

September 14, 2023

The Meeting of the Middlesex Shade Tree Commission was held on the above date at the Middlesex Borough Hall and called to order by Chairman Jason Bond with the following comments:

“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 Annual Meeting Notice which has been forwarded to the Courier News and posted in the Municipal Building on December 12, 2022”

Members: Jason Bond
 Sean Johnson
 Jim Gorman
 Frank Ryan (absent)
 Jeff Killian

Council Rep.: Doug Rex
Administrator: Michael La Place

Secretary Linda Chismar

Chairman Bond opened the meeting to the public.

Clare LeVourne, 809 Grandview Street is concerned with the Army Corp removal of trees and would like to see an incentive plan to plant trees. She questioned if we can get grants for these trees. She is also focusing on getting trees for residents potentially in their front or back yard. She is also concerned that when the Army Corp. is doing their project that there is no plan to remove the wildlife.

Chairman Bond mentioned that we have businesses that come into town that are doing construction replace the trees that are removed, or put money into a tree replacement.

Alfred Parcels, 206 Walnut Street had discussion with Mr. Vidal about water stopping in front of his house when his neighbor drains his pool. This does damage to the street. He has replaced his sidewalk once and roots continue to damage the sidewalk. The roots are clearly visible and above ground. He takes responsibility for his drain and sidewalk but needs support to replace the curbing and do something with the street so that it is not continue to get damaged in front of his house. Mr. Bond will go out to look at the tree and make suggestions.

Seeing that there was no further public participation, Chairman Bond closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the June 8, 2023 Shade Tree Meeting Minutes seconded by Mr. Gorman and carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Chairman Bond, along with all the members present reviewed the June, July & August, 2023 Finance Report.

Communications

1. 442 Pierrepont Avenue – DPW Superintendent must first measure to confirm this is a borough tree. Shade Tree Secretary advised that this is not a borough tree.
2. 118 Vogel Place – Commission agreed to remove this tree at a cost of \$1400.
3. 316 Vesper Avenue – Commission determined that the black locust needs to have a 2” dead wood prune, crown reduction and check for decaying lead in the road.
4. 247 Fairfield Avenue – This tree needs approximately 15 foot clearance to the street light. The 4 low secondary branches of the linden and mulberry cut back to black top.
5. Corner of Maple & A Street – the Pin Oak needs a 2” dead wood prune and elevation of low limbs above roof height.
6. 121 Fairfield Avenue – This dogwood needs a 1” dead wood prune.
7. 205 Ashland Road – This tree must be removed.
8. 512 Walnut Street – Mr. Bond will look at the tree in front of this property that is dropping branches.
9. 926 Voorhees Avenue – This book elder needs a 2” dead wood prune.
10. 2 Judson Drive – Commission was unable to find a tree facing Union Avenue
11. Norway Maple closer to Dorn Avenue – This tree should be removed and replaced with a Kousa Dogwood for \$800.
12. 416 Giles Avenue – This tree is dropping branches and dying and commission felt that the sugar maple needs a crown reduction, clear wires and a 2” prune.
13. 303 Melrose Avenue – Mr. Killian will look at the tree that is dropping branches and uprooting the driveway.
14. 221 Lincoln Boulevard – Mr. Gorman will look at the tree in the front corner of the property that has a hole in it.
15. 541 Howard Avenue – Commission agreed that this tree should be removed and replaced with an ornamental tree.
16. 712 Williams Street – Resident concerned with the tree in front of property, and Mr. Johnson will go out to look at it. Secretary advised by DPW Superintendent that this is not a borough tree.
17. 332 Seneca Ave. – The 2 norway maples on the Mead side of the property need to have a 2” dead wood prune.
18. 328 Seneca Ave. – The 2 ash trees in front of this house need to be removed.

Work Agenda

1. 425 Chestnut Street – This tree should be removed.
2. 9 Dayton Avenue – This ash tree should be removed.
3. 405 Decatur Avenue – This oak tree needs a 2” prune.
4. 12 Center Place – This is an ash tree that needs nothing done at this time – but Commission will check in the spring.
5. 210 Walnut Street – Mr. Bond will follow up on the tree in front of this property.
6. 564 Ashland Road – Mr. Bond will look at the tree in the front and tree on the side of this property that resident feels needs to be pruned.
7. Tree on the corner of Oak and Ashland – Mr. Bond will go out to look at the borough tree that appears to have dead limbs that resident requested trimmed.
8. 7 Wells Place – This removal has been completed and funds encumbered.
9. 9 Lauri Lane – Mr. Bond will look at the tree in front of this property that resident feels needs 3 dead branches removed.

10. 111 Grove Street – Mr. Bond will mark the tree and then DPW can confirm that it is a borough tree.

Follow Up

1. 34 Orchard Road (Next to driveway) – Commission agreed that nothing was needed on this tree.

Violations

Unfinished Business

- A. Shade Tree – Chapter 395 Revisions – Commission agreed that the present shade tree ordinance should be reviewed by an attorney who can compare to other municipalities and make recommendations.

New Business

- A. Budget Update – Commission reviewed the budget numbers listed on the Finance Report and reported that the pending list of tree work that has been quoted as of now should be encumbered and completed.
 - B. Itemize tree removals – Commission agreed to complete pending tree work listed.
 - C. NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Conference – October 26-27 – Mr. Johnson will be attending on October 26th and I am awaiting Mr. Ryan and Mr. Bond's dates they may attend.
 - D. JLUB Plans 2023 – 004 Hamamatsu Corporation – These plans will be initially reviewed by the Chairman and brought back to Commission to discuss NJUCF Stewardship Grant – 2024 Grant Application Process was discussed and also the potential to purchase the program for the Tree Inventory with funds from the capital budget. The QPA has advised that this program should be purchased through a public bid. If reapplying for the 2024 Grant, the Commission discussed the potential of possibly forming a Committee prior to the grant date to review what is needed.
 - E. 534 Drake Avenue – Proposal for Soil Care & Fertilization – Mr. Buccellato was fined for damaging the root system at this property and has paid a fine of \$1,000. Commission has received a quote for the Soil Care and Fertilization. They will get another quote prior to this work being done. The Borough Administrator will check to see if the DPW or Commission can put in the wood chips.
 - F. Mr. Bond brought to the commission that to create awareness he proposed a tree photo contest be done with a prize of a "free tree". We are looking into giving out a "free tree" as a prize for this contest, and Mr. Bond will forward this information to the secretary to include in the newsletter.
 - G. Mr. Bond also suggested that the High School might be able to send a student from the "Environmental Club" to attend the Shade Tree Meetings that might get more awareness out to the community about the functions of the Shade Tree.
- Vice Chairman Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jim Gorman and carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission.
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Linda Chismar, Secretary

NEXT SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY,
October 12, 2023 – 7 PM

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