



METUCHEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION

BOROUGH HALL • 500 MAIN STREET • METUCHEN, NJ 08840

- Tuesday, April 6, 2021, via Zoom teleconference 7:00 pm
- Attendees: Councilwoman, Dorothy Rasmussen, Liaison; Ruchir Mewawala, Nadiah Cheatham, Thomas Thompson, and **Bettina Caluori – new member
- CALL TO ORDER- 7:12 pm. Dorothy Rasmussen led Zoom call, Chairman, Jeremy opened the meeting
- March 2, 2021 Minutes: Jeremy asked if the March 2, 2021 minutes had been reviewed for approval. All members acknowledged and accepted the minutes. The minutes were recorded and sent to Dorothy for submission to the township clerk.
- PUBLIC COMMENT – No public attendees for April 4, 2021
- BUSINESS / DISCUSSION – Dorothy began dialog by welcoming Bettina, our newest commissioner, and with 2 new fall planting requests which may need to go to bid, if total cost is low enough a bid is not necessary and still needs approval from boro administrator.
- Nadiah reviewed the previous requests from 2018 and recommends updating and follow up for before sending out to the group and Jeremy will update the 2019 requests. Ruchir will then merge the two documents into a single current request list.
- Dorothy added that the hazardous trees are being discussed and listed for submission to Fred and Melissa at DPW for abatement.
- Jeremy suggested that we plan another ‘Walk-a-bout’ in the area High Street and Newton as the weather improves, we need to verify the data on our list is correct
- Nadiah mentioned replacement of any hazardous trees removed at a 1 to 1 ratio as we move forward with the correct list trying to maximize our efforts and expenditures and verify ownership of the trees in question. Jeremy added that the DPW will check with the homeowners prior to abatements.
- Jeremy added that we need to develop our fall planting list and we should modify our bid spec to include maintenance and care for new trees.
- Arbor Day April 30, 2021 should have a local event. We can fund a purchase for a public planting, take a few pictures. Jeremy will seek to make a plan with Bruce Paragalo at Metuchen High School. We should try to include the Mayor for a virtual event for Facebook Live at MHS if possible. DPW may need to assist with advance preparations such as locating and digging the holes. Try to safely involve the kids in the event also. Bettina suggested an appropriate poetry reading and/or music and songs to add to the event. Nadiah asked about Edgar school, but there’s a project being conducted by Rutgers there and we must refrain for now.
- Farmers Market – Jeremy mentioned reserving a table at the Metuchen Farmer’s Market
- Jeremy spoke about connecting Downtown to the Plaza & Whole Foods via New Street – unknown status
- Ruchir will work on updating Shade Tree document access for the new commissioners and updating our tree request list on Google docs starting with the oldest requests first and then push back onto the Spring planting list. Then, Jeremy said, we can go out to visually review request locations.
- Upcoming Shade Tree meetings will be conducted remotely via Zoom until further notice. Thank you for your attention to following all safety and social distancing best practices
- ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn was made by Jeremy at 8:37 PM, meeting concluded

The next 2021 Metuchen STC Meeting via Zoom:
May 4, 2021 at 7:00 pm