

Pennington Borough Shade Tree Committee
Meeting of September 13, 2022 7:30 pm
Via Zoom, Meeting ID:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84007236257>
Minutes

Members Present: Suzen Witcher, Cecile Vidican, Mike Rheinhardt, Gabe Rosko, Nadine Stern, Kate Dunham, Rick Smith, and Kate Fullerton.

Members of the Public Present: Manu Chopra, NJZoom

Open Public Meeting Statement was read and the meeting was opened.

Approval of Minutes: The Committee approved the minutes from the June 7, 2022 and August 3, 2022 meetings.

Approval of Procedure for Borough Resident Tree Requests

The Chair requested a motion to approve of the procedure determined at the August 3 meeting for the review of Resident Tree Requests. Mr. Rosko made the motion to approve of the procedure and Mr. Rheinhardt seconded. The Committee discussed the fine points of the procedure, confirming that the Public Works Department and Mr. Rosko have more than 24 hours to inspect the tree request, while Committee members are expected to respond to request within 24 hours. The Committee approved this procedure.

Tree Report/requests: Mr. Fabian was not present at the meeting, so Mr. Smith reported on the tree actions. The first round of the tree requests that were reviewed by the Committee needs to be coordinated with a contractor. They are being processed. As each request reaches a conclusion, the resident is contacted by the Public Works Department. The Committee accepted this report.

Mr. Fabian later submitted a more detailed report:

PSTC 22-11 317 Hale Street: Met with homeowner Borough will schedule with contractor. 7/29/22

PSTC 22-12 103 Laning: M. Fabian and G. Rosko smaller tree under wires can be planted 2023? 7/29/22

PSTC 22-13 111 Voorhees: M. Fabian and G. Rosko agree some smaller dead branches. Borough schedule with contractor 7/29/22

PSTC 22-14 317 Hale: See PSTC 22-11

PSTC 22-15 413 Sked: M. Fabian and G. Rosko tree in decline. Borough schedule with contractor to prune. No need for removal at this time. 7/29/22

PSTC 22-16 106 West Welling: M. Fabian Branches in question out of reach of DPW. Contract out with similar work. 8/8/22

PSTC 22-17 118 West Welling: M. Fabian recommends removal. Tree in decline last couple of years. DPW can handle in house. 9/8/22

PSTC 22-18 120 West Welling M. Fabian and DPW removed branches in question 9/8/22

New Business

The Committee discussed an unapproved tree removal on Sked Street. The homeowner adjacent to a Borough Shade Tree pruned the tree to death, then removed the tree. The Shade Tree Committee ordinance does allow for a fine to be collected if a resident removes a Shade Tree. It was noted that coordination with the Police Department would be needed. Mr. Rheinhardt had noticed the tree being pruned and had asked Mr. Fabian about it. Mr. Rheinhardt reported that Mr. Fabian had spoken to the

property owner and according to Mr. Fabian, the property owner had not meant to kill the tree, he just wanted to raise the canopy. The Chair will follow up with the Mayor to pursue this process and the appropriate next steps. The Committee discussed whether it would be appropriate to plant a new tree in this location.

The Committee accepted with regret the resignation of Todd MacDonald. It was suggested that Ms. Sterling might have a list of residents interested in joining the Shade Tree Committee.

Committee members reviewed the NJCUF accreditation courses for the fall. Ms. Vidican reported that she has earned four credits, but only one shows up on the list of Pennington CEUs. She has submitted the material to DEP several times. Mr. Smith offered to discuss this with our DEP contact. Mr. Rosko pointed out that there are several ways to earn CEUs.

Mr. Rosko expressed concern about a tree at 114 Welling. This tree poses a liability concern to the Borough. Mr. Smith reported that there will be more contracted work in the future, as the Borough no longer has access to a bucket truck.

Committee members discussed the need and use of the gators/water bags around newly planted trees due to the drought. It was noted that some species could need water bags for five years.

Mr. Smith reported on the East Welling plantings. They are available, but there may be fewer trees ordered than originally anticipated, due to constraints.

Members confirmed that the next meeting will be October 4 and then adjourned the meeting.