

## **Shade Tree Commission Meeting Minutes, Township Building and Zoom, Nov. 16, 2022**

**Attendees:** Jerome Ocker (STC) , Bob Dempsey (STC) , Susan Ridgeway (Secretary) , Chris Marshall (Vice Chair), Jerry Recupido (Staff Liaison)

**Guests:** Vytas Masalaitis (McKaig Park Ranger), Mary Ann Ahern (Park & Rec), Theresa Landewe (EAC)

Start 7:00 called to order

Motion to approve agenda passed.

Motion to approve minutes passed.

**Supervisor report** – not present.

**Staff Report:** Jerry Recupido – picking up the bare root trees tomorrow – holes are dug at the parks. Moved spot in a little at Heuser and 6 trees at Bob Holland need to be moved to a new location( natural gas line runs along first base.) The 6 trees will be planted along the Schuylkill West trail near the sewer plant. STC and volunteers will plant.

Jerry sent one of his guys to Tree Climbing class. Need to get gear for him – he is a former climber but has updated his skills.

When leaf season is done, trees (dead ash and ailanthus trees) that are marked will be removed from the Crow Creek trail. Jerome marked them with tape and Jerry has marked with orange paint.

### **Tree Planting:**

Chris is planting 3 trees around the bench at the gazebo by the pond –donated by the resident who purchased the bench. Jerry will provide mulch. Jerome reported that 10 trees will be planted for the Croton Road sewer project site and Jerry will deliver them to the site tomorrow.

**Work Day:** Heuser Park volunteer day on November 5 was a success! Trees were weeded and mulched, cages repaired and some sycamore culled. Plenty of volunteers participated. Next volunteer day is scheduled for Jan. 28, 2023 to thin out the sycamores and work on trees again.

**Spring 2023:** Any trees for the Spring? Maybe funded from the fees in lieu..? Chris thought that Ashton said the money is in a separate fund earmarked for trees. But Jerry doesn't think there is. Jerry will ride through the parks in Spring and look at the trail connector area to identify potential planting sites. There is also question about whether the Crow Creek grant will be awarded, including possible tree planting.

**Connector Trail:** Jerome reported that Kenny completed construction of the Schuylkill River West trail connector to Sullivan's Bridge. They took out all the trees in order to build a retaining wall. Now there is an area where he put grass in. That space could use trees – 50 ft w by 70 ft long – we should try to get some trees planted there.

**Volpe Commons:** Jerry had brush hog out in the basins at Volpe, but left some trees. Kenny still owes us 6 trees on Volpe commons. Need to hear from Tina (who can talk to Tony) and see if that's wrapped up or if Kenny is coming back with the trees that he owes us.

**Crow Creek:** Jerry will clean up after leaf season. Jerome saw bamboo on township property, at Sweetbriar Park and Covered Bridge. Need to look at this and see if it is on township property. Needs to be discussed. Talk about it after the New Year – 2023.

**Rain Garden Project:** Theresa reported on the potential Rain Garden at bottom of hill at Community Garden. Looking at plants, considering donations from people in the township who can divide their perennials. We'd like to get an expert in rain gardens to help with the design. One objective for the project will be education demonstrating the ease of creating rain gardens and relating the project to stormwater mitigation and the Township's MS4 permit. A rain garden captures rainwater and the water-loving plants absorb it and promote infiltration rather than run off. Years ago, it flooded in that area, and it is still often wet with runoff from Henderson Road. Need plants that can tolerate wet soil and have deep roots, instead of just grass that does not promote infiltration.

**BCA 2022** - Barley has sent in the final report for the Tree Nursery Project. The drip irrigation system has been purchased, and a hose reel has been installed.

**TREE DONATION:** Barley arranged a donation of 2 trees from the King of Prussia Home Depot -- a Maple and a Linden. Currently they are being held in our Tree Nursery. Weeds are high there. Some mulch has been provided, and Jerome has spread it, but more may be needed.

**Upper Merion Tree Tenders** – A group get together has been planned for December 1 at the original Roberts School. The objectives are social, getting to know as many new Tree Tenders as possible, and gathering some ideas for the future.

**BCA 2023:** Jerome suggested requesting grant for dead ash trees removal at Arboretum and hazardous pruning needed there. Chris suggested more signage for trees at arboretum. Also suggested, fill the nursery with trees, get them to grow and then have them ready for wherever we need them. Ask if any end of season shrubs or trees are available from vendors that Chris works with – Chris is going to ask. We could store in the nursery until planting.

**Tree City USA and Growth Award** – Jerry said that Martie Peterson and Barley work with him on it. Meetings will be set for December or January.

**Nov 19 – Bare Root Tree Distribution** - Bob will be at the farm at 9 am on Saturday morning, November 19<sup>th</sup> to distribute the trees that residents have ordered. Chris is picking up 3 for Township (to be planted at the pond) and 1 for the Homeowner who is donating the 3 trees.

**Building Plans** – The only plans were for Church Road and we couldn't access them. This was a resubmittal, so not anything major for landscaping. We need a system for tracking and reviewing them. We only need to review the species and what's appropriate for the site. No need to count numbers for compliance – Ashton said the engineering firm has someone who is responsible for that. Chris thought that if we needed to look at big screen for plans, we would make a meeting or even go out to the site for a visit. Need to get a better system worked out.

**Township Lines** – Jerome wrote an article about topping trees and submitted it for the Township Lines magazine. He included Do's and Don'ts of tree care. Going forward we'll contribute more articles, possibly about the stormwater benefits of trees and keeping more water on residential properties with rain gardens.

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 7pm.

Motion to adjourn 7:57pm