

BOARD OF SHADE TREE & PARKS COMMISSION MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

July 18, 2018

Present: J. Sexton, K. Raschen, W.R. Comery, H. Tedesco-Santos , M. Ivanicki, B. Keppler, A. Les, D. Preis, A. Les, C. Hittel

Public: Mr.Hegg, Mr.Ceylan

Absent: C. DiPiazza, D. Minervini

W.R. Comery called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. and stated that this meeting of the Shade Tree & Parks Commission, as required, has been made public and posted at Borough Hall.

W.R. Comery asked for a motion to approve last month's minutes. Motion made by D. Preis, seconded by B. Keppler. All in favor.

Public:

319 Lockwood Drive- K. Raschen explained he met Mr.Hegg at 319 Lockwood Drive, which is his neighbor's house and discussed the Shade Tree Commission's policy for driveway work. To have the driveway lifted and have the contractor coordinate with us and we will remove roots while the asphalt is up. Both of the trees at this address are in good condition. Mr.Hegg stated the town should pay for the repair. W.R. Comery explained to Mr.Hegg that without the actual owners of the house being present, we cannot discuss this issue being it is not your home and have no paperwork, etc showing you have authority to do this. If this is an issue for the residents at 319 Lockwood Drive, they can speak to us about it. They have not reached out to Shade Tree regarding this. Mr. Hegg stated that he has audio of H.T. Santos stating at a Mayor and Council meeting that Shade Tree would be fixing driveways and removing trees that damage them. H. T Santos clarified that the mayor would like to do patch work on damaged driveways, but the Shade Tree Commission does not work at the direction of the Mayor and Council. They have their own policies and the idea was brought up to the commission, but it is not a newly adopted policy or anything, just an idea. Mr.Hegg stated he must've misunderstood. W.R. Comery also stated the department does not have equipment to do asphalt work. If the mayor wants us to do certain things we need the equipment to do it and it has to be discussed with the people it would affect. The town would also have to plan for funding for it. None of this has been discussed. H.T. Santos reiterated that nothing is set in stone and it was just an idea. K. Raschen also stated driveway damage is constantly blamed solely on the tree. Meanwhile, there are illegal curb cuts right against the tree, poorly done driveways, etc. There is no spec to follow, the town does not regulate driveways. People want to pay the lowest price and don't know how their driveway is being done, if there is a stable, compact base, etc. A driveway done correctly will last for 30 + years. If there is 6 inches stone dust and 2 inches of asphalt, it'll be 20 years before the driveway cracks. The trees are not only to blame, but no one

discusses this with our department. Mr. Hegg thanked the commission for their time and understood 319 Lockwood Drive would not be discussed without the home owner present or paperwork stating Mr.Hegg is the power of attorney for the property.

223 Hillcrest Drive- The property is slated for demolition. There is one tree in the area of the proposed driveway and it doesn't look like its doing well. Mr.Ceylan asked if there was anything that could be done. K. Raschen passed around photos of the property and the town trees. W.R. Comery stated it isn't the best looking tree. The commission does not remove live, healthy trees but this one is questionable. D.P made a motion to issue a permit for removal and replacement at the cost of the homeowner. K. Raschen will reevaluate for a new tree preservation price and cost of a new tree planted. D. Preis made a motion to issue a permit and purchase a new tree. Motion seconded by C. Hittel. All in favor.

Superintendent's Report:

641 Falmouth Avenue- Homeowner is requesting removal of a tree because of driveway damage. It is similar to the issue on Lockwood Drive. The procedure was explained, a Hold Harmless form was left so we could grind the roots and the form was never returned to us by the homeowner. Now, 14 years later it is an issue? If a driveway is done right, a tree won't ruin it. The policy remains.

181 Midwood Road- Mr.Homsi requested his tree preservation back early for the third time. It is available in March of 2019. W.R. Comery stated then March of 2019 is the earliest we will entertain releasing it.

714 Bancroft Place- The resident is requestinf removal because of "messy pollen". They have a 30 foot curb cut. There is one Locust tree and one Zelkova. Both are in perfectly good condition and have no issues. Photos were taken on the day of the meeting and passed around for commissioners to see. The trees have great crowns. D. Preis made a motion to deny removal, seconded by C. Hittel. All in favor.

94 Colgate Avenue- The commission extended the payment date. He tried to come in and pay a day late, the office did not accept his check as a summons had already been issued. He came to court and paid his restitution as well as \$33.00 in court costs. The issue is resolved.

126 Prospect Street- This issue is going to trial. K. Raschen and J. Sexton met with the borough attorney. The residents knew they were town trees, and removed them anyway. After the initial summons the easement was brought up. W.R. Comery stated it does not matter – they came to a meeting and were told they were town trees. They have called for trimming before. They removed them anyway without our permission. They are town trees paid for by the developer who did the project. Our next court date is scheduled for Wednesday, July 25th. K. Raschen stated they knew that they were doing, it is not the tree company's fault. They did not wait for our response letter before removing the trees.

613 Craig Avenue – Trees in good health. Motion made to release by D. Preis, seconded by M, Ivanicki

167 Reid Way- Trees in good health. Motion made to release by D. Pries, seconded by B. Keppler.

Tree Planting- Spring and Fall planting was completed last year. We did not plant this spring due to the 5 major storms into May of 2018. We had to add 74 trees to the list since the storms. K. Raschen explained he did get prices and quotes but did not want to set the department up to fail. We only had 2 people for the tree crew at the time and it would be physically impossible to plant that many trees as well as get the routine work done around town. It was the best move possible. W.R. Comery suggested possibly hiring a contractor to help with the extra work load this year. The planting will be done in fall and K. Raschen will get updated prices in August or as soon as the weather starts to cool enough to plant properly.

Vacancies- A new tree climber has been hired as of July 2, 2018. He has minor experience but is not afraid to try and learn. So far he is going a great job, backed up by the tree foreman. Brett is back now that his surgery is complete which is also a big help. We still have 5 vacancies and it is an ongoing issue. H.T. Santos stated she would meet with Mr. D'Arco in regard to this and the department's issues getting postings.

Emerald Ash Borer: All trees have been marked, went out multiple times. We left a small buffer in case there are discrepancies between our numbers and the contractor's numbers. The treatment can be done safely into August. The contractor has crews out regularly.

Authorization to Pay Bills: Motion made by A. Les, seconded by D. Pries.

Assistant Superintendent's Report:

July 4th- the crews worked long hours, worked hard, and did a great job. They spent 19 hours out on detail. It went very well and thankfully the weather cooperated.

ADA Playground- J. Sexton explained we are working with Boswell Engineering to rectify the eighth of an inch issue on one of the ramps. The other issues can easily be fixed with some extra asphalt.

Message Board: The digital board is being sponsored by the police department. Permits have been approved and the sign should be in place within the next few weeks.

Sidewalks- J. Sexton explained he is concerned because the funding that was allotted for the contractor is far below where it should be. Not sure how this is going to work but a meeting about this with the CFO may be in order. We do not need unhappy residents waiting for

sidewalk work they were told would be done. The monies come from capital accounts that we do not have control over. H. T. Santos stated she would set up a meeting to sort out the sidewalk program.

Agenda:

Notice of Violation-

Chairman's Report-

W.R. Comery explained to the commission and our council liason that the invasive Lantern Fly is headed towards New Jersey. If this becomes an issue like the emerald ash borer, we would need \$100,000 to handle this infestation.

General-

Land use/ Zoning-

K. Raschen explained that there is some work going on at Eastbrook Middle School. Our only concerns are the trees planted under the No Net Loss Grant. These trees must be maintained in perpetuity and cannot be damaged during construction activities.

Old Business-

New Business-

Personnel-

New tree climber hired July 2, 2018. Working well so far.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by D. Pries, Seconded by C. Hittel