

November 18, 2021
Recreation Center

The meeting of the Middlesex Shade Tree Commission was held at the Middlesex Recreation Center 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 October 15, 2021.

Members: Jason Bond
 Sean Johnson
 Jim Gorman
 Jeff Killian
 Frank Ryan
 Martin Quinn, Council Representative (absent)

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 moved to approve the October 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 October, 2021 Finance Report seconded by Mr. Ryan and carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Communications

1. 14 Center Place – Mr. Bond looked at this Norway Maple and reported that it should be removed and replaced with a red maple.
2. 107 Melrose Avenue – Mr. Bond reported that the tree on the Mohawk side of the property is dead and should be removed.
3. 12 Rutgers Lane – Mr. Bond will look at the tree with the dead branches that resident reported are falling and requested a trim.
4. 440 Cook Avenue – Mr. Johnson will look at the big part of the tree that fell into the street and resident is concerned is unsafe.
5. 138 Vogel Place – Chairman Bond will go over to speak with the resident regarding his sidewalk.
6. 125 South Woodland Avenue – Mr. Johnson will look at the tree in front of this property that resident requested be trimmed.

7. 322 Melrose Avenue – High priority to remove the 2 ash trees in front of this property and replace with 2 Zelcova's.

Work Agenda

1. 87 Conover Street – Commission reported that the DPW needs to mark out the two trees that are losing branches, as Shade Tree has been unable to locate.
2. 303 Fairview Avenue (Delaware Ave. side) – Mr. Gorman will inspect the tree that resident feels is infested and a hole is located on the bottom of the tree.
3. 501 Decatur Avenue – Mr. Bond reported that the black oak tree should be removed.
4. 315 First Street – Mr. Gorman and Mr. Ryan will check the tree in front of this property to see if it needs to be removed for the paving of the driveway.
5. 328 Howard Avenue – Mr. Bond checked the large tree in front of this property and reported that the maple tree should be pruned.
6. 316 Raphael Avenue – Mr. Bond reported that the limb over the driveway should be reduced and a dead wood prune done.

Unfinished Business

1. RFP for Tree Inventory – Commission discussed that this process is very complicated and it was recommended that Mr. Bond reach out to Paul Cowey for the cost to prepare an RFP for Tree Inventory.
2. Tree Management Plan Renewal – Mr. Bond spoke with Mr. Cowey and was informed that the State is currently undergoing the rewriting of what they want from their Tree Management Plans and they have given a grace period until 2027 to renew the plan.
3. Potential Ordinance Amendment – Allowing residents to request Shade Tree approval to remove shade trees and for them to pay for the removal. This was discussed with the commission and they have agreed to follow up with it at a future meeting.
4. Update on dedication of property on Raritan Avenue as a tree arboretum – Councilman Quinn was unable to attend meeting, and Commission will follow up at the December meeting.

New Business

1. The Shade Tree secretary had a request from Mr. Hand of 282 Harris Avenue, that the following email be read into the meeting records:

“On November 2 Spoke with James Eodice and Jeremiah Carnes while doing pre-election activities. They themselves observed how dangerous tree #1 is And sidewalk

damage from the towns trees. The entire length in front of my house. The 12 foot wishbone is rotting and if not taken care of could fall on children going to school possibly causing death. The sidewalk is a tripping hazard and gave “sea sickness” to my friend in manual wheelchair. There is a differently abled student that goes by my house in motorized chair can only imagine how fun it is for her. The council members made phone calls and assured me someone would actually come talk to me. Council members please let the appropriate parties know I am not exaggerating. And expedite the situation. It would seem to me sidewalk needs to be addressed first as that could determine if more than pruning needs to be done with “your trees” I believe you vote on the minutes tonight I would like this to be read into the record please.”

At the October meeting Mr. Hand attended the public portion to explain his concern and Chairman Bond had been out to look at his trees. Chairman Bond reported to Mr. Hand that he had looked at the evergreen, which is not a borough tree and stated Mr. Hand can remove if he chooses. He also looked at the 2 maples in the front left of the house. Upon inspection of the 2 maples, Mr. Bond felt that these trees need to be pruned of dead branches and the commission would address the low limbs. Chairman Bond also reported that the tree limbs would be cleared of wires.

Chairman Bond reported that in light of the email that the secretary received today from Mr. Hand, he would go over to speak with Mr. Hand regarding his sidewalk concern.

2. Update on remaining budget for 2021 – Commission remaining budget total is at \$440 for 2021. The Council has a pending transfer of \$10,000 into the Shade Tree Budget for approval at their November 23, 2021 Council Meeting.
3. Review of Updated Plans from JLUB for Mountain/Wood Avenue Project – The work has been completed and Shade Tree commission recommendations were taken.
4. Tree Care Plan – Chairman Bond spoke about possibly incorporating a Tree Protection Zone into the Tree ordinance. Mayor Madden is working on revising this ordinance, and updates will be made to that ordinance.
5. Review of JLUB – Plans for 700 South Avenue –Chairman Bond will be reviewing these plans and bring back to the December meeting.
6. Review of JLUB – Plans for Veolia ES Technical Solutions – These plans will be reviewed further and will be discussed at the December meeting.
7. Review of JLUB – Plans for 534 Drake Avenue – Buccellato – Mr. Ryan will review plans and visit the site. This will be discussed further at the December meeting.
8. Quotes for Tree Planting – Jeff Boltzer was the only quote that was received by November 19. The price quoted was \$395 per tree for 25 trees. Funds for this planting will come from the Tree Replacement Fund.

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,
December 9, 2021 – 7:30 PM
RECREATION CENTER

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