

# **Lower Paxton Township SHADE TREE COMMISSION**

## **Meeting Minutes**

May 23, 2023

### Members in Attendance

John Whaley  
Tim Murphy  
Rick Wain  
Austin Gee

### Members Absent

Karl Valley

### Also in Attendance

Nick Gehret, Staff Liaison

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Murphy called the meeting to order at 4:07 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 April 25, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Wain seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Tree Inspections

4220 Plymouth Street. Mr. Gehret stated he received a call from the homeowner asking for advice if the tree should be trimmed or removed. The top appears to be dead. Mr. Whaley will contact and go look at the tree.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Stray Winds Farm, Proposed Tree Planting

Mr. Gehret explained that the person in charge of the HOA for PA Properties for the Stray Winds Farm development wants to plant trees within the development since there are no street trees and not many interior trees. She requested guidance on species selection. She provided a draft layout for where she'd like to plant the trees. Mr. Gehret reviewed it to eliminate trees where they would conflict with utility and drainage easements and intersection lines-of-sight.

Mr. Whaley asked if they are interested in providing shade to the street. He recommended a vase shaped Zelkova. Mr. Murphy asked about the goal or what they are trying to gain so it could help the Commission make appropriate recommendations. Mr. Gehret stated that most or all of them are in open space lots, but they may have to be pulled back out of the right-of-way in order to make some of them work. Mr. Whaley suggested Little Leaf Linden too. Mr. Wain noted many look like they are at intersections. Mr. Whaley suggested a Serviceberry or Dogwood would work to add color in the spring. He also noted it will be important to plant more than one species. A Chinese Dogwood flowers after the leaves come out, so mixing that with the American Dogwood would add variety. Mr. Wain suggested a Hornbeam which has a fair density and provides shade this species is also on the approved species list.

Michelle Thompson, Community Engagement Specialist

Ms. Thompson noted she attached cards with a QR code on it to the seedlings given out at Arbor Day. The codes are trackable, and so far only 3 of the 30 or so have been scanned.

Ms. Thompson explained she is interested in learning from the commissions and boards of ways to connect with the community, mentor new members, she is happy to help with any outreach ideas.

She made a few slides with ideas she has found being done around the area. these things could be partnerships or activities. She found the PA Outdoor Corps and the PennDel International Society of Arboriculture, both of which are training to work in the field. The people in the groups may be interested in working on local projects or the annual tree maintenance or a spring park project. ISA does an Arbor Day event each year so it could be a way to expand what LP does. There is a student conservation association which is a young adult vocational training who may be another potential partner.

She also shared a video that was created by the City of Harrisburg telling residents how to evaluate and monitor trees. this could be a training tool for people that are interested in learning.

She asked if the Shade Tree Commission would be interested in having a table at events or sharing a table with other LP commissions with some information. Mr. Whaley noted that they have participated in National Night Out for years but people aren't interested in information; they are looking for games or goodies at that event.

Ms. Thompson noted that getting and holding someone's attention, so she likes to make things interactive and she likes to do info-graphics. Mr. Whaley shared that the members made a video of how to trim trees and how to maintain them, but the recording failed so it was never usable. There is a landscaping class at DCTS who may be interested in making a video or interactive game or trivia game. Arbor Day used to be very successful for the LP Shade Tree. The local schools took turns participating, they would bus the fourth graders to a location for a ceremony and tree planting, and they would share songs and poems or drawings and they were very engaged. One time there was a girl scout troop that did Arbor Day at Heroes Grove. Once there was an Earth Day/Arbor Day event with tables and demos but nobody showed up.

Ms. Thompson is going to visit some events like a senior expo and she would like to share things from several of the Township committees all at one table. She would also like to see Shade Tree participate in Fall Fest with a game or activity, and it could be educational as well. Mr. Whaley suggested an educational event where people are invited in to learn about a specific topic. Ms. Thompson agreed that would be a good idea and it might help to partner with another group who already has some interest. If both were part of the presentation, it could boost attendance. It could also be shared via Zoom or Teams. A targeted outreach could incorporate some of the information she found and they could also do a hands-on portion. A scavenger hunt or a guided walk may be fun at George Park. Nature identification, planting activity, raffles, leaf painting or an easy art project were ideas shared. Mr. Murphy agreed that doing an activity at Fall Fest would be fun.

## **LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW**

There were no plans to review this month

**PUBLIC COMMENT &  
COMMISSIONERS COMMENT**

Spotted Lanternfly

Mr. Murphy sent an email about watching the Maple trees planted by the Commission for spotted lanternflies and if they are found a trap could be put on the tree. Mr. Murphy will check on the ones planted at Brightbill and Heroes Grove, Mr. Wain will check Norm's Sycamore at Centennial Acres Park, and they will ask Mr. Valley to check the one at Stray Winds Park.

Tree Maintenance

Mr. Murphy noted that there aren't many areas that need maintenance, but they also haven't done a planting project in many years.

**NEXT MEETING &  
ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Murphy noted the next Shade Tree Commission meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

With no additional business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner, Recording Secretary