

THE HOBOKEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION

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RAVINDER S. BHALLA
Mayor



Diana Davis, Chairwoman
Peter Bakarich, III, Commissioner
Peter Cossio, Commissioner
Amy Sommer, Commissioner
Ken Missbrenner, Commissioner
Jeffrey Pilot, 1st Alternate

Minutes of the February 12, 2018 Shade Tree Commission Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm.

Open Public Meeting Act statement was read by the commission secretary.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners: Sommer, Missbrenner, 1st Alternate Pilot, and Chairwoman Davis

Absent: Commissioners: Bakarich and Cossio

Also present: Daisy Amado, commission secretary

AGENDA:

1. Approval of the minutes of the January 8, 2018 commission meeting

Commissioner Missbrenner made a motion to approve the minutes with a second from Commissioner Sommer and all members present unanimously in favor.

2. Chair's Report

- On January 19th, Chairwoman met with Mayor Bhalla and Deputy Chief of Staff, Jason Freeman, and had a productive meeting. The Hoboken Shade Tree Commission's yearly budget will remain the same.
- Chairwoman prepared a letter from the Hoboken Shade Tree Commission endorsing the National Fish & Wildlife Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Grant application which Quanika Stover was submitting on behalf of the City. The Hoboken Shade Tree Commission would be very involved. If granted, 200 trees will be planted. This is a dual grant shared between the cities of Hoboken and Jersey City.
- Chair completed the Green Communities Grant which is for \$3,000 and would help pay Paul Cowie's fees in assisting to write the five year plan for the commission. The Green Communities Grant is scheduled to be on the city council meeting on Wednesday, February 21, 2018.
- Chairwoman thanked Commissioner Missbrenner who alerted her about a tree pit on 3rd and Washington Streets which was full of trash and debris. Chairwoman followed up and a summons was issued.

- Update on 423 Madison: The commission had previously reviewed plans for 423 Madison; we recommended not to plant rain gardens; and we sent the plans back to Nastasi Architects for better drawings. Chairwoman spoke to someone at Nastasi's office who advised they may possibly be changing their minds about the rain gardens. Commissioner Sommer mentioned she spoke with John Otto of the Planning Board and they had a discussion about the Planning Board encouraging rain gardens. Chairwoman stated she will discuss further with the Planning Board chair.
- We are applying for another CSIP grant which will be announced in March. We have a month to work on it and they announce in two months.
- Chairwoman met with Jennifer Gonzalez, planner from Community Development for the city and Quanika Stover on January 25th and one of the items discussed was the City's second annual Spring Fling event on April 21st which is a community-wide day of service dedicated to cleaning up the parks and public spaces. Chairwoman advised on the same date the Hoboken Shade Tree Commission is having the annual Free Saplings event. The sapling event will be held at Church Square Park instead of the Garage and the start time is 10am ending at 2pm. We will have assistance from the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, but Chair is looking for volunteers from the commission. We have 2,000 saplings to distribute and we will be giving approximately five to each individual.

3. 319 Washington Street – Tree Species and Pit Size Recommendation

The tree at this location was destroyed by a subcontractor. Commissioner Pilot will look at it tomorrow and will see if we can shift the pit. Chairwoman had a picture Commissioner Cossio sent to her earlier and she shared it with the commissioners present. Discussion ensued.

Two motions were made as follows:

Commissioner Sommer made a motion to keep as is and if possible move guardrail away from water line with a second from Commissioner Misbrenner and all members present in favor.

Commissioner Misbrenner made a motion to have the caliper and lowest branch at seven feet high and three to three and half inches with the choice of either a fruitless sweet gum tree or a Japanese Scholar a.k.a. Japanese Pagoda "Sophora" with a second from Commissioner Pilot and all members present unanimously in favor.

4. Washington Street Rain Gardens: Agreed with Hoboken Shade Tree Commission recommendation for Swamp White Oak but no Black Gum – Commission to vote for alternative species to replace Black Gum

Commissioners did not agree with T&M, contractor for Washington Street project, with their tree recommendations for the raingardens of Red Oak or Kentucky Coffee Tree. Chairwoman read

tree species names off of the list the commission is receiving from the State for the Spring Fling to give the commissioners ideas. Commissioner Sommer looked up the Commission's approved species list and went over with commission. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Missbrenner made a motion for the Rotunda Sweet Gum "Rotundiloba" (fruitless) with a second from Commissioner Pilot and all members present unanimously in favor.

AGENDA TAKEN OUT OF ORDER

5. City of Hoboken Municipal Code, Chapter 62: Shade Tree Commission

Chairwoman will email this code to all commissioners. Shade Tree is responsible for the regulation, planting, care of shade and ornamental trees and shrubbery in public places, parks and parkways of the City of Hoboken. Chair stated we will take on more responsibility on what is planted around town.

6. Tree on Fire at 526 Bloomfield

On January 17, 2018 Chairwoman received a call from a resident at 7:45am advising that the tree in front of their house, 526 Bloomfield, was on fire. Chairwoman spoke with Fire Captain at the scene and James Davis from the city was also there. Commissioner Pilot looked at the tree and cannot tell there was a fire. Commissioner Missbrenner agreed, he too looked at the tree cannot tell anything happened. Chairwoman advised according to the resident the tree was burning inside the trunk for hours. Commissioner Sommer recommended we wait until Spring. Commissioner Pilot advised there is no reason to remove the tree right now. Discussion ensued, it is recommended the resident hire an arborist to evaluate the tree. With a wooden mallet they can tell if tree is hollow inside.

7. Spring Planting Assignments

Chairwoman advised we need to do markouts and she will be assigning section of the towns to each commissioner. Chairwoman has to contact some of the residents and ask if they will have tree removed. Within the next two weeks she will be sending out email to commissioners with their respective assignments. Chairwoman will also have the city's Communication Manger, Juan Melli, repost and we will announce one more time.

8. Public Comments (limited to five minutes per person)

No members of the public appeared before the commission.

9. New Business

- Commissioner Missbrenner mentioned how tree guards on Washington Street are all banged up, bent and damaged. Chairwoman advised that wrought iron tree guards will be replaced.
- Commissioner Sommer inquired as to the Washington Street project taking place without the commission voting or reviewing same or having input on same.
- Commissioner Missbrenner mentioned that Underground Utilities, vendor working on Washington Street project, has a staging area west of the Tea Building or by the Cove (across from soccer field) the screening on fence is all down, and it looks really bad. Chairwoman stated she will discuss with them.
- Chairwoman had commissioners present fill out a form for the State regarding their professional licenses in connection to our annual report.
- Chairwoman advised the commission will be providing tree species as we have a few projects coming up such as: one contractor has to plant 14 trees; Nastasi Architects has to plant 5 trees; the Housing Authority; etc. We have to recommend locations and species. Chairwoman will recommend locations we want to fill all empty tree pits. Discussion regarding the area around Church Towers needing trees.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Missbrenner and seconded by Commissioner Sommer with all members present in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25p.m.