

Gettysburg Borough Shade Tree Commission Meeting Minutes 08/08/2023

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Shade Tree Commission was held on Tuesday, Aug 8, 2023, at the Borough Office. Present: David Rice, Chair; Susan Naugle, Member; Martin Jolin, Member; Rebecca Brown, Alternate Member; and Rob Harbaugh, Public Works Director. Members of the public in attendance: Shelly Knouse, 28 Chambersburg Street; Scott English, 66-68 W. High St; and William Chantelau, 30-44 Chambersburg Street representing the Property Committee for Christ Lutheran Church. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by Susan Naugle as Chair Rice had advised he would be late.

MINUTES: Draft minutes for the April 11 regular meeting were provided prior to the meeting. Following a reading of the minutes, a correction was made, and members accepted the minutes as corrected.

At this time Mr. Rice joined the meeting and assumed his role as Chair.

FINANCIAL REPORT: A report from the Borough Finance Department shows a balance of \$11,888.67 as of July 31. Members reviewed expenditures. Ms. Naugle noted that payment to Steve Zimmerman for the purchase and delivery of two (2) dogwood trees is not listed. She sent him an email regarding submission of an invoice. **Commission Members accepted the Finance Report as presented.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: William Chantelau spoke on behalf of the congregation of Christ Lutheran Church requesting that the Commission not approve the planting of a street tree in front of the church. He provided photos of the area and shared concern that sidewalk cutting could damage the sidewalk and that tree roots could also damage the concrete in future years. The church invested approx. \$100,000 to repair and upgrade the sidewalk and plaza in front of the church. They would prefer the entry to the church be open to the street. Chair Rice voiced his desire to plant trees but would respect the wishes of the congregation. Ms. Naugle pointed out that the location is within the Street Scape Enhancement area for Borough zoning which calls for planting trees on both sides of streets. She related that others who have indicated they don't want trees have accepted that trees are a public benefit. **Chair Rice moved to remove the location from the planting list, Mr. Jolin seconded the motion. The motion was approved two votes to one, with Ms. Naugle voting no.**

Scott English spoke of the unfairness of requiring property owners to pay for sidewalk repairs when damage is caused by trees planted by the Borough. Shelly Knouse who owns the building next door to the church offered that she supported the congregation's request.

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE: Rob Harbaugh reported they have been watering trees planted in the spring and all appear to be doing well. He estimates that about half of the watering bags (Tree Gators) will need to be replaced. The "donut" watering bags do not work nearly as well. They will be starting tree pruning in the fall.

Rob reported two requests to remove trees. The first is on private property at the rear of property on the 500 block of York Street. The tree is dropping limbs which are damaging a neighboring fence. The Borough Code Enforcement Officer has requested the Commission provide an assessment. The property owner claims he had an arborist indicate the tree should be removed but no documentation was provided. The Chair will contact Trevor Redding to see if he can provide an independent assessment to the Commission.

The second request came from 140 W. Broadway. The property owner is concerned that two street trees, both Pin Oaks, are lifting the sidewalk. He would like those to be removed and replanted with Cherry trees. There is no indication that the trees are presenting a danger to persons or property. No action was taken by the Commission at this time since the Borough is currently reviewing issues related to sidewalks, to include sidewalk damage due to trees.

He has also been contacted by the owner of the Shriver House, 309 Baltimore Street, about a tree that has heaved the sidewalk. This is a heavy pedestrian traffic area. No action was taken pending the review of sidewalk issues by the Borough Planning Department.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS: No additional

REVIEW OF PERMIT REQUESTS:

Members reviewed a permit requested by Harry Stokes to plant two street trees on Mummasburg Street. The location is not his property, but along property owned by the college on his street. He has requested two Village Green Zelkova and has offered to donate the trees and provide tree boxes if needed and will water and care for them. These trees will be considered for planting this fall.

UPDATES TO ORDINANCE LIST OF SUGGESTED TREES:

Ms. Naugle had provided a draft list in advance of the meeting. The Committee reviewed the list and agreed to remove the following trees from the current list due to their invasive nature and/or susceptibility to disease and/or pests: Purple Leaf Plum; Callery Pear; Norway Maple; Ash (Green and White); and Sycamore Maple. There was also consensus to add trees we have planted over the past two years to the updated list. Ms. Naugle will continue to work on the draft list for future review and adoption by the Commission. Changes to the list will require an ordinance change so she suggested the Commission also review the ordinance for other changes. She suggested that the list be removed from the ordinance and referenced as a resolution adopted by Council as that is a much easier and quicker process for future updates.

DISCUSSION OF PLANTING SITES AND SPECIES FOR FALL PLANTING:

Rob reported on locations where trees have been removed and new ones could be planted - 38 E. Broadway (dying), 7 Liberty Street, and 166 York Street (vehicle damage). Susan discussed possible planting opportunities on York St. from 6th St. to the square. Chair Rice requested members be ready to make selections at the Sept. meeting.

Members discussed various tree vendors. Possibilities are Diller's in Dillsburg and a vendor in the Spring Grove area used by the Borough in past years. Both Shott's and Boyers have provided nice trees. However, Shott's is a wholesaler and will not create an account until we have made multiple purchases.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

Susan and Rob advised the Commission that Borough Planning is looking at sidewalk issues and that both will attend a meeting tomorrow. Susan relayed information from Planning Director Marshall that they will have an intern starting soon and plan to use her to do GIS mapping of street trees. Dir. Marshall had also received a request for the Borough to participate in a Tree-of-Heaven eradication program. Members questioned whether the Commission has the resources to take on such a project. More information will be needed.

Having no other business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on September 12, 2023.

Minutes prepared by Susan Naugle 8/9/2023