

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 28, 2021

The Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission met in a regular monthly meeting at 7:00 PM. via the Zoom Virtual Conferencing Program. Present at the meeting were: Mrs. Breen, Ms. Ponce, Ms. Corley, Mr. Bell, and Mr. Pryzblinski. Commissioner liaison Mr. Lee and Staff liaison Mr. Ford were also present.

Election of Officers

A motion was made and seconded to nominate and confirm Ms. Corley as Chair. All in favor. Motion passes.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate and confirm Ms. Ponce as Vice-Chair. All in favor. Motion passes.

Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the Oct. 29, 2020 meeting. All in favor. Motion passes.

Old Business

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (SALDO) REVIEW

The Commission continued their review of the SALDO standards. Ms. Breen informed the members that she was in favor of the County's model ordinance with slight adjustments to reflect the character of Springfield Township. Mr. Bell then inquired as to why Shade Tree Commission was not more involved in land development plan review and advocated for a more inclusive and active role for the Commission. A more active more, Mr. Bell argued and Ms. Ponce reiterated, was necessary to prioritize tree protection in the Township and would ensure that the Commission's opinions were heard by the Township (i.e. Board of Commissioners, staff, and members of the Planning Commission).

At this point Mr. Pryzblinski offered historical insight as to why the Commission's focus shifted away from plan review, citing a desire to emphasize tree protection through education and simply the plan review process by not creating another step for approval. Mr. Pryzblinski also noted that engaging in such regulatory activity could result in unintended hardship for residents.

When asked to comment by the Commission members, Mr. Lee shared that he was supportive of a more active role for Shade Tree to such a degree that their actions do not infringe upon individual property rights.

After a 4-1 vote in favor of pursuing a more inclusive and active role for Shade Tree in the land development plan review process, Mr. Ford outlined preliminary measures that staff could take to give Shade Tree members an opportunity to provide feedback on

development plans that are currently or will be under consideration by the Planning Commission until a formal mechanism to provide Shade Tree feedback to the Planning Commission is worked out.

- With approval by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners, staff will provide Shade Tree Commission members with those land development plans inclusive of landscaping aspects for their comment/feedback in advance of the next shade tree meeting and planning commission for which said plan will be reviewed. Staff will also notify Shade Tree of any applicable zoning hearing board petition that stands to impact the Township's Tree Canopy.

New Business

ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

Mr. Ford shared details about the annual Tree City Conference hosted virtually by the Arbor Day Foundation. All members of the Shade Tree are eligible to attend at no cost due to Springfield's status as a Tree City. Mr. Bell and Ms. Breen expressed interest in attending. Mr. Ford also informed the Commission that the Foundation waived the physical Arbor Day event requirement for the annual Tree City certification.

In lieu of an event, the members discussed live streaming a tree planting for educational purposes that could also be shared online.

PHS TREE TENDER PROGRAM

Another program idea for 2021 was to encourage residents to attend the PHS Tree Tender program. One suggestion was to establish a Tree Scholarship to either fully or partially fund one or more registration to the Tree Tender Program.

Commissioner and Township Update

Msrs. Lee and Ford provided an update on Township operations to the members. Topics included the upcoming police-community relations survey, grant applications/projects at Chiaramonte, Cisco, and Mermaid Parks, and Philly wage tax savings,

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Ford
Assistant to the Manager