

**Morristown Shade Tree Commission (STC40) Meeting Minutes
Monthly Meeting**

July 14, 2015

7:00 pm meeting, Room 201

Morristown Town Hall

Members present:

Karl Roettger, Chair

Chantal Diedrich, Secretary

Joe Torres, Treasurer

Kristin Ace

Michael Rockland

John Harris

Members absent:

Louise Witt

Anne Bertucci

Tina Wahlstrom

Guests: Richard Wolowicz, John O'Donnell, Evan Finn and Susan Finn

1. Roll call

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

made by Karl at 7:06.

3. Minutes: Kristin motioned to approve the June meeting minutes, Chantal seconded and all approved.

4. 78 Western Ave. John O'Donnell (lawyer for the project) and Evan Finn submitted pictures and the proposed plan for the property on 78 Western Ave. There is a line of trees (mostly Norway Maples) that they want removed. The property is on a steep slope as defined by the town. Two of the seven of the trees are in distress. A grouping of 3 trees and one additional tree need removal because of a proposed driveway. Two large maples need to be removed (#6&7) in order to get house module placed on the lot by a crane. The zoning board meeting is tomorrow, and will vote on the steep slope issue. Karl doesn't feel prepared to vote on these trees yet, until all town permits are granted. Joe asked if the wires and utilities could be moved instead of cutting the two huge shade trees (#6,7). Property owners said they would ask the builder about this

possibility. They requested to be put on the next meeting's agenda. Michael is wondering who will pay for the trees to come down. Karl commented that he doesn't want Morristown taxpayers to bear that cost. They would most likely need to plant replacement trees, which the property owner is willing to do.

5. **Fall Planting:** Rich has a list of 95 trees to be placed around Morristown! Rich will get bids. Town wants contractor hired by end of August.
6. **Trees on Speedwell Ave. across from Century 21:** Grates are girdling trees. Rich wants to get town welder to fix grates, or he will remove grates and fill in. Filling could be a hazard to the trees, so widening the grates would be a better option.
7. **Fall Festival:** September 27th is the Fall Festival on the Morristown Green from 12:00 til 5:00. Kristin has reserved a table for the STC in the town's tent. She created a sign up sheet for that day- 2 hour time slots for STC members to participate. Kristin has several handouts we could use, such as *The Value of Trees*, *Mulching Volcanoes*, and *Emerald Ash Borer*. ACTION: Kristin will check with Louise to see if we have the Tree City USA banner, and Kristin will look into getting a Shade Tree Banner.
8. **Emerald Ash Borer:** Joe would like to have someone come in and tell us about the Emerald Ash Borer in NJ. Kristin feels we should have a second meeting to provide time for this. NJ is currently setting traps to assess where they are. NJ is also releasing wasps that love to eat the EAB's. Kristin made a motion that we have a presentation from Rich during a special session, Joe seconded and all agreed. Rich recommended a presentation in Sept. or Oct. when there is more information from the state.
9. **Compensation for removal of town trees ordinance.** Karl did some research, and spoke with Rich about this issue. Karl would like a sub-committee of 3 or less people to come up with a formal Replacement Assessment Schedule. Other towns have various ways of handling this. ACTION: Joe will find out how the town accepts money for a dedicated fund for replacements of trees. Karl, Rich, and Jeff Hartke are meeting with Rich Fernicola to find out how to proceed on Friday this week. Karl, Joe and John volunteered to be on this subcommittee.

- 10. Planting on Private Property:** At times the STC would like to plant a town tree on private property. There may be an ideal location next to a sidewalk that would benefit town residents. The contract the town has now may be outdated. We can legally plant on private property, (such as at the High School) but we need a contract for DPW and Division of Engineering. ACTION: Karl will find out if we need to update contract at the Friday meeting.
- 11. Volunteer Tree Pruning:** Because our tree crew is unable to prune trees because of too many commitments, Karl and Kristin both thought of another way we could get some valuable trimming done around town. CORE trained people are trained to trim trees up to 6 feet. We could form a few teams to trim in quadrants. Another idea is to give a 90 minute training session for town volunteers, then head out in teams to trim. Karl spoke with MR who was afraid of liability. Jeff Hartke was very supportive of the idea. There has to be back up from DPW, collecting brush etc. Karl feels that George, Troy and Rich could do the training. The equipment and reflective vests should come from the town. ACTION: Karl will discuss in his Friday meeting.
- 12. Additional meeting:** Kristin wants to meet an additional time on July 28th because we have many issues to discuss and vote on. She made a motion to meet on July 28th to finish some agenda items, Joe seconded motion and all agreed.
- 13. Tree Protection:** Kristin wants to see if we can protect our trees in town. There is so much foot traffic and trees are being damaged. She researched beautiful tree fences as one idea. We are wondering how to proceed. ACTION: Karl will present idea to Jeff Hartke at his Friday meeting.
- 14. Whole Foods:** Michael spoke with Jim Campbell about the lack of trees in front of Whole Foods. The town seems to be responsible for planting trees. We don't want this issue to be dropped. ACTION: Michael will ask for the phase 2 plan for Whole Foods sidewalk.
- 15. Meeting adjourned at 8:45.** Next meeting July 28th.
- 16. Recording:** Chantal noted that recorder was mistakenly off when she went to turn it off.