

Morristown Shade Tree Commission (STC37) Meeting Minutes
Monthly Meeting

April 15, 2015

7:00 pm meeting, Room 201

Morristown Town Hall

Members present:

Karl Roettger, Chair

Chantal Diedrich, Secretary

Kristin Ace,

Anne Bertucci

Louise Witt

Joe Torres

Michael Rockland

Tina Wahlstrom

Guest: Richard Wolowicz, Karen Kiehn (cell 973-670-9368)

1. Roll call

2. Statement of Compliance with NJ Open Public Meetings Act (Sunshine Law)

made by Karl at 7:01.

3. Minutes from Feb. & March approved.

4. Recording our meetings: Karl was given a recorder by the Mayor to record our meetings, as requested by the town, but Karl was unable to get it to work.

ACTION: Kristin will take it to her husband who will try figure out how it works.

Louise mentioned that the minutes can be brief (only bullet points) when accompanied by the recording. Louise said her understanding based on other town boards minutes was that the STC didn't have to keep extensive minutes of discussions, but write down specific decisions and actions

5. Karen Kiehn, Lafayette Ave.: On Dec. 22, 2015, 3 sawtooth oak trees were planted on Lafayette Avenue near Staples. She does not want the trees near her rental properties. She feels they interfere with lights, road signage, curbing and sidewalks. Pedestrian injuries will be a burden to the town. Leaves will be slippery and bring wildlife. Power lines, cable lines etc. will be a problem. She feels Lafayette Ave. is state owned, and no trees should be planted on a "highway". Rich feels the trees are suitable for this location. Lights and signage are not an issue, as trees can be pruned up. Yes, they will drop leaves and acorns,

but town should pick up leaves. Power lines are offset from the plantings. Karl brought up the Morristown Master Plan, and how the vision for Morristown is to be more pedestrian friendly and to make the sidewalks more walkable with trees lining them. There are plans for this “train station” area. The town has will add pedestrian bump outs along this stretch of road to slow traffic. Karl feels the trees soften the area. There is much litter strewn about. Karl brought up that maybe we can, in a spirit of partnership look at replacing the 3 trees with 2 smaller trees? Ann reminded us that no trees can be a sign of blight. Rich said that it would cost \$600 to move these trees. Louise thought the trees didn’t look healthy when she went to look at them, a day before the meeting. She said they looked “crispy”. Louise was concerned about the STC taking a hard stand about removing these particular trees. Louise asked Karen if she would be amenable to being included in the process to choose different street trees for this location if the oaks needed to be replaced. Karen said she would. Rich added that one of them is being replaced already because of the health of the tree. Karl made a motion to consider leaving the 3 sawtooth oaks as they are. Tina seconded motion. All voted yes. We will revisit issue if health issues arise from trees and reach out to Karen with a decision for replacing trees with a different species.

6. **Arbor Day Proclamation:** We all went downstairs to the council meeting to take part as Mayor Tim Dougherty gave an Arbor Day proclamation.
7. **Fall 2014 planting:** Contractor still owes us 15 October Glory maples. He did not get paid for them. We have locations for 7 trees, and then Rich could add locations for 8 more trees.
8. **GIGM:** GIGM wants to add beds to the back part of their community garden on Early Street. There are fence line trees on the east and west sides that they would like to remove because of the trees casting shade on garden beds. We were there 2 weeks ago to view the site. Tina is wondering if it was possible to leave a few trees. Rich said that it is possible to remove some without hurting others. If we start now and say that invasives have to go, then we are we setting a bad precedent. The large ash tree in the front of the garden that they want to remove will be a separate vote. Karl asked if we could let Carolle and Rich jiggle

out which trees go, and which remain. Louise made a motion not to remove the ash tree, Ann seconded. Most were in favor of keeping the ash tree, except Kristin. Karl made a motion to let Rich and Carolle thin the fence line. Louise talked about benefits vs. detriments of trees. Louise followed up on Karl's comment that the STC has to balance the benefits of trees against other benefits. She said the benefit of having a thriving community garden has to be weighed against the loss of some town trees. Michael moved to allow GIGM to remove only sickly trees. Karl seconded motion. Vote: 3 yes's, 4 no's. Tina left meeting at 8:40. Louise motioned that the west side trees should be removed that GIGM had tagged. Kristin seconded motion. Unanimous yes vote. Karl made a motion to empower Rich to work with Carolle Huber of GIGM to enhance sunlight, yet maintain a screen on the East side. The Catalpa stays as part of that screen. Kristin seconded motion. Most voted yes, except Michael voted no. Louise noted that Carolle had mentioned adding trees to replace those removed at our site visit. Carolle asked if the STC was interested in asking GIGM to plant replacement trees along the North side, and along Early Street. Karl thought GIGM had presented a well thought out plan, and that we shouldn't try to micro-manage.

9. **Community Forestry Management Plan:** Needs to be on Michael Roger's desk by the end of May. How can we get this done? Meet in 2 weeks with edited plan. Read for content. Meet on April 28th, 7:00.
10. **Arbor Day:** 4 trees are being planted-one for STC, 2 from Burnham Park Association, and 1 for Douglas and Irene Vorleiff's family member.
11. **Treasurer:** Louise brought up that Vij Pawar, the town attorney, approved the STC to have a treasurer, and she made a motion to nominate Joe Torres. Kristin seconded motion and all approved.
12. **Meeting adjourned** at 9:10pm.