

## **Mountain Lakes Shade Tree Commission Meeting**

March 13, 2024

**Present :** Sandy Batty, Dan Amato, Chris Capodanno, Cath Mitchell. Phyllis Deering, Lucas Stelling, Calvin Lee (Student Liaison), Chris Cannon (Council Liaison)

**February Minutes :** Passed as written

**Seedling Distribution / Arbor Day:** April 20, Trout Derby. Phyllis has ordered the seedlings. Trout Derby is before Arbor Day, so STC will need to save some seedlings for Arbor Day. Trout Derby is 4/20, 4/26 is Arbor Day. Saplings need to be picked up on 4/11, and Doren has volunteered to do so. Phyllis said this year the saplings are going to be bigger and will be packaged differently. STC will have a table at the Trout Derby for distribution. STC will likely need 50 seedlings for the 1st graders at Arbor Day, so those will need to be set aside in advance - Cath will verify after meeting with the Wildwood elementary school principal tomorrow. The STC discussed how best to advertise the seedling distribution. The STC is meeting again before the Trout Derby, so the STC can firm up distribution details later. Calvin Lee offered a few suggestions of how to distribute through the high school.

**Arbor Day :** Cath is meeting with the elementary principal, Mr. Higgins, on 3/14 to verify Arbor Day details and number of students. Separately, Phyllis is following up on the Arbor Day activities for the 4th and 5th graders. STC needs to decide if they are honoring someone with a tree this year. Phyllis suggested maybe not honoring someone every year. Before our next meeting, the STC should decide if they're going to honor someone or not. May need to revisit the list of past honorees to verify if we have already honored.

**Tree Removal / Replacement Ordinance :** Sandy shared the ordinance. DEP is requiring every town under the stormwater management rules to have a tree replacement ordinance. Sandy attended a webinar that provided background. A second webinar, next Tuesday (3/19/24) at 10 AM, will explain how best to adopt the provided ordinance. Sandy, Dan, and Lucas met during the month to discuss the existing ordinance. Chris Cannon said that the STC has been requested to join the town council meeting in April to explain the STCs position and plan to adopt. Sandy doesn't believe that there will be consequences if we do not adopt the updated ordinance by May 1st. Chris Cannon would like to have something in motion before May 1. Sandy, Dan, and Lucas will meet again as the ordinance subcommittee to discuss how to proceed. Lucas went over the differences in the current ordinance and the DEP provided model ordinance. Sandy suggested waiting until after the webinar to make any further changes/alterations to the existing ordinance.

**Boxwood Blight :** Cath attended a course on Boxwood Blight, and earned CEU's. The blight is easily spread. The speaker at the course was optimistic about the management of Boxwood blight, with how much more information is available about it now. There really wasn't a solution provided on how to treat, other than chemicals which STC is hesitant and resistant to do. Mulch is good underneath the boxwoods.

**Presentation to Borough Council :** Will be a two-pronged approach. Present to Council about using the Trust Fund for pruning and discuss the ordinance. Targeting April. Chris Cannon is coordinating. Lucas offered to help present at the Council meeting.

**Liaison Reports :**

Kalvin (Student) - Nothing happening at the high school at this point

Chris (Environmental) - Nothing happening

Doren (Woodlands) - Doren was not present in the meeting

**Other Business :** The Rock Lane trees previously identified as needing to come down are actually managed by Boonton Township, and they (Boonton Township) had them removed. Good partnership between the groups.

There was a tree that came down across the Boulevard.

The Birchwood path was closed to tree work. That was on the STC prune/remove list, so progress is being made.

Phyllis inquired about the tree identified as needing to come down in Memorial Park, and Sandy said that that tree was removed.

Discussed meeting in person for future meetings.

Meeting Concluded at 7:43 PM EST.

Minutes taken by Dan Amato