

February 18, 2021
Middlesex Municipal Building

The meeting of the Middlesex Shade Tree Commission was held remotely on the above date and called to order by Chairman Jason Bond.

“This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Law in that the requirements of the law have been met by the Meeting Notice which has been forwarded to the Courier News and posted in the Municipal Building on December 8, 2020 and amended on January 19, 2021.

Members: Jason Bond
 Dan Gitler (absent)
 Sean Johnson
 Jim Gorman
 Jeff Killian (absent)
 Martin Quinn, Representative

Secretary Linda Chismar

Chairman Bond opened the meeting to the public. Seeing that there were no public comments, Chairman Bond closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Bond made a motion to approve the January 14, 2021 Shade Tree Meeting Minutes seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the January, 2021 Finance Report seconded by Mr. Bond and carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Communications

1. 101 Fairfield Avenue – Mr. Bond viewed this location and made the following recommendation for the trees in front of this property. (1) the tree left of the driveway should get a 2” prune and broken branches should be removed; (2) The small shrub that is limiting view should be removed to increase visibility to resident; (3) The London Plane at the intersection of Fairfield Avenue and Zoar Place needs a 2” prune and wires should be cleared; and (4) the remaining 2 London Planes in front of the property need a 2” prune and branches leaning towards house should be reduced.
2. 129 Beechwood Avenue – Chairman Bond feels that the 2 big sugar maples need a 2” prune.
3. 283 Beechwood Avenue – Chairman Bond reported that the gum tree needs a 1” prune.

Follow Up

1. 48 Louis Avenue – Mr. Bond informed resident that after he assessed the tree that they can prune the roots to help with the lifting sidewalk.
2. 141 Beechwood Avenue – Mr. Bond reported the following on the 5 trees in front of this property that have declined in health due to the construction at this property: (1) the Maple on the left side of the driveway needs a 2” prune and (2) the 4 maples between the driveway need to be removed and replaced with 4 sugar maples.
3. 700 Mountain Avenue - Mr. Bond reported that the walnut tree is thin but healthy. He recommended that 2 – 3 branches be removed over the roof and a 2” prune.
4. 340 Runyon Avenue – Mr. Bond recommended that a 2” prune be done and the lead that it extending towards driveway over the wires be reduced.

Unfinished Business – (None)

New Business

1. Review of Joint Land Use Board Plans – (Block 353, Lot 1.01 & 1.02 – RG Middlesex) that were emailed to members has been tabled until the March 11, 2021 Shade Tree Meeting.
2. 2020 Planting appears to be successful.
3. Tree Management Plan Preparation & Submission – The Commission reviewed the plan and completed remaining information needed so that the secretary can submit to the NJDEP Community Forestry Program.
4. Direction for tree orders – The Shade Tree Secretary ordered the seedlings requested at the last meeting. The Shade Tree Chairman will review the free seedlings available by the Community Tree Recovery Program and see if it is possible to apply, due to the time restrictions and requirements imposed in the application, due to COVID Pandemic.
5. Amendment to Tree Replacement Fund Ordinance (395-18) – Commission discussed that the JLUB has recommended that the fees in this ordinance be increased. Chairman Bond looked in other towns that have fees in excess of the \$300 fee that Middlesex presently charges for trees that are to be replaced that are 8 – 26 inches in diameter. Somerville charges \$650, Edison charges \$500, Watchung charges \$350 and Short Hills charges \$250. The Commission would like to recommend that these fees in the borough ordinance increase as listed: 8-25” \$400, 25 – 36” \$500 and 37” & above \$900. The Chairman and JLUB Chair will make recommendations to Council to amend this ordinance.
6. Commission also discussed an ordinance that is used in Freehold where the residents can request a permit and obtain approval to prune or remove a tree on their own, with consent of the Commission. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.
7. Councilman Quinn will look further into the CSIP Grant and review with the Shade Tree Commission.

Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Bond and carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Linda Chismar, Secretary

NEXT SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY,
March 11, 2021 – 7:30 PM
REMOTE MEETING

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please call Linda at 732-356-7400, Ext. 238