

**Princeton Shade Tree Commission**

Meeting Minutes

November 28, 2017

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

Present**Board Members:**

Sharon Ainsworth, Chair
Victoria Airgood
Raymond Devoe
Patricia Frawley
Welmoet Bok van Kammen
Bernie Miller, Council
Liaison
Alexandra Radbil
Janet Stern

Absent**Board Members:**

Lily Krauss, Vice Chair
Pat Hyatt

Staff:

Lorraine Konopka, Arborist
Ben Strauss, Recording
Secretary

Guests:

Future Actions	
Chair Ainsworth	Add Nassau Street QR Codes to December agenda
Chair Ainsworth	Add i-Tree Echo to the December agenda
Chair Ainsworth	Add website to the December agenda
Ms. Airgood	Make suggested changes to 45 Spring Street Letter
Ms. Airgood	Send revised letter to Ms. Most
Ms. Bok van Kammen	Contact Mr. Ellis
Ms. Bok van Kammen	Inventory trees in Harrison Park
Ms. Bok van Kammen	Create a list of information needed from town for i-Tree Hydro
Ms. Radbil	Give Mr. Ellis' contact information to Ms. Bok van Kammen
Ms. Stern	Get an appointment with Council Member Crumiller and Ms. Rothman about the website
All members	Use i-Tree Canopy
All members	Think about the website site plan
Unassigned	Write Letter to the Editor thanking people who donated to the tree fund
Unassigned	Add a sentence about researching i-Tree Storm to the Community Forestry Management Plan

I. Opening Statement

At 5:04 PM, Chair Ainsworth calls the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call

Chair Ainsworth calls roll.

III. Public Comment

Chair Ainsworth sees no members of the public.

IV. Minutes

1) October 24, 2017

Members suggest corrections. Ms. Stern motions to approve the October minutes with corrections. Ms. Airgood seconds. Members vote to approve the minutes unanimously.

V. Budget Update

The committee does not hear a budget update.

VI. New Business

1) Planning Board Review – (L. Krauss, S. Ainsworth)

45 Spring Street; Block 27.04, Lot 20

Nelson Spring, LLC

Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan with Variance

Members discuss Vice Chair Krauss' review of the proposed new second story apartment, particularly the following two questions:

1) A member asks why the summary recommends removing three trees. Arborist Konopka thinks two of the three trees (one, an Ash tree that had regenerated out of a sixty inch stump) have such poor condition that they do not merit saving. She also does not think construction workers can adequately protect any of the trees. Members agree that the two trees do not merit saving but think construction workers should at least try to save the third tree (a large Black cherry tree).

Members suggest changes to clarify this in the review.

2) A member asks if any of the neighbors might want those trees kept for their shade. Arborist Konopka thinks the neighbors do not know the trees exist.

Motion to approve the letter with changes

Result: Adopted [Unanimous]

Move: Frawley

Seconder: [Unclear]

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

Ms. Airgood will send the changes to Ms. Most.

2) Code for Princeton Ash ID Project – (P. Hyatt, L. Krauss, A. Radbil)

Ms. Radbil describes the project: an app that helps the user identify Ash tree (or other trees) and then tags it with GIS. It could help identify trees in the schools or parks. She and Ms. Hyatt met with Mr. Ellis, a Princeton University Computer Science graduate student. He wants Tree Keeper database information.

Arborist Konopka thinks, to conduct outreach, members might need approval from Council and the Board of Education. Ms. Radbil says Mr. Ellis has been working with the schools' head of science.

Arborist Konopka suggests Mr. Ellis and his group could potentially help the town answer GIS questions.

Ms. Bok van Kammen expresses skepticism that the project could work for the large parks. GIS does not work well in wooded areas. For instance, when Ms. Bok van Kammen used GIS to tag trees along the canal, she received mixed results. She wants the group to conduct more testing.

Chair Ainsworth says Ms. Bok van Kammen can talk to Mr. Ellis and his group. Arborist Konopka suggests Ms. Bok van Kammen tell Mr. Ellis to use Harrison Street Park as a test spot, given its defined area and already-identified Ash trees (with green dots showing they have been injected).

VII. Old Business

1) Shade Tree Commission Tree Fund – (S. Ainsworth)

Chair Ainsworth reports that the Stony Brook Garden Club has donated to the Ash Tree Program. Chair Ainsworth says the committee could write a Letter to the Editor thanking everyone who donated to the fund.

Ms. Bok van Kammen expresses concern that the money raised only slightly exceeds the money spent on the Town Topics ad. She wonders if any donated money went to treat Ash trees.

Chair Ainsworth says money from the Shade Tree Fund went to Ash tree treatment. People contributed to the Shade Tree Fund, not a specific line item.

2) Monoculture and 10/20/30% Rule – (L. Konopka)

Arborist Konopka wrote up a monoculture definition, which included the 10/20/30% rule (planting no more than 10% of the same species, 20% of the same genus, 30% of the same family). Arborist Konopka says she added family to her planting list for the Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) Grant. Members agree they need to further discuss the monoculture rule.

3) Review-Individual Committee Tasks – (S. Ainsworth)

Chair Ainsworth describes the Individual Committee Tasks document, a list of members' assignments. She wants to attach it to the annual report due February 15th. Members discuss changes.

Ms. Frawley asks about tagging trees on Nassau Street with QR Codes. She wants to include that on the task list. Members express support. Arborist Konopka states her maintenance concerns (squirrels eat them, people take them). Arborist Konopka says members can calculate the cost: who will install them? Who will maintain them? She says members will have to receive permission from the town, because of the ordinance against placing signs on trees, and from the state, because some trees might be state trees. Chair Ainsworth will add it to the December agenda.

4) US Forest Service i-Tree Analysis Tool – (W. Bok van Kammen/A. Radbil)

Ms. Bok van Kammen describes the different i-Tree tree assessment tools:

1) i-Tree Storm: Ms. Bok van Kammen describes it as a data collection package that prepares towns for natural disasters. It requires people to collect information before and after a storm to assess damage. It might help towns submit storm assessments to FEMA.

Only one town in New Jersey (Woodbine) has done a pre-storm assessment. Ms. Bok van Kammen called them. Woodbine pilot tested the package eight years ago. They then did not have a storm (Hurricane Sandy must have missed them).

Ms. Bok van Kammen does not recommend the committee use the program, given it focuses on a subject outside the committee's domain. Members agree that it is not a priority.

Arborist Konopka suggests adding a sentence about researching i-Tree Storm to the community forestry management plan.

2) i-Tree Canopy: it assesses a town's surfaces to create a town canopy (ground cover, impervious cover and water cover) estimate. Ms. Bok van Kammen read articles that found it had good accuracy compared to other software (it has a tendency to overestimate tree canopy for towns with a high tree canopy). Ms. Bok van Kammen says, when she used it, the program estimated the town's tree canopy at 59 percent and estimated some other information. She suggests other members use it as well.

3) i-Tree Hydro: it looks at the benefits trees have for water runoff and quality. It can show the effect of losing trees, for instance, of losing Ash Trees to Emerald Ash Borer. It can model the potential effect of environmental programs, for instance the effect of creating rain gardens. Ms. Bok van Kammen talked to the town Environmental Commission about it. They wonder if other engineering software better addresses the issue.

Ms. Bok van Kammen needs some information from the town to use i-Tree Hydro. She will create a list.

4) i-Tree Echo: Ms. Bok van Kammen says she will discuss it next time. Chair Ainsworth will place it on the December agenda.

VIII. Other

a. Park Ash Tree Inventory

Arborist Konopka says she uses an Excel spreadsheet to inventory Ash trees for injection and removal. Ms. Bok van Kammen requests she use the existing database. Arborist Konopka does not consider inventorying Ash trees in parks an important activity, given she will remove most of the inventoried trees. Arborist Konopka wants more work done on the existing street tree database, which has many errors that require attention.

Members discuss the park Ash Tree inventory situation: Chair Ainsworth does not think members can currently enter park Ash trees into the Tree Keeper database. Ms. Bok van

Kammen says Tree Keeper has a park layer, which she has used to enter a small park. Members discuss park tree data entry.

b. Committee Adopt-a-Tree

Ms. Frawley asks if members will still adopt an Ash tree. Arborist Konopka says she already injected the proposed Vandeventer tree. Ms. Bok van Kammen says the committee can find a tree in the spring time. Members agree to find a tree then.

c. Shade Tree Fund Recommendations

Ms. Bok van Kammen asks if the committee has any control over the Shade Tree Fund. Chair Ainsworth says the committee can make recommendations about fund allocation (the fund receives money from fines and penalties). Arborist Konopka says, after the recommendation, the Department Director would review it then the Administrator then possibly the Council.

Chair Ainsworth says the committee has not made any recommendations. She says the committee can discuss possible recommendations in 2018.

d. EAB Management Plan

Arborist Konopka says, in December, Council will hear and vote on the EAB management plan. She will attend the meeting.

e. Website Outreach

Ms. Stern wants to meet with Council Member Crumiller and Ms. Rothman (Access Princeton). She wants to ask them how the new website must connect to the Princeton website.

Ms. Stern and Ms. Bok van Kammen drafted site plans. Ms. Stern gives them to members. She asks members to think about it. Chair Ainsworth will make the website a December agenda item.

IX. Adjournment

Ms. Frawley motions to adjourn. Ms. Airgood seconds. The committee adjourned at 7:09 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ben Strauss, Recording Secretary.

Date Approved: 1/23/18