

Mountain Lakes Shade Tree Commission
Minutes of Sept. 13, 2022 Meeting

Present: Sandy Batty, Cath Mitchell, Chris Capodanno, Lucas Stelling, Dan Amato, Doren Greene

Council Liaison: Cynthia Korman

Meeting began at 7:30. Minutes from June meeting approved as written.

Tree Walks: Because it was such a hot dry summer, leaves are falling early and it is critical to complete the tree inventory as soon as possible. A few members still need to finish, and we established a deadline of October 15 at the very latest. Sandy asks that notes be entered on the Excel Sheet if possible. The DPW has asked that trees to come down be tagged; they have the tags. The prune and remove job will go out to bid with the work to be done in late winter or early spring. Question was raised whether the tags last through the winter.

Craig School Application: The commission discussed the drafted comments regarding the Craig School expansion. The recommendation is to plant native plants rather than invasives, in particular the euonymus. Japanese Silver Grass is likely not invasive, but Chinese Silver Grass is. Another concern is the border along the Haydock property where it is not clear if trees will be taken down where a line of arborvitae is planned.

Pruning on the Boulevard: Lucas shared pictures of trees by 85-89 Boulevard that were pruned quite crudely, and some young trees that shouldn't have been pruned at all. It was determined that the DPW had indeed performed the pruning. We will request that at least one DPW worker be trained in proper pruning techniques and only trained workers be allowed to prune.

Student Members: We are limited to two HS student members and they need to reapply each year. Questions were raised on whether to advertise the available positions, and rotating student members so that more students can have the opportunity. It was noted that many other committees are looking for student members.

Arborist. It is time to call now for an arborist to check on questionable trees. We are budgeted for \$1500 for that purpose.

Tree Plantings: Cath volunteered to join Lucas in identifying locations within the Rights of Way to plant new trees. There are some requests from residents to plant in the Right of Way in front of their properties.

Liaisons: Cynthia reported on a project to make Zoning Ordinances more user friendly and asked if the proposed committee should include a member of Shade Tree Commission. It was decided that Sandy will read and review the updated Zoning to ensure that it is compliant with our goals and practices.

The Borough Council approved applying for grant from the NJ Highlands Council to study whether we should conform the Highlands Plan.

Chris and Doren reported on the proposal for a coordination of Garden Club, Environmental Committee, Woodlands Committee, Shade Tree Commission, and Lakes Management Committee. It hasn't formed yet, but was suggested that each group list their priorities, which we will do at our next meeting, so please consider and come prepared to discuss.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.