

# **Lower Paxton Township SHADE TREE COMMISSION**

## **Meeting Minutes February 22, 2022**

### Members in Attendance

Karl Valley  
Tim Murphy  
Rick Wain  
John Whaley  
Austin Gee

### Members Absent

### Also in Attendance

Nick Gehret, Staff Liaison

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Valley called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm on the above date in the Conference Room of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg.

## **MINUTES**

Mr. Whaley made a motion to approve the January 25, 2022 meeting minutes, as corrected. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### 2022 Arbor Day Celebration

Arbor Day is always the last Friday of April, so this year it falls on April 29, 2022. Mr. Gehret state that Parks and Recreation is not going to have anything for Earth Day. In the past, the Shade Tree Commission was able to involve fourth graders from the local elementary schools, but with transportation issues, that hasn't been feasible in recent years. Members discussed dates and times and decided on planting a tree at Stray Winds Park on either April 26<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Gehret will invite the Board of Supervisors and coordinate publicizing it with the Communications Manager to get it on the website and social media. It was suggested to ask SWAN to put it in their newsletter and the Stray Winds homeowners' association could also let the neighbors know.

Mr. Gehret will make sure that Andy Brought is available to attend. About 25 seedlings will also need to be ordered. The Autumn Blaze Red Maple is what was planted last year, and it has done well, so it was agreed to use the same variety if it is available.

Mr. Whaley asked where the 2022 Arbor Day tree should be planted at the park. Mr. Gehret will go out and look to see where the best location will be. He will also check with Rachelle Scott to make sure the location doesn't interfere with any park activities.

### Tree Maintenance: Arbor Day Trees at Centennial and Brightbill Parks

Mr. Wain stated he checked on both trees. He tried to loosen the supports on the Maple tree at Brightbill but the ground was still too frozen to move it much. The supports should be removed late spring/early summer of this year, otherwise it looks really good. This tree is doing very well.

The southern facing side of the tree at Centennial Acres Park is peeling/exfoliating from ground level to about 5-6 feet off the ground. Mr. Whaley stated that a Sycamore tree will do that when it is older but not normally when it is so young. Mr. Wain state that it is just the outer bark that is split and peeling. He noted that on the northern side is smooth. Mr. Murphy suggested it happens when there is a freeze and the sun thaws that area. Mr. Wain did ask Rocky Gleeson to look at it and he said it was somewhat normal and he wasn't concerned. Mr. Valley stated that he gave the original plaque to Norm Lacasse's wife.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Shade Tree Commission

#### Approved Species List

Mr. Gehret explained that the Planning Commission refers to this list frequently and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances requires developers to select tree species from this list. It has not been updated in a while, so he would like the Commissioners to review the list. Mr. Whaley noted that the Callery Pear is on the list, but has recently become named as an invasive species. Mr. Murphy noted he thinks that the enforcement is being phased in over the next few years. Mr. Wain agreed and found information from the Department of Agriculture saying that it was added November 2021 and may no longer be distributed, cultivated, or propagated in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Gehret noted that there is a conservation easement around the stream at the intersection of Crums Mill Road and Linglestown Road, near Harrisburg Foot and Ankle. The property recently changed ownership and the new owners cleared it down to the ground. Upon investigation, he found that the new owners brought in an arborist to do an environmental assessment based on the sale of the land. Because the Callery Pear was present, they removed the trees and grubbed out the lower section of the stream. They are doing a new planting schedule on the bank. They have involved Dauphin County Conservation District throughout the process. This brought to light that the Approved Species List needs to be updated to reflect the recent recommendations.

Mr. Whaley stated the list tries to take into account the availability in local nursery stock, the height at maturity because of overhead wires, the space needed for the trees because of the tree lawn size, and the shape of the tree because of how it overhangs the street and parking. He also noted that there are not many native varieties on this list because they do not really apply to the intended usage. Some trees vary greatly whether it is the male or female variety. Members discussed a few of the varieties on the list and will talk more about them at the next few meetings.

Mr. Gehret would like to see the trees in the under 25 feet high because the SALDO refers to the list when regulating interior parking lot plantings and commercial developments and other plantings that are not necessarily along a street right-of-way. He added that a new complication is the prevalence of underground utilities. There are several applications of this list that the members will want to consider as they discuss the trees.

#### Tree Inspections

No inspections were requested this month.

#### Hazardous Tree

Mr. Wain stated that during the windstorms over the last week he noticed some trees down. There is one area that needs some attention on Continental Drive across from Centennial Acres Park, where there is a home with 2-3 very large Ash trees that have died, and the wind brought down a section of them in the back yard. While they are not in the tree lawn, they will come down into the road because they are well over 40 feet high. Mr. Gehret will look into them to see if it is something Public Works can remove or if the homeowner will be responsible.

#### Shade Tree Commissioners' Shirts

Mr. Gehret stated he is looking into new shirts for the members and will show the proposed designs to the members for opinions prior to placing the order.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT & COMMISSIONERS COMMENT**

Mr. Valley stated that the Susquehanna Township puts out a very nice newsletter and he shared an article about stormwater money at work, and it talked about the benefits of stream restoration and removal of invasive species. He suggested that when the Commission is working in the parks, they mark any Tree of Heaven as they find them so that Public Works can remove them.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Wain noted the next Shade Tree Commission meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2022, at 4 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner,  
Recording Secretary