

Shade Tree Commission Meeting - May 10, 2023

Present: S. Batty, L. Stelling, D. Greene, C. Mitchell, C. Capodanno, D. Amato
C. Cannon (Council Liaison),
R. Hirschfeld and M. Berrei (student representatives)

Jemi Gellen, prospective new Alternate Member, attended first fifteen minutes and introduced herself.

April Minutes were accepted unanimously as written.

Arbor Day Sandy reported it was wonderful, and shared pictures. Noted that the Arbor Tree Flag flew and this was our 26th consecutive year of Tree City designation.

Seedling distribution at Trout Derby was appreciated by the dozen or so who took saplings, but we would like greater participation. We only had three species to offer - Two Oaks and Black Walnut; evergreens or flowering trees tend to be more popular, but we had no choice. Perhaps we might publicize better? Woodlands Committee took the remaining (around 75) and planted them near the vernal pool behind Birchwood Lake.

Shade Tree Trust Fund - the language in the resolution establishing the Trust Fund is very broad so apparently we can use it for almost any expense regarding shade trees. (Resolution says the purpose is “to offset the costs of maintaining a municipal shade tree program.”) Lucas suggested we offer a cash rebate (perhaps \$250) that residents could apply to the cost of pruning deadwood or dead tree removal in the setback area (amended to specify front setback area), We would require that the work be done by a licensed trees service, and the resident would have to present an itemized bill indicating the location of the tree once work has been completed. This proposal was popular among all members, adding that we might offer ourselves to assist residents in determining what needs pruning, as well as to determine if it’s in the eligible area (Setback minus the Right of Way). Chris Cannon will discuss with Mitchell Stern before presenting to Council.

Sandy brought up the town wide flyer concerning Landscaping Issues that was published by a consortium of Environmental Commission, Green Team, Woodlands and STC. The printing and mailing cost was over \$700, and another is planned for the fall. We could definitely publicize tree planting as well as this proposed rebate (if it does go into effect) and might use our Trust Fund money to offset printing/ mailing costs.

Area Prune and Remove Walks should begin soon, now that trees have leafed out and we have nice weather. Sandy will email list, and can have hard copy if anyone needs. She’d like to schedule the arborist for June.

High School Environmental Club - Rebecca and Margaret reported that they had Earth Day festivities, worked on Briarcliff Garden with Makerspace, are doing Birchwood Rain Garden maintenance and will be meeting next week to plan the end of year activities.

They are both graduating this year but have identified possible replacements for next year and will discuss with them. Cath offered to come speak to the club.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57