

City of Lambertville
SHADE TREE COMMISSION

Minutes of January 24, 2022 Meeting

Attending the meeting were members Brian Herzhauser, Helen Pettit, Rich Mowry, , Art Lerege and Tom Ogren. Members Susan Wydick and Jessica Palilonis were absent. Chair Brian Herzhauser convened the meeting at 7:33 pm. The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act at City Hall.

Brian pointed that Jessica had missed three consecutive meetings which disqualified her for continued membership on the STC under the City ordinance.

Approval of Minutes:

Helen made a motion, seconded by Rich, to approve the minutes of the November 22, 2021 meeting. All voted in favor.

Re-appointment of Commission Members:

Brian swore in members Tom Ogren and Rich Mowry for another five year term expiring on December 31, 2026.

New Business:

1. 42 Delaware Ave. - Tree Action Request: Homeowners Ronald and Bonnie Gendaszek requested approval to prune braches of the Red maple and Lacebark elm away from the roof of their house and porch respectively and thin branches. Other tree species were listed in the application but were determined to be not part of the action request. *Brian made a motion, seconded by Art, that the request be approved. All voted in favor except Rich who abstained.*

Since in this case the tree contractor had submitted the computer generated Tree Action Request form to the City, there was a discussion about the need to document homeowner approval for tree work. In the future, It was agreed that property owners would have to submit evidence of having approved or submitted the computer generated request to the City.

2. Community Forestry Management Plan - Annual Report: Brian indicated that the annual report was due February 15th and asked for assistance in submitted it. Tom agreed to assist.

Old Business:

Brian reported that the property owner of 16 Church Street, Brian Isserman, had complained that someone had drastically pruned about half the branches on the street tree he planted last year. The pruning had been done by a member of the STC without notice to the STC for pruning

eight trees recently planted by the City on Church Street as well as two trees on the same block recently planted by property owners.

There was a lengthy discussion about whether STC members should prune any trees in the public right-of-way even if recently planted by the City and involving branches less than seven feet high from the ground (which does not require STC approval). It was pointed out that downtown trees planted by the City right-of-way had been pruned in the past on two occasions with notice to and consent by the STC. But some questioned whether that should be allowed in the future since tree pruning is the responsibility of property owners under the STC ordinance. One member felt that for a short period of one or two years after the City had planted trees, STC members could do a better and more consistent job of pruning low level branches on trees in downtown sidewalks than individual commercial property owners.

A related issue was whether a STC member should prune a tree planted by a property owner especially without notification. All agreed that this should not have been done.

Public/Commission Member Comments:

1. Tom mentioned that the State Forest Service responded to his request to obtain a seedling from the historic Salem oak. A seedling for Lambertville along with other New Jersey towns will be made available this spring. The scheduled pick-up date for Lambertville's seedling is April 16th. *Brian made a motion, seconded by Art, that Tom be authorized to pick up the White oak seedling. All voted in favor.* No date and place for the planting was set. Tom prepared a fact sheet on the Salem oak and seedling distribution which could be posted on the STC webpage.
2. Helen mentioned that she was working with the Deputy City Clerk Michael Humphey on improving the Tree Action Request form, utilizing the City's SDL computer software for a City tree inventory, and having STC documents saved for future access.
3. Mayor Nowick, who attended the meeting, asked if the STC was aware of a Sustainable Jersey grant application being submitted for the planting of 20 trees at the Cherry Street Park. Brian said Mary Ann Borge of the Parks and Recreation Commission had contacted him about it but with very little information. Mayor Nowick offered to provide the STC with more information.
4. Brian mentioned that Sue of the STC had informed him that she had recently submitted a grant request to the Delaware River Greenway Partnership for tree planting. He was to provide more information to the STC.
5. Brian announced that he would be resigning from the STC in April.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by 8:34 pm.

Tom Ogren
Recording Secretary