

Morristown Shade Tree Commission (STC15) Meeting Minutes
Monthly Meeting

January 14, 2014

7:00 pm meeting, Room 201

Morristown Town Hall

Members present:

Tina Wahlstrom, Chair

Chantal Diedrich, Secretary

Karl Roettger

Anne Bertucci

Louise Witt

Joe Torres

Kristin Ace

Michael Rockland

Members absent:

Guest: Richard Wolowicz

- I. Roll call**
- II. Minutes:** approved minutes from 11, 12, 13 and 14th meetings.
- III. Statement of Compliance with NJ Open Public Meetings Act (Sunshine Law)**
made by Tina at 7:05.
- IV. Approve Accomplishment Report:** Tina made motion to approve the Accomplishment Report that Kristin circulated for review. All approved. **ACTION:** Kristin to get a copy to Michael Rogers (MR) for the mayor to sign off on. It will then be sent to the NJ Community Forestry Program. We will let Paul Miller know (Office of Sustainability) once we have confirmation of our Approved Status.
- V. Approval of Annual Report** Tina then motioned to approve the Annual Report, Kristin seconded. All said aye. **ACTION:** Tina will get a copy to MR and the mayor.
- VI. Spring planting**
Phase 1 Rich W. (arborist) gave his recommendations for our first phase of tree planting this spring. We looked at 40 trees. Rich estimated that it could cost approximately \$12,000-\$15,000. The trees planted here will be larger. On Washington Street, the County must be notified before planting, since it is a County road. **ACTION:** Rich will contact Jeff Hartke about this issue and write the communication to the County. The STC discussed the various tree selections and made a few changes. An Elm is the first choice for George Washington's Island, since that is what fell during the hurricane. Second choice is a White Oak. Tina motioned to approve Rich's plan, Karl seconded. All said aye.

Phase 2: Replacement trees and new requests. This planting will cover the requests that are on the spreadsheet now as well as new requests. STC would like to solicit requests from residents. Rich explained that the list from DPW may not be accurate anymore. Rich recommended that we get the word out to the town's people to let us know if they need/want a tree. A communication will have to be written. Options for reaching as many of the residents as possible were discussed such as a posting on the town's website, local newspaper articles, flyers, and neighborhood newsletters. The STC decided two pieces should be written. One to announce the STC (informing the public) the second as a 'call to action' asking residents to submit requests for trees to the STC.

ACTION: Kristin will write an information piece about the STC. **ACTION:** Louise will write a 'call to action' press release. The process for requests will be: ask residents who want a tree to fill out a form; the form will be uploaded to our webpage. The requests will be sent to morristowntrees@gmail.com email.

ACTION: Joe will create a form to post on the town website; it will be circulated before the next meeting. The STC would also like to offer residents the opportunity to have a tree planted on their private property. The trees would have to be close to the sidewalk (not just anywhere on the property) so that it still benefits the public. This will allow more shade trees to be planted rather than ornamentals in locations near utility lines. There is precedent for this in Morristown. **ACTION:** Tina to follow up with MR regarding this process. Also discuss the process for distribution of press releases, etc..

VII. Tree City USA: Rich recommended that we pursue this designation; it will provide good PR for the town and the STC. If we decide to pursue this we need to apply by December 14th. The town must make an Arbor Day proclamation, meet a tree planting budget target and fill out an application. A general discussion occurred regarding the opportunity to have an Arbor Day activity this year that would include a ceremonial planting in town. We would like to have the mayor involved too.

ACTION: STC and Rich will look for a prime location for an Arbor Day planting. Tina to inform MR of our intentions and solicit location ideas

VIII. Tree planting specs: **ACTION:** Rich will get spec document out to the STC for comments and approval by the next meeting.

IX. 15/17 Madison Street. The owner of the property would like to put a driveway between two houses. There is a town tree that would have to be removed in order for the driveway to be added. Rich shared a site plan and informed us that the tree is large and healthy and that buttress roots are prominent. The roots may impact the sidewalk in the future. Pictures were reviewed. Karl stated that this may be a rental property since the owner has a different primary residence. There was a general question regarding the likelihood of the plan being approved by the Building Dept since the space is very tight. STC agreed that the decision making process is

unclear regarding the chronology of having the Building department weigh in on the site plan versus the STC making recommendations about the tree. **ACTION:** Tina to discuss with MR. Tina also informed the STC that the owner needs to be invited to the STC meeting when we discuss the disposition of the tree. **ACTION:** Tina will invite owner to Jan 28th meeting.

X. Inventory: Tina is meeting with Michael Rogers to review The Land Conservancy tree sampling results on Friday Jan 17.

XI. Meeting adjourned at 8:48pm