



Princeton Shade Tree Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 26, 2017

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

Present

Board Members:

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

Staff:

Ben Strauss, Recording
Secretary

Guests:

Tom Charles, Field Wood
Manor
Raymond Devoe

Absent

Board Members:

Welmoet Bok van Kammen

I. Opening Statement

At 5:00 PM, Chair Ainsworth calls the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call

Chair Ainsworth calls roll.

III. Public Comment

Chair Ainsworth recognizes the member of the public. Mr. Charles, a resident at Field Wood Manor, thanks the committee for the treatment of his community's around 80 ash trees, a few weeks ago. He says the contractor did a good job notifying the residents, treating the trees, and posting a pamphlet on pesticides. Chair Ainsworth thanks him for his comment.

Chair Ainsworth asks him about the trees' condition (in a dry spell). He says the trees remain in good health, with no sign of infestation.

IV. Minutes

1) July 25, 2017

Ms. Hyatt says she abstained on the 102 Elm Street tree cutting vote but says she would have voted no for the following reason that she wants in the minutes:

As of the morning of our July meeting, PTSC has been told the neighboring owners, the Merrits, were “unreachable”. But at our 5 pm meeting we were assured by the property owner’s counsel that the Merrits had at last given verbal permission to trench for a wall and therefore cut the roots of trees growing on their own property. PSTC had received nothing to this effect in writing before the vote was called.

I would be pleased to learn that the required written permission from the Merrits has now been received in the Clerk’s Office, or other appropriate location.

Members discuss this issue.

Members mention other corrections.

Ms. Frawley moves to approve the July minutes with corrections. Vice Chair Krauss seconds. The committee unanimously approves the minutes with corrections.

V. Budget Update

The committee does not hear a budget update.

VI. New Business

1) Lanwin Development Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan and Subdivision – Alternative Layout Province Line Road and Frederick Court – (L. Krauss)

Vice Chair Krauss describes the Provinceline wood project’s second phase: the current plan would cut down 1,500 trees of 4,000 counted trees, to build two cul-de-sacs and sixteen, detached family dwellings. The project has been delayed due to problems with its site plan.

Vice Chair Krauss wants clarification on the following five aspects:

1) Plan Formatting: the plan does not clearly show the location and type of individual trees on the property (she points, for instance, at the plan’s very small tree-designation numbers).

2) Septic Field Location: the plan seems to call for both mitigating the wetlands and building a septic field in the wetlands.

3) Retention Basin Size: the plan calls for building a small retention basin in front of every house instead of one large retention basin for all the houses.

4) Street Tree Monoculture: the plan calls for planting a lot of street trees but only three species of them (57 red maples, 42 Liquidambar, 49 red oak).

5) Removed Tree Condition: the plan does not give the condition of the 1,500 trees to be removed.

Ms. Frawley asks if Arborist Konopka had any comments. Vice Chair Krauss does not know.

Vice Chair Krauss and some other people complained about it. So, the Developer has now been revising the whole plan, which has been placed on hold indefinitely.

Council Member Miller says, in order for the plan to get on the Planning Board's agenda, someone in the Planning Department must have reviewed it and considered it complete. Council Member Miller says some members should talk to Planning Director Solow about the incompleteness and unacceptableness of the plan.

Chair Ainsworth considers the plan's tree listing a recurring issue: plans with long lists of trees without a tally of the trees (number of trees for removal, their condition, their size, their species). She says the committee needs to request the Planning Board require a tree tally. Vice Chair Krauss says, without a tree tally, she could not tell much about the trees planned for removal. Ms. Radbil says the committee should request the Planning Board add the tree tally to their checklist, thus requiring it for a plan's completeness.

Chair Ainsworth says she will communicate the committee's concerns to Arborist Konopka and Director Hough.

VII. Old Business

1) EAB Management Plan Draft – (A. Radbil, J. Stern)

Ms. Stern says that Arborist Konopka made some additional comments to the draft, so the committee cannot discuss the draft without her.

Chair Ainsworth says the draft's goal seems to have "morphed" from, originally, in January, adopting the state's recommended template for a municipal management plan to meet a statement requirement, to now something "unrecognizable." Chair Ainsworth worries that, as the committee works more and more on the draft, the draft moves more and more away from its original goal.

Ms. Radbil says she and Ms. Stern will meet with Arborist Konopka about the draft. Then, together, they will produce a new, unmarked draft, which receives Arborist Konopka's sign off.

Chair Ainsworth says the committee will discuss the topic at their October meeting.

2) Ordinance Brochure Spanish Version – (P. Hyatt)

Ms. Hyatt reports that Director (of Human Services) Neira arranged for some Princeton University students to translate the brochure and then double checked that translation in her office.

Ms. Stern says she keeps losing brochures at the library. She put 200 there and, the next day, gone. Someone must have removed them. Ms. Radbil says maybe a librarian mistakenly did so. Ms. Radbil suggests, even though Ms. Stern already asked permission, Ms. Stern should check with the library staff.

Ms. Stern mentions that the Town Topics changed her English "in brief" submission, so it no longer mentions the ordinance. Town Topics would also not run her Spanish submission.

Ms. Stern asks about distribution for the Spanish translation. Ms. Hyatt thinks the Spanish ones would have more use in the offices than in the library. Ms. Stern wants some of the Spanish ones to go to tree services. Chair Ainsworth says tree services will probably see them at the Office. Ms. Stern wants someone to give the brochure to tree services as part of the packet given out with applications.

Chair Ainsworth will email Ms. Most about printing 500 of the Spanish brochure and 500 more of the English brochure and about giving out the brochure as part of tree service application packets.

3) Community Outreach/High School Science Teachers – (P. Hyatt)

Ms. Hyatt reports that she has been emailing Dr. Cohen, Princeton School's District Supervisor of Science. Dr. Cohen then contacted all the elementary schools' science teachers and garden

coordinators. Ms. Hyatt wants schools to lead kids to become “tree detectives” and map trees at their school, particularly ash trees, given the liability from their branches falling.

Ms. Hyatt says kids would need to identify the trees soon. When trees lose their leaves, they become much harder to identify. Vice Chair Krauss says they can call her with tree identification questions.

4) Community Outreach/Tree Tags – (P. Hyatt, Bok van Kammen)

Ms. Hyatt thinks, in the future, parents could fund ash tree treatments and identification labels. Ms. Hyatt reports that she found non-invasive, tree tags, with QR codes, at a retail price of \$3.50 per tag.

Ms. Hyatt says Ms. Bok van Kammen has been working on a database to link the QR code to the tree species, and a visual map for identifying the trees. These would have additional costs.

5) Ash Tree Removals/Treatment Update and CSIP Grant Award – (L. Konopka)

Chair Ainsworth reads Arborist Konopka’s report.

Ms. Radbil asks about injection locations. Chair Ainsworth says members will need to ask Arborist Konopka that question at the next meeting.

A member asks if the EAB injection FAQ has been distributed to property owners. Chair Ainsworth says yes. Members say that the FAQ has a lot of errors. Chair Ainsworth says members can make suggestions for improving it for next year.

Ms. Frawley asks about the rationale for dedicating the \$30,000 ash tree planting grant to Heatherstone Estates. Chair Ainsworth says Arborist Konopka chose the site to keep the selected trees in a consolidated area for easier management. Council Member Miller clarifies that, before receiving the \$30,000 grant, the municipality must maintain the trees for three years.

6) EAB Public Outreach/Door Hangers, Ash Tree Bookmarks – (S. Ainsworth)

Chair Ainsworth says the Rutgers extension created ash tree identification bookmarks. She passes some out. Members discuss ash tree identification.

VIII. Other

1) EAB Attacks on Fringetrees

Vice Chair Krauss suggests adding information about EAB attacks on fringetrees to the website. She thinks residents might want to know that before planting one. Ms. Stern asks Vice Chair Krauss to send her a few sentences, so Ms. Stern can post them. Vice Chair Krauss says she can send some sentences, and a link to the study that found EAB likes fringetrees.

2) Volcano Mulching Brochure

Ms. Stern suggests that the Office should hand out to tree service people the volcano mulching brochure. She sees more volcanos now than before. Members discuss the issue.

Ms. Radbil says the committee ordered their mulch volcano brochures from the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture). Chair Ainsworth says the committee has some Spanish copies left but only a few English copies. Ms. Radbil says she will look into ordering more, and ordering an updated version.

Ms. Hyatt suggests the committee use a cartoon to depict the dangers of mulch volcanos such as trees falling from gale force winds. Vice Chair Krauss says her son might draw one.

3) Borough Tree Guide

Ms. Hyatt mentions she and Ms. Bok van Kammen have talked about redoing the borough tree guide. She showed a copy of the old guide.

4) Monoculture Definition

Ms. Frawley says the municipality has been paying a lot to remove and replant trees in developments, like Fieldwood Manor or Heatherstone, that the municipality had allowed to be planted with single species. She considers it unfair to the town and residents. Vice Chair Krauss says she includes criticisms of monoculture in all her site development letters. Chair Ainsworth will add it in the list (including the tree tally) that the Planning Board should consider.

Vice Chair Krauss says the committee needs to define monoculture (and understory). Ms. Radbil says the Shade Tree Federation should have a definition.

5) Drone Pictures

Vice Chair Krauss says the committee should, with a drone, take pictures of the parks, to measure the trees there (possible so long as the trees still have leaves). Chair Ainsworth says,

next meeting, Ms. Bok van Kammen can describe the use of the drone at Marquand Park. Mr. Devoe thinks Princeton Community TV might have one. He will ask about it.

IX. Adjournment

Ms. Frawley moves adjournment. Vice Chair Krauss seconds. The committee adjourns at 6:30 pm.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Ben Strauss, Recording Secretary

Date Approved: 10/24/17