

BOROUGH OF WEST READING
SHADE TREE COMMISSION
April 1, 2019

The Shade Tree Commission met on Monday, April 1, 2019 at Borough Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. with Chad Moyer, Lynne Burns, Cody Rhoads, Public Works Director Dean Murray, and Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman in attendance. Ron Schweitzer and Patrick Kaag were unable to attend.

Visitors: W. David Johns

Public Comment

Mr. Johns spoke about the three maple trees on Spruce Street at Kent Way, adjacent to his property, which have lifted the sidewalk. He inquired about the process for repairing sidewalks when the issue is caused by tree roots. Mr. Murray explained that the trees would have to be assessed to see whether they are in decline and should be removed. He noted that it is not the Borough's policy to remove healthy trees, but instead to find a way to fix the sidewalk to remove the tripping hazard. Mr. Murray will contact Mr. Johns to assess the trees.

Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Lynne Burns and seconded by Cody Rhoads to approve the minutes of January 7, 2019.

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Oak Terrace Trees

- The tree that was planted near the end of Oak Terrace is still not growing and will need to be removed.

Trees to Be Planted

- Mr. Murray has not yet decided which variety of trees should be planted on Chestnut Street.

Tree Removal

- The sycamore trees on the south side of Buttonwood Street still need to be removed.
- There are four trees on the east side of South 4th Avenue that will be taken down.
- Four Zelcovas on the west side of Ann Street have outgrown their space and need to be removed.

Spotted Lanternfly

Six cases of wraps have been purchased to band the trees that are targeted by the lanternflies. It was suggested that some wraps be left at Borough Hall for residents that may need them. Lanternflies are drawn to sweet trees like maples and the 'Tree of Heaven'. Borough Crew will be tackling the wrapping of trees in the Borough very soon.

Tree Trimming

- The trees on the south side of Playground Drive and S. 7th Avenue have been identified for trimming along with the sycamores on Sycamore Road. Mr. Murray explained that most of the sycamores have reached the end of their life span and need to be removed. This will be accomplished by removing every other tree over time so that it won't be a radical change for the neighborhoods. He noted that these trees will need to be done by professionals because of their size, and could cost upwards of \$3000 per tree to take it down. Funds will have to be budgeted specifically for this project.
- Ms. Burns asked that the tree in front of her house be assessed.

Reading Hospital

- The Hospital has recently requested the PA One Calls for all of the new trees that they agreed to add.

Penn Avenue Trees

- The trees on Penn Avenue are growing well and seem to be a good fit for that location. Rather than using the tree grates as originally installed, the mulch seems to be working well. It is intended that the trees will be mulched several times per year, prior to our large events.

Memorial for Dean Rohrbach

- The rededication of the Veterans' Memorial is planned for November 11th. Specific plans have not yet been finalized. A plaque will be added to the single stem Magnolia planted at that site in Dean's memory.

NEW BUSINESS:

Five Year Plan

- A five-year plan has been discussed briefly in the past however Mr. Murray said that he would like to have it in place for the upcoming 2020 budget. The sycamores were again discussed and it was noted that there are about 20 trees for each side of Sunset, Sycamore and Tulpehocken.
- Trees for the new townhouses on Elm Street were discussed. It was noted that the planting strip is at least 3' wide at that location which can easily accommodate street trees. Plans to plant trees there will be considered once the first six homes have been completed.
- The budget line items associated with the Shade Tree Commission will be provided for everyone at the next meeting so members see the funding available to work with in 2019.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Hoffman