

BOROUGH OF WEST CAPE MAY

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

January 12, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Borough of West Cape May Shade Tree Commission was called to order by Dave Hammond at 6:02 PM via a Zoom Web Conference. This meeting is held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which was sent to the Star and Wave and posted on the bulletin board in the foyer of Borough Hall, 732 Broadway, West Cape May, NJ.

ROLL CALL AND FLAG SALUTE

Members present: Lisa Bernstein, Dave Hammond, Susan Hoffman, Wayne Hoffman, Matt Notch, Bill Oetinger and Harry Schmidt. Bill McCray was excused. Parker Smith was absent.

Others present: Peter Burke, Deputy Mayor; Ross Alber and Denise Farnath-Alber, 207 Columbia Ave.; Sue Rea, 722 Third Ave.; and Joe Grottola, 716 Third Ave.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

After a review of the minutes from the December 1, 2020 meeting, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Harry Schmidt and seconded by Lisa Bernstein. The minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Oetinger presented a year end summary. He reported a starting balance of \$94,821.29 at the beginning of 2020 and an ending balance of \$83,129.32. The commission undertook two large scale projects (benches for Wilbraham Park and a tree inventory) this year that resulted in \$14,000 in expenditures. Revenue came from the Tomato and Lima Bean Festivals. A motion to accept the report was made by Dave Hammond and seconded by Harry Schmidt. The report was approved.

REORGANIZATION

The slate of officers for 2021 will be:

- Wayne Hoffman, Chair
- Dave Hammond, Vice Chair
- Bill Oetinger, Treasurer
- Susan Hoffman, Secretary

CORRESPONDENCE

- **207 Columbia Ave.**
The property owner requested the removal of a black cherry tree. The borough arborist visited the property on Dec. 15, 2020. He recommended that the tree be removed. It is partially dead and in severe decline. Dave Hammond made a motion to approve the removal of the tree and to replace it with one tree of any size from the West Cape May

List of Approved Trees. Susan Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved with Matt Notch abstaining.

- **722 Third Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of a Japanese black pine tree. The borough arborist visited the property on Dec. 15, 2020 and recommended that the tree be removed. It is dead. Harry Schmidt made a motion to approve the removal and to replace it with one large tree. Dave Hammond seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **303 Second Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of nine Leyland cypress trees. The borough arborist visited the property on Dec. 15, 2020. He recommended that the trees be removed. They are overgrown and in need of severe pruning. Unfortunately, pruning the trees for clearance will ruin the aesthetic quality of the trees. Drawings submitted with the request show a proposed swimming pool. The commission did not feel they could make a recommendation on replacement trees until further details about the pool were known. The request was tabled pending zoning approval of the pool.

- **207 Fifth Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of a red oak tree. The borough arborist visited the property on Dec. 15, 2020. He recommended that the tree be removed and replaced with a large tree from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Bill Oetinger made a motion to approve the recommendation. Wayne Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **212 Second Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of a poplar tree. The borough arborist visited the property on Jan. 2, 2021. He recommended that the tree be removed. It is growing against a fence which has been broken by the movement of the tree. The lower trunk and root collar are decayed. Harry Schmidt made a motion to approve the removal of the tree and to replace it with one small or medium tree from the West Cape May List of Approved Trees. Susan Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved with Matt Notch abstaining.

- **605 Sunset Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of two poplar trees. The borough arborist visited the property on Oct. 1, 2020. He recommended that one of the trees be removed and the other be considered for removal due to a structural weakness. The area around the trees had recently been filled with soil resulting in a change of drainage. If the drainage is not corrected the probability of survival of the second tree is low. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to approve the removal of the trees and to replace them with four large trees from the West Cape May List of Approved Trees. Susan Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved with Matt Notch abstaining.

- **716 Third Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of two silver maple trees. The borough arborist visited the property on Jan. 3, 2021. He recommended that both trees be removed. One of the trees was filmed rocking and lifting during the storm of Aug. 4, 2020. In addition, both trees are on top of or close to a proposed septic field. Root damage will be unavoidable. Dave Hammond made a motion to approve the removal of the trees and to replace them with two small or medium size trees from the West Cape May List of Approved Trees. Wayne Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved with Matt Notch abstaining.

OPEN PUBLIC PORTION

- Ross Alber and Denise Farnath-Alber, 207 Columbia Ave.; Sue Rea, 722 Third Ave.; and Joe Grottola, 716 Third Ave. were present to discuss their tree removal requests.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Code Enforcement**

Wayne Hoffman will contact Chris Gillin-Schwartz for an update on the status of the ordinance.

- **Tree Inventory**

Susan Hoffman reported that the Davey Resource Group would like to kick off the inventory process the first week in January.

NEW BUSINESS

- **2020 Annual Report**

Bill Oetinger raised a question about grading of a lot under development in the three hundred block of Third Ave. He noted that the lot is 2 ½ -3 feet lower than the lot to the east and 2 ½-3 feet lower than the street. Peter Burke stated that a grading plan is required, and grading specs call for the grade to run towards the street.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hoffman, Secretary