

Morristown Shade Tree Commission (STC11) Meeting Minutes
Monthly Meeting

October 8, 2013

7:00 pm meeting, Room 201

Morristown Town Hall

Members present:

Tina Wahlstrom, Chair

Chantal Diedrich, Secretary

Kristin Ace

Michael Rockland

Joe Torres

Karl Roettger

Louise Witt

Guest: Rich Wolowitz

Members absent:

Anne Bertucci

- I. Roll call**
- II. Minutes**-none to approve
- III. Statement of Compliance with NJ Open Public Meetings Act (Sunshine Law)** made by Tina
- IV. Introduction of Town Arborist :** Rich Wolowitz was introduced to the STC. He has been hired by the town to work an average of 12 hours per week. He is excited to work in this partnership and described his background. Friday will be Rich's designated day to work in Morristown. For now his time will be spent between STC issues and any issues that the DPW may have concerning trees. He will maintain the spreadsheet and create his own email account where requests for Morristown should be sent. He will meet with the DPW soon and get a feel for their current procedures.
 - a. Priorities:** Rich has identified some hazard trees in town and utility guy wires in trees that he feels need immediate attention. He will plan to address these more urgent issues first. Rich asked if the Town ever contracts out tree removal. Rich proposed that once hazards have been identified and mitigated that the next phase would involve a plan to assess every municipal tree on a three-five year schedule. This would be accomplished by creating a plan where the Town is divided into sections and each section is scheduled to be reviewed sequentially in a systematic way. Rich also mentioned that the NJ Community Forestry Program offers various grants to towns for trees.

Tina: We do not have Approved Status yet, once we do Morristown will be eligible for the CSIP grants. We are on track to obtain Approved Status early in 2014.W

Action: Tina to follow up with Michael Rogers about contracting tree removal in the past

- b. **Soil Samples:** A general discussion about the poor condition of some Town trees and the death of many recently planted trees occurred. The STC feels it is important to understand why this has occurred before more trees are planted. Rich suggested that he take soil samples from empty tree wells in Town to have them analyzed. This will help us understand if for example we need to fertilize, change pH or need to address salting issues.

ACTION: Rich will take soil samples next week and get them to Rutgers.

- c. **Planting specs:** The STC would like to have planting and maintenance specs reviewed by Rich prior to planting.

ACTION: Rich will request the specs from Jeff and review them prior to the upcoming planting for the Speedwell Avenue Streetscape project.

- V. **STC server access:** The STC still does not have access to the email account set up by the Town on the Town website. Several members are unable to access it remotely. Unless all members can all access the email account from home it will not function as intended e.g. the STC would like to publically announce the email account so that residents can send request directly to the STC.

ACTION: Joe will look into access to the STC.

- VI. **Fall Planting:** A general discussion ensued about whether or not we should wait until early spring to do our first planting or put a few trees in this fall. Early spring means March 15 to April 1st. The Town Administrator has asked us to fill some of the empty wells on South Street this fall. Joe stated that he thought we should have our maintenance plan, soil samples and our tree planting specs before we plant any trees.

Vote: A motion was made to delay planting until the spring, this was seconded and a vote was taken to delay the planting until early next spring. Six voted aye, and Kristin Ace abstained.

VII. The Master Plan: It is going in front of the Planning Board soon and will be made public. The STC should review the Master Plan.

ACTION: Louise will ask for a copy for the STC.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned. Next meeting Thursday October 24th.