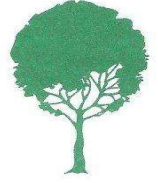




Borough of Atlantic Highlands
Shade Tree Commission



100 First Avenue • Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716
 Tel: (732) 291-1444 • Fax: (732) 291-9725

Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission
Meeting Held April 14, 2021
Meeting Held on Zoom

1. In Attendance: Ken Grasso, Fred Callis, Bill Thorne, Rich Lerner, Mary Trank, Janet Grote, Ellen O'Dwyer, Lori Hohenleitner (Council liaison).

The monthly meeting was called to order by Ken Grasso at 6:30 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law.

2. Approval of Minutes: Rich Lerner made a motion to approve the March minutes. Bill Thorne seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

3. Correspondence: The Commission received a letter regarding Bill Thorne sent from Borough Administrator Adam Hubeny, citing Bill's many years' service to the Shade Tree Commission. Ken Grasso and others thanked Bill for his work.

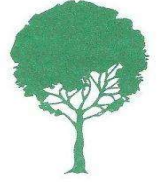
4. Treasurer's report (Bill Thorne):

Opening balance	March 11, 2021	\$8,655.87
Expenses	Balance due Paul Cowie & Assoc.	\$2,150.00
Total expenses		\$2,150.00
Total deposits		\$0
Closing balance	April 14, 2021	\$6,505.87
Pending expenses		
	\$95.00 NJ Shade Tree Federation	
	\$30.00 CORE training Mary Trank	
	\$30.00 CORE training Ellen O'Dwyer	
	\$30.00 CORE training Ken Grasso	
	\$185.00 Total pending	
Pending grant		
	\$3,000.00 Green Communities Grant	



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5. Old Business

a. Residential tree planting:

Ken Grasso said mark-outs were done on April 14th. Planting should be done by the end of the month.

The Commission discussed in both specific and general terms the question of residents removing a tree or trees to facilitate installation of solar panels and whether a homeowner who has removed tree(s) to facilitate installation of solar panels should be eligible to receive tree(s) if they become available at no cost to homeowners.

Is it: “trees are better than no trees” so all residents are eligible OR if a homeowner has removed a tree for solar panels they are not eligible for no cost replacement tree?

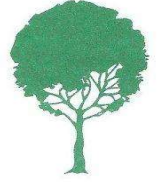
Ken Grasso asked Ashley Cruz her opinion. (Ashley, a landscape architect, is a resident who attended the meeting). She said while there is benefit to solar power, we would not want to encourage residents to take down mature trees in favor of replacing them with new trees received at no cost.

The group discussed whether there is a way to get solar companies to pay for new trees if mature trees are removed; can the Shade Tree Commission collect escrow from solar companies to help defray the expense of replacing trees? Councilwoman Hohenleitner is going to investigate this.

Members also discussed researching other communities--specifically, Maplewood and Colts Necks--regarding policies for mature trees generally (including removal) with resident Ashley Cruz asking the Commission to consider the designation of “heritage tree” for some trees in the borough.



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b. Memorial tree plaques:

Fred explained these vary by price and size and we should purchase with care. He will report in June. The first plaque will be for the tree planted for Mr. Donahue, which has survived for two years.

c. Tree seedling distribution:

After some discussion about suitable dates, Saturday, April 24, 2021 was settled on for distribution of the tree seedlings purchased from the NJ Forest Service. This event will take place in front of borough hall, as it did in spring 2020.

d. Arbor Day Proclamation:

The Annual Arbor Day Proclamation was sent to the Mayor and Council to be read at the April 22, 2021 meeting.

e. CORE Training

Ken Grasso, Ellen O'Dwyer, and Mary Trank attended the NJ Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry program's Core Training Short Course in March, which was held virtually through Rutgers University's "Canvas" system. Ken Grasso encouraged others in the group who had not attended or had not attended recently to consider attending the next time it is offered.

f. Tree removal form moved from Code Enforcement to Shade Tree page.

At the March meeting, Janet Grote had asked about the location of the tree removal form on the borough website. It can now be found on the Shade Tree page.

6. New Business

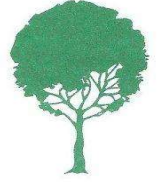
a. Arbor day planting

The group discussed whether to replace the Zelkova on Center Ave. by the soccer field in recognition of Arbor Day.



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b. Mary Thompson memorial

The group discussed whether to honor former Shade Tree Commissioner Mary Thompson with a memorial tree.

A decision was reached in favor of the memorial tree. Bill Thorne remembered that Mary Thompson liked weeping willows. Ashley Cruz suggested planting a suitable native species and offered a list. She, Ken Grasso, and Councilwoman Hohenleitner are going to meet near the soccer field to view possible locations.

Ken made a motion to purchase a memorial tree for Mary Thompson not to exceed \$1000. Bill seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

c. Hennessey Blvd trees -- possible issues

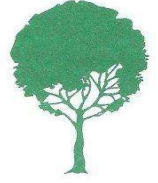
Ellen O'Dwyer-- who recently completed the CORE training -- noticed that the 10 trees planted on Hennessey Blvd. are improperly planted, with the "root flare" buried too deeply. She said these trees need to be lifted. Ken Grasso said that we need to get more information and return to this topic at a future meeting.

d. Missing maple leaf on plaque in Borough Hall

Ken Grasso said he had been contacted by Borough Administrator Adam Hubeny because some maple leaves were missing from the Arbor Day plaque in borough hall. Ken said we would have to look for these, however Bill Thorne said he had requested and received new leaves from the Arbor Day Foundation, which Jimmy Phillips from the borough had already picked up and restored to the plaque in borough hall.



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e. New flag pole.

The Commission discussed Atlantic Highlands' designation as a "Tree City USA" and its request that the borough fly the Tree City USA flag (on a new flagpole, if necessary). Ken Grasso explained that the borough administrator had offered that the flag could be flown at the "Welcome to Atlantic Highlands" sign, which has a small flagpole. There is also a small pole behind the library. Where could the flag be flown, prominently? Where could a flagpole be erected? Councilwoman Hohenleitner said that in municipalities questions about where to fly flags and what flags are often questions about American flag etiquette. She is going to work on this.

f. Councilwoman Hohenleitner informed the group of three new forest management bills introduced in the state legislature. She informed the group that she would send more information via email.

7. Public Comment

Sarah Colasurdo also attended. She told the group she likes to stay informed.

8. Adjournment

Bill Thorne made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 pm. Mary Trank seconded it. All voted in favor.