

MINUTES

SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Allen called to order the Meeting of the Susquehanna Shade Tree Commission on Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 4:01 PM.

ROLL CALL:

William Allen – Present

David Roccasecca – Present

Pat Carroll - Present

Steve Drachler – Present

Ray Davis - Present

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL:

Dave Pribulka, Township Manager

GUESTS:

Brian Chase, ISA, Barlett Tree Expert

Chris Sala, Nephew of Resident Owner of 539 Schoolhouse Lane

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - S. Drachler motioned to approve the minutes from August 17, 2023, D. Roccasecca seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

GUEST SPEAKER – Brian Chase, Arborist Representative/Bartlett Tree Service – Discussion held on Crape Myrtle Bark Scale was introduced.

Brian Chase presented Crape Myrtle Bark Scale and its potential threat to the tree species. They produce honeydew, which becomes unsightly, reduces the vigor of the tree although unlikely to kill it, ultimately create hazards. Aphids also pose a threat. Applying dormant season horticulture oil may be a way to prevent the spread of bark scale and aphids, but must be applied at the right time to ensure that it is most effective. The Commission discussed best practices for mitigation and preventing the spread of mildew. Mr. Chase recommended that the treatment be applied around February to be most effective. Incorporating sulfur and potassium phosphate in the soil may also be an effective means of

focusing on priority trees to prevent the spread of scale and aphids. Mr. Chase also provided a brief update on the spread of Spotted Lanternfly as well as its prevalence this season.

BUDGET: Stand with balance of: \$43,621.53. D. Pribulka review the budget report and added that the 2024 Budget preparations are underway. Discussion occurred about the tree-pruning contract proposed to be reviewed in 2024 budget, along with height clearance on streets and sidewalks.

APPLICATIONS:

The following addresses were received and either Approved or Denied by the board members for the following addresses.

- **3107 Meadow – Free Residence** – P. Carroll motioned to **APPROVE** the application, D. Roccasecca seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**. Removal of 1 Norway Maple Tree – Decayed and girdling roots, damaging sidewalk.
- **3539 Schoolhouse – Burcin Residence** - D. Roccasecca motioned to **APPROVE** the application, S. Drachler seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**. Item was moved to the top of the agenda to accommodate the resident who attended. Mr. Sala described the history of the tree. Mr. Roccasecca noted that the tree looked pretty bad. Mr. Sala requested approval to replant the tree in a different spot to avoid future damage from vehicles. Mr. Drachler clarified that the “Free Tree” would meet the requirement to replace the tree that is being removed. Removal of Norway Maple Tree – vertical cracking and trunk decay.
- **212 N. Progress Avenue – The Greater Zion Missionary Baptist Church** – P. Carroll motioned to **APPROVE** the application to remove the dead tree, but not the living one. R. Davis seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**. It was further noted that the applicant did not check the acknowledgement that a new tree be planted and the stump be ground. S. Drachler moved to table the motion pending notice to the property owner that a completed application has not been submitted and that no justification was provided for removing the healthy tree. R. Davis seconded the motion. **MOTION TABLED UNANIMOUSLY**.
- **601 LATSHMERE DRIVE – COX RESIDENCE** – Application is not completed (emailed owner and called for updates). R. Davis moved to approve the application. S. Drachler seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**. Removal of 1 Pin Oak Tree.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Annual Free Shade Tree Delivery – Arrangements;**
Friday, September 22nd, Susquehanna Maintenance will pick up trees (19) at Black Landscaping and tanbark/topsoil from Dig My Earth.
- Tree planting will begin on Monday. Not all 46 trees will be picked up immediately, but the first 40 will be planted. The remainder will be planted at the end of October.
- **524 Sandra – Holland Residence** - Tree dust remains, final letter sent to remove (9/11/2023) Brief discussion occurred but no formal action was taken. The consensus of the Commission was not to provide further financial assistance to remove the tree until the current issue is mitigated. The property owner has been notified of the Shade Tree Removal Assistance Program and the Committee would wait until an application was received to address the issues.
- **501 Altavista Avenue – Karasue Horstick** – Letter attached from homeowner. Chairman Allen reviewed the history of the property and the two trees that were permitted to be removed. The

property owner continues to refuse to replant the two trees on Altavista as was the requirement per the permit issued to remove the two trees in 2019. R. Davis noted that he understands the reluctance to replant trees over underground utilities; however, some smaller trees on the approved tree species list can be planted there safely without jeopardizing the underground utilities.

- Discussion took place regarding the Commission's frustration about the lack of ability to get compliance with the enforcement issues on these properties. D. Pribulka agreed to research some options for improving compliance and report back to the Commission for further discussion and potential next steps. R. Davis noted that the concern was not directed at staff in charge of enforcement. S. Drachler noted we might be able to post properties that are in continued violation.
- Discussion regarding the fact that homeowners do not really "own" the tree lawn, question was asked how does this potentially complicated our ability to plant trees and then charge the homeowner (in situations where they have not complied with our requirement to plant after a tree has been removed).
- **3507 N. 2nd Street – Kouri Residence** – Police unsuccessful in attempt to close Shade Tree Violation.
No discussion or action took place.
- **607 Boundbrook – Koirula Residence** – Tree Remains – No discussion or action took place
- **3408 Green Street – Fish Residence** – Failure to replant tree. Letter sent to owner 9/11/2023.
No discussion or action took place.

Proposal 3727 N. 3rd Street – Decaying tree (corner of property). Proposal still out for bids. (Requested to remove and grind stump). D. Pribulka noted that this is a Township tree and staff will be working on having it removed.

Addressed with dead or dying trees and or stumps:

- 305 Oak – Remove Tree
- 604 Lescure – Stump Remains
- 512 Latshmere Stump Remains
- 501 Latshmere Remove Tree

D. Pribulka – Township Manager, working on standardizing the process to authorize work by Arborist.

The Commission noted their appreciation of Brian Chase and Bartlett work to help with the Tree Commission and the Township maintenance.

NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

- **500 Alta Vista – Rai Residence**
- Attached Assistant Program Application
- The item was table for discussion. Enforcement will be postponed while the property owner provides more income information regarding compliance with program.

Adjournment: D. Roccasecca moved to adjourn, P. Carroll seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a unanimous vote and the meeting ended at 5:08

NEXT MEETING: October 19, 2023

TIME: 4:00

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn M. Hartz
Administrative Assistant/Code Compliance Inspector



William Allen, Chairman - Date