



METUCHEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION

BOROUGH HALL • 500 MAIN STREET • METUCHEN, NJ 08840

Minutes: January 14, 2013

Present: Tracey Gelber, George Fromm, Cher Krumins-Beens, Ushantha Govender, Franklin Ferrera, Linnae Bulum, Maggie Manz and Dorothy Rasmussen

Meeting Called to Order: 7:06PM by George Fromm, seconded by Maggie Manz

Review of last minutes – Approved 1st by Linnae Bulum and 2nd by Franklin Ferrera

2013 Elections -

- **Chairperson:** Ushantha Govender nominated Tracey Gelber 2nd By Cher Krumins-Beens. Franklin Ferrera nominated by George Fromm 2nd by Maggie Manz. STC voted Tracey to position by unanimous vote.
- **Secretary:** George Fromm nominated Cher Krumins-Beens 2nd by Tracey Gelber. Unanimous vote by STC.

Change of meeting dates – Motion made by Maggie to move meeting from 2nd Monday of every month to the 4th Tuesday of each month. Motion was 2nd by Cher Krumins-Beens and approved by members, next STC meeting to be held 2/26/13.

Tree Funds – Tracey is working to get a monthly update on current fund levels for all accounts that relate to STC.

Fall Planting – Planting of the 15 poor health trees has been moved to the Spring planting. The list of trees planted in the Fall will be given to Ushantha by George for updating the tree inventory. STC continues with current plan to only plant on opposite side of power lines.

2013 Project assignments were agreed upon:

- Arbor day (4/26/13)- Franklin & Maggie
- Zoning/Planning Liaison – Maggie
- Bulletin Board Metuchen Library – Cher
- County Fair – Ushantha
- Spring/Fall Planting – George
- Annual Report – Tracey
- Metuchen Messenger Articles (4x per year) – Linnae
- Tree Inventory – Ushantha & Franklin
- Communications follow-up - Franklin

Myrtle Fee Update – *Update:* Still pending direction from Bill to know how to move forward on project. Tracey has given residents an update. *History of issue:* Karen Alexander approached STC via email about the loss of the trees in the area. She is interested in spear heading the gathering of neighborhood donation program but would like STC to manage planting of the trees. To do so STC needs to confirm that we can plant in the areas of interest by residents (due to right of way and Middlesex water right of way) and that the funds they collect can be part of the current tree bank system.

Sandy Repercussions Borough Plans Update – Need to get from Fred Hall an update of where trees have been removed to update tree inventory database. Ushetha will be sending request to Fred via email this month. Federal government will be giving funds for removal of trees but is not providing funds for replacement. Tracey will look into the option of having some of these funds allocated to help STC initiatives.

Mayor's Update – Mayor wants STC to give recommendations of trees for area to cover the Cemetery by Myrtle. STC needs to understand where the funds for this project are coming from before we're able to give proper recommendations, Dorothy to follow-up with Mayor. Once receive more details George will provide requested data.

Franklin will send an invitation to Mayor for upcoming meeting to discuss goals for 2013.

History of issue: Mayor's current statement on this matter is that Metuchen residents would currently not want to fund the at least \$2Million investment to remove all the needed improvements. However, STC is pushing to get a better understanding of DPW's plan to deal with the removal of "dead" trees and of maintenance of healthy trees in our town.

2013 Green Communities Grant – State will not provide funds unless the town matches, Dorothy to review potential of moving forward with program.

New Business

- **Main Street near Casablanca Hairstyle Tree** – Bill has been approached by landlord about removing the tree because of roots damaging the sewer lines and his basement. Dorothy recommended that sewer line be fixed instead of removing tree. George will take a look at the health of the tree to see if removal may be best next step and what would be the best type of tree to replace it with.
- **Montclair Ordinance** – passed a resolution requires that resident help fund tree planting and care in their town. Why can't something similar to be done to in Metuchen? Need to consider a possible PR campaign to get this started and Maggie will reach out to the leads of the Montclair program to see what they did.
- **Spring Planting** - STC would like Main Street to be planted but it may be too soon after the storm damage to do so. As agreed to in our Dec. meeting STC continues to not plant trees under wires. Cher will speak to Campbell about possible trees being placed against chain link fence facing Center street area.

Next Meeting: Following meeting will be held TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26 @ 7PM.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:11 by Linnae Bulum and seconded by Ushentha Govender