

Minutes of August 10, 2010
Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission for Meeting of September 14, 2010

The meeting was held at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall, 100 First Avenue, Atlantic Highlands.

In attendance: Louise Donoghue, Marilyn Scherfen, Joseph Hawley, Lois Young, Kate Wigginton and Mary Thompson. Guest: Jackie Dean and Adam Hubeny

Louise Donoghue called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

The minutes were reviewed and a motion was made by Lois Young to accept the minutes. Joe Hawley seconded it. A vote was taken and all who had attended the meeting voted in favor of acceptance.

Treasurer's Report: As of today, there was a balance of \$9,638.42 in the account, not reflected in the amount is \$4,500 due a vendor for tree removal. Joe Hawley made a motion, which was seconded by Marilyn Scherfen to approve the report. The motion was unanimously accepted. The comment was made that the Committee would need the balance for fall planting and Arbor Day activities. Discussion followed.

The Bradford Pear tree blight was discussed. Mrs. Donoghue called the County Shade Commission. There is a treatment protocol but it is expensive and the County has decided to let nature take its course.

There are 20 resident tree requests on the list at present. The budget vs. requests was discussed. Joe Hawley made a motion to plant up to 20 trees in the fall. The motion was seconded by Marilyn Scherfen and approved by all those present.

Joe Hawley made a motion to plant a tree in honor of Bernie Frotton, a long time Commission member. Marilyn Scherfen seconded the motion and all voted in favor of the planting. A site and date will be determined later.

An award will be presented to Posten's Funeral Home at the September 8th Council meeting for thoughtful tree maintenance in keeping with the "Tree City" concept.

This year's Core training will take place on October 22nd and 23rd. Joe Hawley, Jen Marston and Mary Thompson should attend.

Mrs. Jackie Dean was introduced and she expressed her concern about the 2nd Avenue street paving. 18 trees are due to be removed and replaced. She is opposed to the removal of healthy trees. She stated that the Sycamores are "historical" and that their removal would detract from the appeal of the street, reduce property values and be environmentally unfriendly. Kate Wigginton observed that in her assessment of the trees on 2nd Avenue, many

trees were in jeopardy because their root structure invaded the sidewalks and the street. It was her opinion that with new curbs there would not be enough room to maintain a healthy tree. She also noted that they had been inappropriately trimmed about 5 years ago and the “V” trimming had damaged the trees. Adam Hubeny assured Mrs. Dean that the new trees would be larger than usual at a cost of about \$600 per tree for a total of \$32,000. He stated that the issues were safety and liability as well as aesthetics. He commented that David Marks, the Borough Engineer had reported that two trees were viable in front of the Niles house and another one in front of the Apartment Building. Mrs. Dean replied that she was concerned about the engineer’s ability to make such a determination without an arborist’s advice. She further noted that she preferred a diversity of trees as opposed to uniformity and that variety was part of the beauty of Atlantic Highlands. She understands the safety issues but requested that an arborist inspect the trees to determine if some trees can be saved by proper pruning and crowning. She noted that the Sycamore population was decreasing. Joe Hawley noted that the arborist for JP&L had inspected the trees and found most of them to be in distress. Adam Hubeny noted that the issue has been on the Council agenda and on the Borough web site and stated that the plan was not created without due diligence. The various trees were discussed in detail and a dialogue ensued about trees that were more suitable for street planting. It was suggested that Mrs. Donoghue get in touch with John Butler and request him to have a look at the street. Joe Hawley will work with Mrs. Dean and report her recommendations to the Committee.

The proposed “Rain Garden” was discussed. The Harbor Commission requested a “walk through” to determine suitability. Winter boat storage and the chain link fence were talked about as well.

Sustainable New Jersey was discussed. Kate Wigginton noted that a resolution needs to be passed about the importance of trees. Atlantic Highlands has a 47.7% tree ratio and the aim should be for 50%. Kate Wigginton put forth a motion to adopt the resolution and Joe Hawley seconded it. The vote was unanimous to approve the motion. (See attached)

Joe Hawley stated that fellow Commissioner Ken Thoman had missed more than the excused number of absences at meetings and he requested that the Mayor be notified. Mary Thompson will send the Mayor a letter to see if he wants to take any action.

A motion to adjourn was made by Joe Hawley and seconded by Lois Young. The vote was unanimous to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Thompson