



Upper Merion Township Shade Tree and Beautification Commission

Minutes

January 15, 2020

Called to Order: 7:05 PM

Present: Robert Dempsey, Jerome Ocker, Jerry Recupido (Staff Liaison), Susan Ridgeway (Chair), Jennifer Ryan-Gisewhite, Barbara Van Clief

Approval of Agenda: Approved unanimously

Approval of Minutes from November 20, 2019: Approved as written

Old Business:

- a) A new sign explaining the Emerald Ash Borer mitigation project has been installed at Heuser Park, replacing the sign that was damaged by weather.
- b) Best trees video: Susan will call Don Herbert to obtain the draft written by Ann Marchino. PDFs will be made of the tree species – recommended by Don as the best format.
- c) Tree City USA Growth Award: Barley assisted Martie Peterson with the Growth Award Application. We have not been notified whether this has been awarded.
- d) BCA Grant 2019: Sue has submitted the final accountability report, indicating that the invasive prevention work at Heuser Park has been completed for 2019.
- e) PECO Restoration Grant: We have not been notified officially whether this grant was awarded.

New Business:

- a. Burgess Arboretum: Barley and Jerome have met with Joe Brophy from the Upper Merion ECDC. Shreiner Tree Experts has completed a great deal of work at the arboretum, much of it pro bono. Gerri Vattimo has placed a “thank you” sign at the site. The STC has been asked to participate in future discussions about the trees at the arboretum and will do so.
- b. Emerald Ash Borer treatments: There was a question about whether funding for continued treatment of selected ash trees in the Township parks has been budgeted. Treatment needs to be repeated every 2-3 years to prevent infestation by EAB. There are still trees at risk in several parks, including Sweetbriar. These trees need to be marked and a plan made for either treating or removal.

- c. Spring tree planting: A request was made for 7 replacement trees at the Upper Merion Baptist Church. We will visit the site to make species recommendations. Bob has offered to transport the trees if no other solution is available.
- d. Spring tree care: Newly planted trees at Heuser Park will need to have invasive weeds removed in early spring. A work day will be promoted, with the help of Gerri Vattimo. The date will depend on whether help is needed for planting at the UM Baptist Church, but will be late April or early May. Barley will likely not be available due to travel plans.
- e. Jennie confirmed that she will be moving out of the Township and can thus no longer serve on the STC, as per the ordinance. We will ask Tina Garzillo (as our Board liaison) whether an exception can be made for this ruling. Jennie has agreed to continue to serve if this is made possible.
- f. Board of Community Assistance 2020 grant application: The group suggested applying for support for ash tree injections or for a Management Plan for the Burgess Arboretum. Barley will work on getting a quote for the management plan.
- g. Spotted Lanternfly: The Department of Agriculture has marked a number of trees in Bob Case and Walker Parks. We aren't sure what these markings indicate, but will attempt to find out.
- h. Trees in Township Building Park: Jerry and Jerome will mark trees to be removed at the playground area and the picnic grove. These trees will be removed to improve the health of the remaining trees and landscape.
- i. Earth Day: Sue will again staff the Shade Tree and Tree Tenders table at the Earth Day celebration. The date will be April 18 and Paige Wildasin is coordinating.

Reorganization:

Elections of new officers was held with the following results:

Chair: Jerome Ocker

Vice-Chair: Bob Dempsey

Secretary: Susan Ridgeway

The next meeting of the Shade Tree Commission will be held at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 in the Upper Merion Township Building.

Adjournment: 8:21 PM