

Morristown Shade Tree Commission

Meeting agenda-April 8, 2014

7:00-8:30pm Room 201

Morristown Town Hall

Members present:

Tina Wahlstrom, Chair

Anne Bertucci

Kristin Ace

Louise Witt

Joe Torres

Karl Roettger

Members absent:

Chantal Diedrich, Secretary

Michael Rockland

Guest: Richard Wolowitz, Stacy Schlosser

- I. Roll call:
- II. Minutes-none approved
- III. Statement of Compliance with NJ Open Public Meetings Act (Sunshine Law)
- IV. Arbor Day planting
 - a. Updates- The mayor has asked to change the time from eleven AM to ten AM, and the STC agreed. The mayor will speak for five to ten minutes, then Louise will speak followed by Tina. Then soil will be shoveled around the tree and photos will be taken. Rich will bring a camera as back up. The mayor's office has a list of invitees , but they need an invitation. **Action:** Kristin will make up the invitation, sent it to the STC for general comment, then to Kristen Wedderburn for distribution. Proclamation, press release? An official proclamation needs to be made each year. This must be completed by Arbor Day. It entails having a Proclamation provided to the mayor's office prior to the next Town Council meeting. The mayor must proclaim the official

Morristown Arbor Day. **Action:** Louise will provide the Proclamation to Kristen Weddeburn and arrange to have it read by the mayor at the next Council meeting. Next steps: Rich W will have the Sugar Maple at the site however the red bud and pear may come later. They have been ordered as part of the spring planting and may not be delivered separately before April 26. The original plan was to plant three trees for the celebration but it may just be one.

V. Recent tree requests/issues

- a. 43 Wetmore sidewalk: Contractor for homeowner, without authorization, removed the slate sidewalk with a plan to pour cement replacement. During the process the contractor cut the roots of a healthy 25 inch diameter Pin oak tree. It had two, 3" roots cut and one 5" root which was partially severed to remove the top part of the root. Suggested by the STC the contractor be fined for damage to public property to the extent of the current law and be required to pay for care of the tree to try to save it Motion was made and passed by a unanimous vote. **Action:** Tina to draft and send an email and forward it to Michael Rogers, Vij Pawar and Jeff Hartke. The email will contain a recommendation to: 1) apply the full allowable penalty according to the Town Ordinance 3-31 and 2) apply an additional fee for the future care of the damaged tree. This would be determined based on the input from a third party tree contractor (such as Bartlet) who have expertise in deep root feeding.
- b. 96 Speedwell billboards: A request was made to reduce the size of the pear tree in front of the shop to enable a complete view of the billboard sign. STC discussed and decided to allow the tree to be trimmed according to the arborist guidelines by DPW. STC agreed that the trimming should help increase visibility of the sign without compromising the health of the tree. **Action:** Rich W. will notify the requestor that it will be put into the DPW schedule. It was suggested they be notified by certified mail however group felt email was sufficient.
- c. Prune Oakleaf hydrangea at George's Island: Carol Heuber recommended the hydrangea on Georges Island be pruned. It requires shrub pruning which is different than tree pruning. STC wants to try to save this year's blooms. **Action:** Karl is going to meet Rich at the island to review and make recommendation as to when and how much should be pruned. **Action:** Rich to follow up with DPW and Kathleen Margiotta to find out if they can do the pruning and if this is the best approach.
- d. Tracy Park- Rebecca Feldman is working on having three trees donated by Veterans groups but has some concern regarding the logistics of getting them watered regularly. However, Mr. Moran, the neighbor, has offered to water them, if the STC approves. The STC discussed the merits of assigning watering outside of the DPW and/or contractors who are paid to care for the trees. While we sincerely appreciate the input of our community and their willingness to help the STC felt it was more important to rely on the town to do the watering. The process that is in place should be adhered to, and the STC will make sure the trees get watered. Tina made a motion to decline the Moran offer, Joe seconded, and all voted in favor. **Action:** Tina to notify Rebecca of the decision.

- e. 268 South Street: Louise spoke with Jeff Hartke and Deena Leary, who is the new director of the county's Department of Public Works this past week. They discussed STC's role in maintaining and making decisions regarding the removal of County trees located within Morristown. Deena informed Louise that she would need some written communication regarding the matter. All felt it was fortuitous conversation and we want to develop a rapport with Deena. However, the STC decided we should not put the request in writing without input from the Town Administrator and Town Attorney. **Action:** Tina is going to contact Jeff Hartke, and Vijay Pawarand ask what procedure we need to follow. Streetscape project-South Street_
- f. Walker street removal request: initially a request was made to remove a Horse Chestnut tree on Walker Street, located next to the cemetery on Martin Luther King Street, because the requestor believes the tree is dead. Rich examined the tree ;it is alive. Rich remarked that there has been no further contact from the requestor and recommended that we wait until the requestor makes additional contact.

VI. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.