with creating a tree inventory which is needed for many grants.

e. Administrative – CEU's/Five Year Plan (Paolo)

K. Larsen and K. Hoey will organize and follow CEUs and accreditation standards for STC; Commission members should forward all training correspondence to them.

f. Plaque at Denormandie Park (Reid)

A. Reid and Wendy discussed options and would like to move forward with the Signature Plaque option.
K. Larsen will send vendor information.

g. Kwanzan Cherry Tree Giveaway on Fair Haven Road (D'Agati)

P. D'Agati presented a concept evaluation for the Kwanzan Cherry Tree Giveaway on Fair Haven Road. Key findings are as follows:

- Assume 40 ft clearing required for each tree. Requires verification
- Approximately 35 clearings 40 ft in diameter between Ridge Road and River Road. VERY rough estimate
- If this becomes a "thing" one could imagine homeowners following suit as they consider future plantings
- Most spots are on or adjacent to private property
- Consider native alternative?
- Consider setback from street, overhead power lines, future sidewalks, other?

D. Paolo thanked D'Agati for his work and said next steps are cost estimates and bringing it to Council. He wondered if a Sustainable New Jersey Grant could apply here. L. Neff shared that the Fair Haven Fields Natural Area has funds available and chair Carolyn Ferguson would be willing to share the cost of replacing cherry trees. D. Paolo will follow-up.

h. Updates from Borough Tree Specialist, Bill Brooks

Absent.

i. Tree Ordinance Review (D'Angelo)

M. D'Angelo reiterated the three salient points of significance between the Fair Haven and Rumson tree ordinances that were discussed at the November STC meeting:

1. A more equitable fee schedule between builders and residents for removal of trees. Allows builders to clear cut lots for a max of \$150 (\$25 per tree).
2. Address the building envelope: more input from Land Use/Tree Specialist at the beginning of the process, so the proposed new structures such as driveways, sheds, etc. do not damage roots and then become a hazard tree.

3. Timing of submission for Tree Removal Applications: Disconnect between evaluation/approval and tree removal occurring.

D. Paolo would like to see more enforcement language to follow through on penalties; making sure what was done is done after construction projects. L. Neff said this effort should be coordinated with the Land Use Committee and the next steps should be to write the recommendations in the form of a white paper and meet with Mayor Halpern, Todd Lehder and Betsy Koch to discuss. Perhaps a Planning Board Public Hearing can occur to garner more public feedback regarding ordinance changes. M. D'Angelo believes that although STC mission is for public trees, he believes STC has the responsibility of beautification and safety of trees in the town overall and that STC should make a recommendation to Mayor and Council.

M. D'Angelo recommends:

- As in Rumson, Fair Haven should lower the threshold of needing a tree removal permit from 10" diameter to 6" diameter. Also, carve out a special exception for Ornamental Trees.
- Fees: Resident vs. Builder. Rumson differentiates fee structure, but Fair Haven attorney advised fee must be equitable based on owner, can differentiate fees/penalties based on activity. Supports increased tree removal fees overall and penalties. Violations/Penalties: removal without a permit fine \$200-\$2,000 (Rumson).
- Mitigation plan/Footprint of dominant and secondary property structures: Planning/Zoning Board should have authority to look at the tree permit on a case by case basis, in case hazard or special nuisance of the property. Also add a protection clause for trees during construction.

L. Neff believes a Tree Escrow Fund should be established to incentivize replanting of trees. J. Sullivan agrees with the Escrow; where does responsibility lie if ownership changes hands (i.e. builder to homeowner)? Must discuss with attorney. L. Neff believes the funds should stay with STC to rebuild the town's canopy.

Resident Tracy Cole thanked the committee for their work and thinks changes need to be made to the Tree Preservation Ordinance to be more restrictive. T. Cole will assist in any way to help protect the canopy of Fair Haven. She believes there is a disconnect with other Land Use ordinances and among other Commissions; there should be more synergies and connectivity to amplify results.

L. Neff suggests getting the thoughts on paper, perhaps borrowing language from Rumson ordinance for next Council meeting December 20. D. Paolo asked Dr. D'Angelo to create a summary of needs and wants to present to Council and Land Use committee; the Borough Attorney can help with the legal language. K. Larsen to follow-up on Borough ordinance timeline.

7. Public Participation

Claudia Brady, Fair Haven Road, has two Cherry trees that have died, but would purchase a new one to continue the trend in the area. She suggested there be two concept/signature Fair Haven trees the Borough should identify as replacement tree options to give the town a more cohesive look. She is not interested in adding costs to the town's budget with these projects or costs associated with creating an Escrow fund; taxes are already too high.

8. Proposed New Agenda Items

- Sportsman Field east tree line: Planning Board approved a subdivision of two lots on Third Street, bordering Sportsman Field. Many trees are coming down. The Board of Education is interested in working together to replenish the tree line/border.
- C. McCabe suggested the town cleanups in the natural area and fields should be turned into firewood that residents can use. D. Paolo asked him to follow-up with the Rec Committee on this idea.

9. Adjournment: M. D'Angelo made a motion to adjourn @ 8:43pm, K. Hoey seconded. All in favor.