

Pennington Borough Shade Tree Committee
Meeting of April 11, 2023, 7:30 pm
Online via Zoom

Minutes

Members Present: Jaye Berman, Moe Fabian, Kate Fullerton, Meredith Moore, Mike Rheinhardt, Nadine Stern, Cecile Vidican; **Absent:** Gabe Rosko, Suzen Witcher

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

Approval of Minutes: All were in favor of the approval of the January 3 and March 14, 2023, minutes.

Meredith Moore was introduced as the newest member of the Shade Tree Committee.

Tree Request

Before moving to Old Business, a New Business agenda item was addressed to accommodate Mr. Fabian's schedule. He said he was trying to expedite a request regarding a maple tree at 125 Laning Avenue that Mr. Rosko and he agreed should be removed. Ms. Berman agreed to look at the tree and submit the needed committee member recommendation.

Old Business

Arbor Day

Mr. Fabian reported he has picked up the tree prepped the planting location for the Arbor Day tree planting ceremony at Toll Gate Elementary School to be held on Friday, April 28, 2023, at 11:45 a.m. He also noted confirmed he has the tree slices ("cookies"), the banner, tables and other materials typically displayed and distributed at the event. Ms. Fullerton (the Chair) noted approval of the Mayor's proclamation. She asked Mr. Rheinhardt if Betty Sterling knows how many students would be attending so she would know how many coloring books to put out, and further noted that Mr. Fabian and Gabrielle Canavera would need to know how many "cookie" slices would need to be stamped. There was some discussion about providing these materials in small, individual tote bags to the teachers for distribution to the students.

Tree Planting

The Chair shared that two memorial trees have been planted next to one another as follows:

- A redbud, as requested by former Borough Council Member and Administrator, Eileen Heinzl, now deceased, in memory of her parents
- A red maple, as requested by Julia Heinzl (Eileen's daughter), in memory of a friend.

Salem Oak Seedling

The Chair provided background on the Salem Oak seedling Pennington Borough was supposed to have received but noted no further information regarding its status. Amid discussion as to whether there had been any progress on distribution of the seedlings, Ms. Vidican searched online and reported two of the seedlings have been planted elsewhere in NJ.

Arboretum

With regard to the Pennington Borough Arboretum, Ms. Stern noted progress in areas such as ash tree removal and budgeting estimates on deer exclosures, but there are no further updates since our last meeting.

Library Welcome Folders

There was discussion concerning inclusion of STC bookmarks in welcome folders distributed to new residents by the Pennington Library. Ms. Moore will help facilitate the process between Mr. Rheinhardt, who has the bookmarks, and the appropriate library contact. Ms. Vidican noted she has "How to Plant a Tree" brochures (in Spanish), which can be displayed and distributed on Pennington Day.

Green Team Education Program

The Chair said she would be following up with the township's environmental committee and FOHVOS in connection with the Green Team education program's goal of planting thousands of trees throughout the township.

Streetscape II Project

Ms. Stern announced the public comment period has now closed, but there will be additional opportunities for public comment. The Chair noted Mr. Rosko had provided input on the new trees to be planted.

New Business

Pennington Day

Mr. Rheinhardt said he needs to connect with Ms. Sterling to process the \$25 table booking fee. He further noted the slabs from Moe were smoothed and sanded and will be covered with food-grade mineral oil and beeswax, which will allow them to be preserved for future use. Ms. Stern said other matters, such as the sign-up sheet, could be handled at the next STC meeting.

Council Update

Ms. Stern provided a Council update, reporting:

- The Borough Master Plan is being reviewed with updates over the next year. Recommend committee members pay attention as the plan is vetted with the public.
- The 2023 Budget passed. While there will be a property tax increase, the increases are for non-discretionary expenses, i.e., salaries, health insurance, etc.
- The Open Space Committee submitted a resolution indicating support for Open Space funds to be used for the Sked Street Park project. The Sked Street Park plans are progressing, and the Mayor will be holding a public meeting for residents.
- The Borough will be participating in NJ Local Government Week by holding an Open House on April 18 from 5-7 p.m. Most committees and borough departments will be available to meet with residents, explain what they do, and describe volunteer activities. Ms. Berman will represent the STC at the event.

Pending any schedule conflicts, the next Committee meeting will be May 9, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned.