

BOROUGH OF WEST CAPE MAY

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

September 14, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Borough of West Cape May Shade Tree Commission was called to order by Wayne Hoffman at 6:03 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 lobby of Borough Hall, 732 Broadway, West Cape May, NJ.

ROLL CALL AND FLAG SALUTE

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

Others present: Peter Burke, Deputy Mayor, and Rhiannon Worthington, Deputy Zoning Official and Deputy Enforcement Officer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

After a review of the minutes from the August 10, 2021, meeting, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Barry Sullivan and seconded by Harry Schmidt. The minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Oetinger reported a balance of \$87,353.02. A motion to accept the report was made by Susan Hoffman and seconded by Harry Schmidt. The report was approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

- **205 Atlantic Ave.**
The property owner requested the removal of a red maple tree. The borough arborist visited the property on August 5, 2021. He recommended that the tree be removed and replaced with two large trees from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Susan Hoffman made a motion to approve the recommendation. Bill Oetinger seconded. The motion was approved.

- **200 Bayshore**
The property owner requested the removal of a white poplar tree. The borough arborist visited the property on September 9, 2021. He recommended that the tree be removed and replaced with one small or medium size tree from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Bill Oetinger made a motion to approve the recommendation. Harry Schmidt seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **408 Atlantic Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of a silver maple tree. The borough arborist visited the property on August 31, 2021. He recommended that the tree be removed and replaced with one large tree from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Harry Schmidt made a motion to approve the removal. Bill Oetinger seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **608 Second Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of a black gum tree. The borough arborist visited the property on September 9, 2021. He recommended that the tree be removed and replaced with two large trees from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to approve the removal. Harry Schmidt seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **122 Emerald Ave.**

The property owner requested the removal of a hackberry tree. The borough arborist visited the property on September 9, 2021. He recommended that the tree be removed and replaced with one large tree from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to approve the removal. Susan Hoffman seconded, and the motion was approved with Matt Notch abstaining.

- **8 Landis**

The property owner removed a black cherry tree without a permit. A citation was issued. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to require the replacement of one large tree from the WCM List of Approved Trees. Bill Oetinger seconded, and the motion was approved.

- **603 Park Blvd.**

The property owner requested the removal of a cluster of seven trees. The borough arborist visited the property on August 31, 2021. He recommended that all the trees should be removed and replaced with one large tree and four small or medium size trees. Wayne Hoffman made a motion to approve the removals. Harry Schmidt seconded, and the motion was approved.

OPEN PUBLIC PORTION

- There were no members of the public present.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Code Enforcement**

Bill Oetinger presented the next draft of the Emergency Tree Removal Amendment. Suggestions included defining a dangerous tree and the process to communicate with the executive committee.

- **Tree Planting and Maintenance Grant**

Susan Hoffman reported that we have received conditional approval for a grant from the NJ Department of Urban and Community Forestry to plant 50 trees along the borough right of way. More details will be available soon.

- **Removal of Dangerous Trees in Borough Right of Way**
Four trees in the borough right of way were identified as hazardous in the tree inventory conducted by the Davey Resource Group. The trees are located on the Fifth Street side of Panico's Bistro (1 tree), 120 Fifth Ave. (2 trees), and 300 Third Ave. (1 tree). Micky Riggan, the borough arborist, performed further assessments and concluded that all four trees should be removed. Bill Oetinger made a motion to recommend that the borough commissioners draft resolutions requiring the removal of these trees at the owner's expense. Harry Schmidt seconded, and the motion was approved.
- **Big Tree/Heritage Tree Program**
Commissioners reviewed a Big Tree/Heritage Tree Program draft developed by Barry Sullivan. The program would provide grants for tree maintenance to property owners whose trees are included on the New Jersey's Big Tree/Heritage Tree Registry. Up to four grants not to exceed \$500 each would be awarded annually. Suggestions made by the commissioners will be included in the next draft. The draft will be shared with the finance officer for input.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Salute to Summer Festival**
Feedback concerning the 2021 Salute to Summer Festival was discussed. While the event started with good attendance, it dropped off throughout the day. Several vendors expressed displeasure at the results and thought that the event was under publicized. They found the new name confusing. Others suggested the event return to Wilbraham Park for greater visibility. There were reports of misinformation listed on some local social media channels. The commission agreed to review the results of the Lima Bean Festival before making final decisions about next year's events.
- **NJ Shade Tree Conference**
Susan Hoffman, Wayne Hoffman, and Barry Sullivan will be attending.
- **Other**
Following the positive feedback concerning the presentation of the NJ Heritage Tree Program, Barry Sullivan agreed to draft a process for West Cape May to work in concert with the state to identify and protect significant trees in our community.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Hoffman, Secretary