

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SHADE TREE COMMISSION – TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN
VIRTUAL MEETING**

DECEMBER 1, 2022

OAKHURST, NEW JERSEY

The Regular Meeting was a virtual meeting held on GoTo Meeting beginning at approximately 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairperson: Norman Colten
Member(s): Moshe Gordon, Stephen Gaudette, Patty Cronheim
Alternate I: Ken Lutz, joined after roll called
Alternate II: James Veach, joined after roll called
Liaison: Councilperson Margie Donlon, joined after roll called
Associate(s):
Others: Kevin Thompson, Twp. of Ocean Tree Enforcement Officer
Public:
Absent: Member(s): Jack Kearns
Associate(s): Marc Rogoff, Carolyn Gulick, Laurel Von Gerichten

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW:

Chairman Colten announced that the notice requirements of the Open Public Meeting Law for this meeting have been satisfied; a copy of the Annual Notice was sent to the Asbury Park Press, The Coaster, and News 12 New Jersey and posted in Town Hall and filed in the Office of the Township Clerk on June 30, 2022.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

November's meeting minutes for approval have been moved to January.

NEW BUSINESS:

BUDGET:

No update.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

1.) TREE REMOVAL APPLICATIONS & PERMITS:

Chairperson Colten asked Kevin Thompson, Tree Enforcement Officer, to give a briefing on the progression of the tree removal permit process. Kevin explained that tree removal permit applications are being submitted by both residents and tree services. He is receiving approximately six to eight applications per week.

Q: Patty Cronheim –Are people choosing to stay within the three trees, or paying for more? Are these being tracked, logged?

Kevin; most residents are staying within the three-tree limit, with the exception of dead/dying trees. And, yes, everything is being logged into the system.

Q: Ken Lutz-Has anyone been found without a permit?

Kevin; yes, there have been instances where work has been stopped. The tree service was then advised of the correct paperwork necessary to complete the job. Also, summonses have been issued when failing to comply with the guidelines of the ordinance.

2.) NJUCF STEWARDSHIP GRANT:

Norman will reach out to NJDEP to discuss some questions and concerns regarding the RFP. It is being worked on and will hopefully be completed soon.

Once this is done and the Grant is closed out, a new Grant for planting can be applied for.

3.) HAZARDOUS TREE EVALUATIONS AND PROCESS:

This consists of trees that are in the ROW or overhang the ROW under the Shade Tree Commission's jurisdiction, and on Township properties deemed hazardous.

Kevin brought a few hazardous trees at 1202 Maple Ave. He believes there is a large gum tree, along with two other trees, which can become a potential hazard and would benefit from a pruning. Norm moves to have the township utilize resources to remove one tree and prune two other trees at 1202 Maple Avenue. Seconded by Member Cronheim. All were in favor.

Kevin believes that all trees on any Township property should fall under the town's responsibility to maintain or remove not the homeowner.

Norm mentioned that the ordinance contains wording regarding who is responsible for the removal of the tree. Norm would like to change the ordinance on who the responsible party would be.

Ken suggested the ST go to the town council and ask that this policy be changed to make the town responsible for the removal of trees in the ROW, not the owner.

4.) STREET TREE CONSIDERATIONS:

No update.

5.) TREE ORDINANCE:

Chairperson Colten sent an email addressing the ROW trees to the commission. Jim Veach sent an email as well, containing some interesting information. Norm asked that everyone please read both before the next meeting, and share thoughts on what to do or not to do. Norm will also a meeting with the Town Manager to discuss.

6.) COMMUNITY OUTREACH & PROGRAMS:

No update.

NEW BUSINESS:

CONCERNS:

GENERAL COMMENTS:

James Veach feels that the Township needs to do a better job on the website listing contractors. He feels a portal should be made for residents to be in contact with the Shade Tree/Environmental Commissions. Norm advised Jim that the email to contact the ST/EC appears on the Township's web page.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made to adjourn by Member Gaudette; seconded by Alternate Lutz. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by

Donna Oates, Secretary