

**BOROUGH OF WEST CAPE MAY**

**SHADE TREE COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**February 9, 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. 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, Bill McCray, Matt Notch, Bill Oetinger, Harry Schmidt, and Parker Smith.

Others present: Carol Sabo, Mayor, John Francis, Commissioner and Joe Knoll, resident and Wilbraham volunteer.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

After a review of the minutes from the January 12, 2021 meeting, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Wayne Hoffman and seconded by Harry Schmidt. The minutes were approved.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Bill Oetinger reported a balance of \$83,129.32. A motion to accept the report was made by Parker Smith and seconded by Harry Schmidt. The report was approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- **501 Bayshore**  
The property owner requested the removal of two poplar trees. The borough arborist visited the property on Jan. 15, 2021. He recommended that the trees be removed. The root system of both trees has been damaged during construction of the house. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to approve the removal of the two trees requested, the removal of a third smaller tree in the same area and to replace them with three large trees from the West Cape May List of Approved Trees. Harry Schmidt seconded, and the motion was approved with Matt Notch abstaining.
- **211 Second Ave.**  
The property owner requested the removal of a silver maple tree. The borough arborist visited the property on Jan. 15, 2021 and recommended that the tree not be removed. It is in good condition and has low risk of failure. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to deny the removal. Dave Hammond seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **286 Sixth Ave.**  
 This request to remove a large tree due to the installation of solar panels was not reviewed because the application was not complete. However, general discussion did ensue about removing trees to accommodate solar energy. It was suggested that a legal opinion be obtained.
- **303 Second Ave.**  
 This request was tabled at the January meeting. 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. Susan and Wayne Hoffman met with the homeowners following the January meeting. They are now considering different options including removing only a few of the trees and/or cutting them up for clearance. Mickey Riggan has been asked to revisit the property to look at the trees from a preservation standpoint. To help facilitate the homeowner's project, Dave Hammond made a motion to approve the removal of up to nine of the cypress trees and require the replacement of any trees removed on a one-to-one basis. Susan Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved.
- **600 Block of Second Ave.**  
 Wayne Hoffman will talk with Peter Burke about reviewing the landscaping plans for this area.

**OPEN PUBLIC PORTION**

- There were not members of the public present.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **Code Enforcement**  
 Wayne Hoffman reported that all revisions to the new ordinance are complete and it will be introduced at the January 27<sup>th</sup> commissioners meeting. He shared a new form outlining the Tree Protection Zone that will be attached to all future construction packets.
- **Tree Inventory**  
 Susan Hoffman reported that the Davey Resource Group has completed the tree inventory. A draft of the inventory and maintenance should be sent soon. She noted that three trees have been identified as hazardous. They include a sycamore in Wilbraham Park, a catalpa on Fifth Ave. next to Panico's parking lot and two catalpas at 120 Fifth Ave. (the trees run along the side of the property on Pacific). It was decided that code enforcement should send letters to the property owners alerting them to the danger and requiring that the trees be removed within a certain time period.
- **Future Initiatives**

Bill Oetinger developed a list of projects that the Shade Tree Commission could undertake. A special meeting will be held Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021 at 6 PM to discuss and prioritize.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Arbor Day/Sapling Giveaway**  
After being cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, the State of New Jersey has announced that the Tree Recovery Program will be held in 2021. We will request 1,000 saplings for public distribution.
- **Spring Tree Planting**  
A spring planting will be held. This will cover those on the waiting list from the fall planting. It is estimated that a total of 10 to 15 trees will be planted.
- **Storage Shed**  
Public works has asked that the commission consider buying a storage shed to house the holiday decorations. Wayne Hoffman will talk with Peter Burke about funds available from the borough to cover part of the cost.
- **Tree City USA**  
Susan Hoffman reported that she completed and submitted the borough's Tree City USA Application. If approved, this would mark the borough's 23rd consecutive year of recognition.
- **NJDUCF Annual Accomplishment Report**  
Susan Hoffman reported that she was finalizing the borough's annual accomplishment report for the New Jersey Department of Urban and Community Forestry. Accreditation by this department, is vital for the Shade Tree Commission. It provides the borough with protection from litigation and makes us eligible for grant money from the state. The report is due on Feb. 15, 2021.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business, Harry Schmidt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bill Oetinger seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hoffman, Secretary