

**City of Plainfield  
Shade Tree Commission  
Minutes of Meeting of March 25, 2015  
Planning Conference Room, City Hall  
515 Watching Avenue  
Plainfield, New Jersey 07060**

**1. Roll Call and Call to Order:** Chair Peter Simone called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Present were Mr. Simone, Mary Burgwinkle, Jan Massey, Barbara Spellmeyer and Oscar Riba. David Frost and Lynne Wallace were not present. Also present: April Stefel (Shade Tree Commission Liaison, Planning Division).

**2. Open Public Meeting Act:** Publication was handled by the Planning Division.

**3. Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the February 25, 2015 meeting were approved by the Commissioners with one editing change. Ms. Burgwinkle was reminded to send final minutes to Director of Administration and Finance Ron West and Ms. Stefel for posting on the website.

**4. Shade Tree Commission Items:**

Shade Tree Commission CORE

Mr. Simone announced that CORE training, which is usually offered only at the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation in October, will be offered in Rivervale, New Jersey in April. Ms. Wallace is the only member who needs CORE Training and she will be made aware of this opportunity.

NJ Shade Tree Federation/NJ Department of Agriculture/EAB Traps

NJ Shade Tree Federation has reached out to STCs in the state for help in placing Emerald Ash Borer traps around the state. Ms. Spellmeyer agreed to be Plainfield's representative for this project and will contact the federation.

STC Community Forestry Management Plan (CSIP Grant)

Ms. Stefel reminded the Commissioners that STC's third edition of its Community Forestry Management Plan will be due in August 2016. She is planning to apply for a 2015 Green Communities Grant of \$3000. The grants are offered every year in order to assist municipalities in writing Community Forestry Management Plans or their 5 year revisions. The money would be used to offset the cost of hiring a qualified forestry consultant who is a Certified Tree Expert to help to develop and write the CFMP. The grant requires a match from the City of \$1500, which can be from our budget, or it can be made up of in-kind time from volunteers, public works and city employees based on the following hourly rates: City Employees-\$44 hr.; DPW-\$60 hr; and, volunteers-\$21.79 per hour. As a result, all STC members should keep records of the time that they spend on STC activities. All of the Commissioners had been provided with copies of the CFMP second revision from August 2011, and Ms. Stefel brought the original CFMP from June 2005. Ms. Burgwinkle was allowed to take the binder to review it, but was reminded that this is the only copy and must be returned to the Planning Office.

Public Works Tree / Stump Removal

Ms. Massey reported that she ran into John Louise at a community meeting and questioned him about work on trees and stumps. He estimated that about 20% of the work that needed to be done in Ward 3 is complete. Commissioners should continue to contact John about tree maintenance.

### Tree Maintenance/Pruning and Tree Removal/Stump Grinding

Mr. Simone reported that he is obtaining estimates from Tamke, Daveys, Caffrey, and Disch for tree trimming by professionals in targeted areas.

### STC Planting Policy and Public Notification (Public Ordinances/STC website/Public Works Department Bulletin

Ms. Burgwinkle updated the Commissioners on her research on this project. She brought copies of the Shade Tree Commission Ordinance, which is housed in the Municipal Code in Chapter 3, "Agencies, Boards, Committees and Commissions", at Article 41, with an editor's note to see also Chapter 13, Streets and Sidewalks. In Ms. Burgwinkle's opinion, this placement of the ordinance makes it hard for citizens to find it. She believes that it should be cross referenced with Chapter 15, Trees (rather than streets and sidewalks) and that the Tree section should be updated. She pointed out to the Commissioners the Penalty Section of the STC Ordinance, which is Sec. 3:41-12. She will discuss enforcing violations using this section with Corporation Counsel. She is also working on drafting language for the website regarding the City's easement for tree planting over rights of way, but has not been able to find a definition of rights of way. Ms. Stefel suggested that she speak with Jeff Marsden, the H2M engineer for the city to ask him for help with the definition.

### Arbor Day 2015-Site Selection "Drake House" / Presentation

The Arbor Day celebration for 2015 will be held 4/24/2014 at 11:00 am at Drake House Museum, located at 602 West Front Street in Ward 4. This year, STC was able to obtain a \$3,000 amount from PSEG to fund the plantings, as technical issues prevented them from planting at the Plainfield Substation on West Second Street. Mr. Simone, Ms. Spellmeyer and Ms. Wallace met on March 8th to discuss period appropriate plants and trees, and the tree is likely to be an Aesculus Carnea Briotti (Red Horse Chestnut) or a Stuardia, both very large species and will replace a large tree that was on the front lawn of the museum. Discussion ensued about the planning of the program; John Louise was invited to this meeting but is driving back from Virginia with equipment that DPW was able to obtain from the government. Mr. Simone attended a meeting of the Board of the Historical Society of Plainfield to brief them on the plantings that we intend to do.

### Financial Report

Mr. Simone reminded the Commissioners that our budget is \$27,600 and that dues for our various memberships totaling approx. \$1500 have been paid.

### Greening of Union County 2014-Tree Selection/Site Selection

Mr. Simone reminded the Commissioners that the following assignments have been made for tree planting sites and tree maintenance site identification: Ward 1-Oscar Riba and Barbara Spellmeyer, Ward 2-Peter Simone, Ward 3-Jan Massey/Lynne Wallace, Ward 4-Mary Burgwinkle.

### **5. Adjournment and Next Meeting:**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. Next meeting is April 22, 2015 at 7:30 pm.