

# FAIR HAVEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

April 5, 2023, 7:30pm HYBRID: In person at Borough Hall and via Zoom

1. Call to Order @ 7:34pm

2. Sunshine Law Notice, C. Larsen

3. Roll Call:

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

Absent: Christopher McCabe, Michael Hoey, Kevin McGovern

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (March 1, 2023): All in favor.

6. Project Updates

a. Arbor Day, Mike D'Angelo

April 28 is Arbor Day. There will be a tree event at the library April 25 for Sickles School age children. Knollwood students will participate in a poster contest. Submissions are due April 28; STC can decide winners at the May meeting. At the June meeting, STC can present winners with prizes. B. Torcivia asked to display some posters at Love Where You Live Day ("LWYLD").

b. Green Team ("GT") and Natural Area Update, Bonnie Torcivia

GT film night "Wild in the Garden State" at Bicentennial Hall was successful. LWYLD will host more vendors this year and Borough Commissions will have activities/tables on display. STC will raffle off a tree. Resident tree buying program information should be available. J. Sullivan suggested having a "Kids Passport" to stamp when they visit each table. K. Larsen to circulate signup genius for the table staffing.

B. Torcivia presented at the Council meeting that the Fair Haven Natural Area Advisory Committee would like to remove the hazard trees near the cell tower. She mentioned a Restoration grant available at NJUCF once the Tree Inventory is complete. UCF received funding from the Inflation Reduction Act for up to \$1.5M targeting more disadvantaged communities – there is funding available at the federal level. April 29-30 FHNAAC clean up days to plant deer resistant understory plantings.

c. Tree Inventory, Jill Sullivan

NJUCF grant cycle is delayed due to staffing issues. The grant application is expected to be released in June. Unfortunately, Federal funding is not trickling to state level. B. Torcivia asked if Shari Spero, Borough's Licensed Tree Expert, would be the point person on the inventory project? J. Sullivan responded she has not been able to get in touch with her. K. Larsen to circulate last year's application for reference. Ocean Township won the NJUCF grant last year; perhaps we can view their project for reference.

d. Community Outreach, Leah Beganie

L. Beganie said STC has 158 followers on social media. She has Arbor Day content ready and is working on a template for tree of the month theme. She will also work on spotted lantern fly awareness.

The Doorhanger project is complete and was distributed throughout the Boro by high school students last weekend. Extra doorhangers will be at Borough Hall and LWYLD table.

e. Kwanzan Cherry Tree Giveaway on Fair Haven Road, Peter D'Agati

P. D'Agati received updated pricing from Absolute Quality Tree at \$765/tree plus tax installed. He currently has three trees identified and will confirm with homeowners. P D'Agati asked if the homeowner should sign a waiver for the Borough that the homeowner is responsible for the maintenance of the tree? Councilwoman Cole said no because Shade Tree Trust fund money is being used (vs. tax dollars). K. Larsen noted that Engineer Poruchynsky can speak to that when he measures the ROW. B. Torcivia thought the pricing was high. J. Sullivan volunteered to ask the Tree Buying program nursery if they have this species to offer.

f. New Tree Giveaway, Jill Sullivan

J. Sullivan informed the Bratone family that 172 Lake Avenue is the location for the Tree Giveaway. She recommended waiting until Fall for planting and use the Resident Tree Buying Program for this site. All members in favor.

g. Resident Tree Buying Program, Jill Sullivan

J. Sullivan presented a summary of what the Resident Tree Buying program would look like. Fernbrook Nursery will provide a selection of trees to choose from. STC will not collect money, but organize order taking and work with the Borough the market project. The vendor is responsible to mark out utilities, the homeowner is responsible to mark out sprinkler system lines. There is a minimum order of 10 trees which will be planted on 1-2 predetermined days; 15-20 trees planted a day in teams of 3. The homeowner is responsible for staking the tree, if desired. Gator bags are recommended. L. Beganie suggested directing homeowners to FH Hardware, if they sell them. J. Sullivan is targeting August for the sales month and end of September to install. K. Larsen will assist with orders. The cost is \$380 per tree installed in Manasquan, hoping for similar pricing in Fair Haven. Councilwoman Cole suggested that this program is a great way to get tree removal replacements satisfied and suggested a letter be issued from the Borough Secretary with the program information to all tree removal applicants.

h. Updates from Borough Tree Specialist, Bill Brooks

The County came to look at the Cherry tree on Ridge Road near sub-transmission line; work is expected to be completed in May. JCP&L line trimming will occur in 2024, on a 3-year cycle. DPW has a list of FH trees due for trimming to go out to bid. He noted spotted lantern flies are coming back and likely worse this summer. In County Park lands, they are cutting down the infected trees (egg masses, typically Ailanthus trees) and treating the stump (not grinding it). Mr. Brooks suggested looking into pathfinder 2 as a control method. There is a new bacterium that is being noted in South Carolina that may kill lantern flies; he is not sure if it will reach more northern areas.

Mr. Brooks warned of denying tree removal appeals. If it is a safety issue, it may present a hazard situation.

i. Council and Tree Preservation Ordinance Update, Councilwoman Cole

The Tree Preservation Ordinance amendments were drafted last year. There was substantial feedback from an administrative function and cost perspective. Councilwoman Cole described the Tree Removal application, permit and appeal process, as written with Borough Attorney Greg Cannon. She asked if STC would be comfortable being the appeal body for denials? M. D'Angelo said that is a large consideration and asked what the average number of denials is? K. Larsen responded four thus far in 2023. She noted this number is based on current ordinance thresholds, if the criteria becomes more stringent, it may increase the number of denials. Councilwoman Cole said the goal of the ordinance legislatively is to have more tree being planted and language protect/prohibit unwarranted removals. She described a potential new classification: Landmark Trees: to protect special trees, the tree has a benefit to the public. M. D'Angelo asked what the time frame is? Councilwoman Cole responded that she is the point person so will keep the STC up to date. C. Larsen warned if there are too many hurdles, people may circumvent the entire process. He would lean on the Tree Expert's guidance, as STC members are not tree experts. L. Beganie believes it is a community issue when someone takes down a tree, so it's appropriate for STC to opine. M. D'Angelo asked if there is a precedent for STC to be involved in this process for private property trees? Has a cost analysis been done to extend this process? Councilwoman Cole said it would be captured in the fee schedule and taxpayers should not be underwriting the administration of this ordinance. M. D'Angelo believes word travels fast and developers know if a town has a reputation for being strict with tree removal or not. C. Larsen asked to add this topic to the May agenda. K. Larsen to send the June 2022 Ordinance draft to the Commission for review. Councilwoman Cole believes the tree removal process should be friendly and fair and penalties steep enough that residents want to avoid them.

Councilwoman Cole noted eight microprojects and 20-30 road projects are on the horizon in the Borough and suggested STC be informed on issues that relate to trees. B. Torcivia asked if a Commission member may be involved when a tree expert evaluates projects i.e. sidewalks on Fair Haven Road in the Historic District? Councilwoman Cole will provide a list of projects and timeframe to STC for review.

#### 7. Proposed New Agenda Items

B. Torcivia asked to clarify the Arbor Day project with respect to the Sportsman Field location. M. D'Angelo responded that he didn't want to get involved in the Sportsman Field planting, as he was told the Board of Education had a plan for the space and is worried about tree survival. However, he understands if she was directed otherwise from the Superintendent. B. Torcivia helped clean the area of Sportsman Field and Third Street and thinks the corner would benefit from tree plantings.

#### 8. Public Participation

N/A

#### 9. Adjournment @ 9:36pm