

Minutes for

STC- July 28, 2015

Meeting called to order at six minutes after seven.

Karl made the OPMA compliance statement,

STC members present: Karl Roettger, Anne Bertucci, Michael Rockland,
Louise Witt, Kristin Ace, John Harris

Guests: Rich Wolowicz (Town Arborist)

Susan Finn (78 Western Ave. property)

John O'Donnell (Atty. representing Susan Finn/ Evan Finn)

Mr. O'Donnell addressed the commission on behalf of his clients in a review of their request to remove town trees as indicated on the site plan previously provided to the STC (with photos). Mr. O'Donnell noted that tree #2 (a 4" caliper Norway Maple) fell below the 5" caliper that defined "Tree" in chapter 17-2 of the town code.

During this discussion Rich Wolowicz reported that he had a phone conversation with the contractor for the site and that tree #7 would not need to be removed as initially requested. Trees as indicated on the site plan as #2, #3, #4, #5, #6 would be the trees requested for removal. Karl reported that he had spoken to James Campbell and that all board approvals for the property had been granted and only STC approval was required for the Finn's to proceed with their plan.

Mr. O'Donnell also requested clarification on how the cost of tree removal by his client and how any tree replacement compensation (how many and what size) would be established. He was informed that the commission was working on a formal species rating formula and that a vote on his client's request would include specific requirements of removal and replacement and how to proceed in those areas. Karl will be following up with Rich on the NJ Species Value Rating Guide for Morris County and with Jeff Hartke on the process for removal. Having formal guidelines and process in place for cost of removal and replacement compensation going forward was thought to be an important protocol for the STC. John, Joe and Karl will be working as a sub-committee on this.

Mr. O'Donnell and Ms. Finn were told that the request to remove trees at 78 Western Ave, would be placed on the August 11 agenda for discussion and probable vote and that Karl would email Evan Finn to confirm.

Karl talked about evaluation factor and wanted to be specific about what we will use.

Louise asked that we be very careful deciding which trees to remove.

Louise said she didn't want to get boxed in and vote for valuation of trees.

It was noted by Anne that we had done this for Washington Ave. replacement.

Michael asked about where trees could be planted and if the STC could provide specific locations.

Arborist Report: gator bags on order and should arrive in a day or so and will then be put on newly planted trees. Dead trees will be documented and removed.

Karl met with Michael Rogers about the five pear trees removed on South Street. Michael Rogers requested that Rich provide the STC with a list of all new tree work at each regular meeting and that the list become part of the minutes.

Louise asked when we voted for the removal of those trees.

Karl said he felt that since they were dead and any dead tree is a hazard tree that it was ok for DPW to remove.

Rich said we should vote on removal of trees at 21 Frederick and 189 Speedwell since they are both hazards. Felt he didn't want to risk his license.

Anne said that she learned in Core Training as long as we use diligence in our work we were not in jeopardy nor was the arborist.

Louise spoke about the "Basic Tree Risk Assessment Form". Discussion ensued regarding how many forms are practical and for what status of trees.

There was not a vote for which trees, in particular the trees on South Street that were removed. We have formerly decided to vote on trees to be removed and Louise wants to exercise that decision. Louise gave the example of a large tree being removed a couple of days after an STC meeting with no mention of it being diseased or set for removal. She happened to pass when it was being removed and learned about it no vote or discussion on that either. She voiced her concerns about this happening again.

The South Street Pear Tree removal resulted in the administration receiving a significant amount of public comment and criticism,

Jeff Hartke asked that the STC communicate through Rich.

CVS has requested the removal of a tree for a DOT required handicap ramp in front of Pan Pizza on Speedwell Ave.

Discussion of items for Fall Festival on the Green table. Kristin provided an estimate from Alphagrahics for a 2x6 vinyl banner (\$93.20) and 3x100 page note pads, full color 5.5x4.25 (\$96.09). The purchase was approved by a unanimous vote.

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Louse asked the STC be informed about any sidewalk work being planned.

Kristin commented on the importance of putting in place the protocols previously created by the protocol committee. Anne agreed and Karl asked Anne to present them at the August meeting.

Anne reported on her meeting with Mr. Ray and his attorney at the Elm St, garden Anne gave a detailed summary of Mr. Ray's concerns regarding his plans for future gardens and his relationship with the STC. Anne invited Mr. Ray to attend the August 11 STC meeting where he would be given an opportunity to make a presentation on his own behalf.

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Meeting was adjourned.