

Mountain Lakes Shade Tree Commission – meeting minutes **Wednesday, February 8, 2023**

Members attending: Sandy Batty, Marnie Vyff, Lucas Stelling, Phyllis Deering, Dan Amato, Cath Mitchell, Doren Greene

1. **January 2023 minutes** were passed.
2. **Annual Report/Tree City Application** Phyllis says it needs to be finished in a week. Details were discussed. She will submit it by Tuesday.
3. **Arbor Day Celebration** – April 28 – Phyllis reported she talked with Beth Azar, Wildwood Principal, and planning has begun. Discussion on having one of Janet Horst’s stories read or having the kids sing the Tree Rap song again. Seedlings order has been made – 650 trees, 200 for Wildwood kids, 150 for Woodlands committee and 300 for the general public.
4. **Arbor Day honoree** – Discussion of possibilities and a short list was compiled. Commission agreed Beth Azar was the best choice. Phyllis will ask her where she would want her tree planted.
5. **Trout derby** – April 22 – Phyllis is on Recreation Commission and will ask if we can again have a table to distribute seedlings. Marnie asked if Mitch from Anchor Hardware could have a table too for the Green Team to promote electric leaf blowers. Phyllis will ask at their meeting next week. Table will be from 9-11 am. Next month we decide who will work at the table.
6. **Speedway Development application** – Lucas read over Sandy’s report and collaborated. The only tree removal is in the back. They need to submit a Setback Tree Management Plan. Eight trees are to be planted in the front. They are planting native species. Marnie told of Environmental Commission report reflecting endorsement of trees. Questions arose as to what the Setback Tree Ordinance requires. Sandy, Phyllis and Lucas will meet at 8 Monday morning to look into the wording of the ordinance.

In December, Sandy submitted the STC recommendation to raise the Fee for trees removed in the setback.
7. **Membership** – There is an opening for a 2nd alternate. Sandy will contact short list of possibles and have it put in an upcoming email blast.
8. **Liaison Updates**
 - MLHS Student Update** – none attended
 - Environmental Commission** – Marnie reported- The library is adding a patio and the EC was not given any plans for it. Generally, the Borough has not been great at getting development plans and subsequent reports to the EC. She suggests if the Shade Tree is having similar problems, we should work together to make sure we get plans and reports in the future.
 - Woodlands Committee** – Doren reported they looked over Borough owned lots for dangerous trees. The Shade Tree members were glad for the assistance but a few questions arose. Whose jurisdiction are these lots, also known as pocket

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parks? Does managing them actually make the town liable if something happens to someone? Should Woodlands be doing this as the STC has liability coverage but the WC does not? The Borough lawyer should be asked.

Landscaping Committee -Jackie Bay organized a zoom meeting about gas powered leaf blowers with Lois Kraus from ATL Advocates for Transforming Landscaping in NJ. About 27 people attended the meeting. She suggested as a start to educate about the problems with leaf blowers.

Woodlands concerned about dumping.

9. **Other Business** – none

Meeting ended at 8:20 PM.

Next meeting is Wednesday, March 8, 2023.