



## **Princeton Shade Tree Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**June 27, 2017**

Monument Hall-East Conference Room  
1 Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540

#### Present

##### **Board Members:**

Sharon Ainsworth, Chair  
Lily Krauss, Vice Chair  
Victoria Airgood  
Welmoet Bok van Kammen  
Patricia Frawley  
Pat Hyatt  
Bernie Miller, Council  
Liaison  
Alexandra Radbil  
Janet Stern

##### **Staff:**

Lorraine Konopka, Arborist  
Ben Strauss, Recording  
Secretary

##### **Guests:**

Raymond Devoe  
Ronnie Hock, Designer  
Jeff Bewkes, Property  
Owner  
Lisa Carco, Property Owner

#### Absent

##### **Board Members:**

### **I. Opening Statement**

At 5:01 PM, Chair Ainsworth calls the meeting to order.

Ms. Bok van Kammen shares an Arbor Day bookmark with members. She says she wishes she had more. Arborist Konopka gives her surplus bookmarks.

Members see the committee's new banner. They compliment Ms. Hyatt for ordering it.

### **II. Roll Call**

Chair Ainsworth calls roll.

### **III. Public Comment**

Ms. Ainsworth recognizes members of the public. Two already have an agenda item and the third does not wish to comment.

## **IV. Minutes**

### **1) June 27, 2017 Minutes**

Members discuss changes to the draft minutes as well as to the minutes protocol: members wish to read the draft minutes earlier, preferably two weeks before the next meeting. Chair Ainsworth will contact Ms. Most about changes to distributing the minutes.

Mr. Devoe asks about the timing for minutes posting. Members wish to discuss that at another time.

Council Member Miller describes how Council has both a transcript and action-oriented minutes. Members discuss. Members agree to keep the minutes in their current style.

A member asks Arborist Konopka to clarify her comments, last meeting, that “the committee never finalized the...Emerald Ash Borer plan”. Arborist Konopka clarifies that, in January, the committee discussed the state-suggested template but never made a decision. Chair Ainsworth will place the Emerald Ash Borer plan on the agenda for the July meeting.

Ms. Frawley moves approval of the minutes. Ms. Radbil seconds. The committee unanimously approves the minutes.

## **V. Budget Update**

Arborist Konopka reports that Council approved a \$350,000 Emerald Ash Borer Management budget. While she has not spoken yet to Mr. Hough, she wants to divide the money into fifths: one-fifth for injections, one-fifth for planting, and three-fifths for removals.

Council Member Miller mentions that the budget has not yet been published and that it cannot be spent until 21 days after publishing.

Ms. Bok Van Kammen thinks Mr. Hough told the committee the money existed for tree removal and injection, no money for replanting. Members also discuss if the money must go specifically toward ash trees.

Arborist Konopka discusses her injection bid document. She has 138 trees confirmed as candidates for injection.

### **a. Status of Bid Document**

Arborist Konopka reports that she is close to completing the Bid Document for Ash Tree Injections.

## VI. New Business

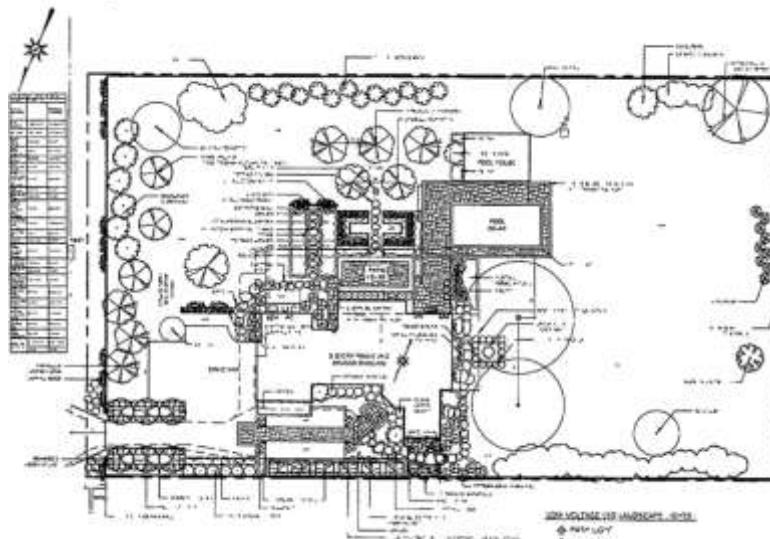
### 1) Tree Removal Application Denial (L. Konopka)

Arborist Konopka discusses the history of the project: in March, she heard about tree removal on the property. She approved the cutting of four large Spruce trees; she also (retroactively) approved the cutting of two large Holly trees, which had been illegally removed by the construction contractor, for them owing a total of eleven new trees.

Arborist Konopka has now denied their request to take down all of the requested, twenty four, large, mature evergreen trees on one side (adjacent to 84 Elm Road). She could exempt three trees due to poor condition. She disagreed with the property owners' (Mr. Bewkes and Ms. Carco's) plan to create a concrete wall barrier in place of the trees. Mr. Bewkes explains how they want the stone wall on three sides, to block noise (particularly from their neighbor's pool and tennis court).

Ms. Carco and Mr. Bewkes introduce themselves as the owners of the 102 Elm Road property and Ms. Hock as their designer. Mr. Bewkes says they want to build the wall to serve as a barrier for noise from cars and from their neighbors' pool and tennis court. They also want to build it for privacy, which the tall trees, without many middle leaves, do not provide.

The committee considers the below planting plan provided by the property owners:



Arborist Konopka requests a preexisting conditions map, so she and members can see the current layout of the trees. Members agree with her.

Arborist Konopka also expresses concern about the eleven or twelve, mature trees in the neighbor at 114 Elm Road's house (above the top of the map, not shown). Trenching for the wall will also harm those trees.

Chair Ainsworth asks why the town's administration did not reach out about the application to Arborist Konopka. Arborist Konopka says she does not know.

Ms. Bok Van Kammen wants a conversation with the Zoning Department. Council Member Miller says he will talk to Zoning Officer Bridger. Members discuss the process.

Vice Chair Krauss expresses concerns with the monoculture in the plan (which calls for planting primarily Cryptomeria). Ms. Hock says she can change the species selection. Yet, she thinks the proposed site already has a healthy environment.

Ms. Airgood asks if the neighbors have been notified about the proposal. Mr. Bewkes say the neighbors at 114 Elm Road with the effected trees want the trees cut down, given the trees drop material, block the Sun, and might crush their house if they came down.

Ms. Stern wants permission to enter the property. Otherwise, members will not be able to view the trees. Mr. Bewkes and Ms. Carco give their permission. Members discuss logistics for visiting the property.

Motion to table decision so members can go to site and see the trees, and discuss the application at or before the July meeting

Result: Adopted [Unanimous]

Move: Krauss

Secunder: Frawley

Ayes: Ainsworth, Krauss, Airgood, Bok van Kammen, Frawley, Hyatt, Radbil, Stern

Ms. Stern wants feedback from the north neighbor (114). Chair Ainsworth says the committee should have proof that at least the neighbors were contacted.

Arborist Konopka mentions her allowed time to respond to tree removal applications: the clock of 20 days for her to respond has now stopped and the committee now has 45 days (by ordinance) to come up with its decision.

Chair Ainsworth thanks Ms. Carco, Mr. Bewkes and Ms. Hock for coming to the meeting. They thank the committee for hearing their request.

## **VII. Old Business**

### 1) Ash Tree Treatment/Removal (L. Konopka)

Arborist Konopka and her crew have been working on checking all injection-candidate trees. A lot of trees have lost candidate status.

### 2) Website Review (J. Stern/W. Bok Van Kammen)

#### *a. New Website*

Ms. Bok Van Kammen reports on her conversation with Council President Crumiller. Council President Crumiller could not update the committee's website, given it has become too many versions behind. Ms. Bok Van Kammen suggested switching to a new software like WordPress, which could give users easier access to updates. Council President Crumiller wants to wait until the town has a new website in 6 months. Ms. Bok Van Kammen suggests the committee wait that time.

A member asks about cost. Ms. Bok Van Kammen considers the main cost the time of the work, between her and Ms. Stern, as well as about \$500, possibly for a template (everyone agrees to a modest update expense). Ms. Bok Van Kammen says that, this year, the Marquand Park Foundation switched to a WordPress [site](#), which she considers successful.

#### *b. Website Updates*

Ms. Bok Van Kammen reports that she updated the website to include more event information. Ms. Bok Van Kammen suggests that the website could ask residents to send in pictures of healthy ash trees, like other municipal websites.

### 3) QR Code Tree Identification (W. Bok Van. Kammen)

Vice Chair Krauss suggests starting the program by placing signs on trees on Nassau Street. Vice Chair Krauss can help with writing them. Ms. Stern can edit them. Ms. Hyatt suggests engaging school children to put up the signs. Ms. Hyatt can reach out to the schools about it.

Members discuss creating a hanging sign for the four small Ash trees in in the Monument Hall municipal building parking lot. Chair Ainsworth calls for creating it at small expense, with no objection from members. Ms. Bok Van Kammen will look into it.

Ms. Hyatt, Ms. Bok van Kammen, and Ms. Radbil will meet to look into options for labeling trees.

#### 4) EAB Adopt-A-Tree Program and Tree Fund (P. Frawley/A, Radbil)

Chair Ainsworth reports on the current status of the program. She also mentions that she mailed out thank you letters.

Ms. Frawley reports that she contacted three tree companies. Two responded to her. Bartlett wants to both treat the tree for nothing and adopt it. Bartlett now plans to inject the tree multiple times, take soil samples from around the tree, prune the tree, and fertilize the tree. Chair Ainsworth will send them a special thank you letter.

Ms. Bok van Kammen asks about the plan to keep track of injected trees, especially for injecting them again, given the many different people (residents, foundations, municipality) injecting them. Arborist Konopka responds that, once the municipality injects a tree or receives a form about a private tree injection, people will update it in Tree Keeper. Ms. Radbil has already been updating it.

### **VIII. Other**

#### 1) Brochure

Ms. Stern asks about the brochure. Arborist Konopka says the brochure went to the printer.

Ms. Radbil wants the committee to write a letter to the owners of the real estate companies about the brochure. Members also want to place the brochure in the Zoning Office and to translate it into Spanish. Council Member Miller suggests asking Spanish-speaking municipal police officers to translate it.

### **IX. Adjournment**

At 7:28 pm, Ms. Frawley motions to adjourn. Vice Chair Krauss seconded. The committee unanimously voted to adjourn.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Ben Strauss, Recording Secretary

Date Approved: 7/25/17