

BOROUGH OF WEST READING
SHADE TREE COMMISSION
February 7, 2022

The Shade Tree Commission met on Monday, February 7, 2022 at Borough Hall. The meeting was called to order at 5:58 p.m. with Chairperson Patrick Kaag (member); Borough Manager Dean Murray (advisor); Public Works Crew Leader Kerry Grassley (advisor); and Commission Members Chad Moyer (member), and Yahaira Castillo (member) in attendance.

Visitor: None

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Presentation: Kevin Weber - Bartlett Tree Experts (National Company), on behalf of the West Reading-Wyomissing (District 7430), presented to the commission an opportunity for West Reading to receive some trees for planting in the park system. The planting would take place during the Rotary Day of Service on 4/30/22 under the all new "A Focus on the Environment". All trees and labor would be donated on this day. The trees offered would be 1"-2" caliper trees, bare root transplant (seedlings/whips). The species gathered for this project would be up to (25) Swamp White Oaks, (25) Red Buds, & (25) Paw Paws. Will determine potential locations for the trees on 2/16/22 at 1:30 pm in the park, where we will walk with Kevin Weber to determine the best locations for the different species as some as better suited for erosion prevention/wet environments/fruit bearing. Discussed that Buttonwood St was lined with Sycamore trees, and they were used to make buttons at the Knitting Mills.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of the December 6, 2021 meeting was made by Mr. Moyer and seconded by Ms. Castillo. **Motion carried 3-0.**

New Business:

Tree near 409 Oak Terrace removed. Rest of Oak Terrace had dead limbs removed in the past month. Ownership of the dying Walnut Tree located on the east side of Parkview Road needs to be reviewed to determine if the removal of this tree would be the responsibility of the City of Reading or the Borough of West Reading. Arbor Care has recommended removal of the tree located at 227 South Seventh Avenue.

Discussion for removal of Pine Trees behind Firehouse due to proximity to power lines and are becoming unhealthy otherwise.

Motion made by Mr. Moyer and seconded by Ms. Castillo to remove the six Pine Trees. **Motion carried 3-0.**

Old Business:

Discussion for removal of Ann Street Zelcovas on West side near 410 & 418. Assessed difficulty in preserving trees when the roots systems are interfering with the underground utilities. Cuts had to be made to access a resident's sewer line to perform maintenance, these hurt the life of the tree. Considering also how high the sidewalks are heaved, the roots would have to be shaved down quite

a bit to be able to repair/replace sidewalks. Ramping the sidewalks is not ideal for ADA compliance, the elderly, strollers, etc., especially since this road is already significantly pitched downhill. No decision is being made at this time on whether or not to remove the (2) trees. Handed out the "Sidewalk Repair Guidelines" that were created in 2017 from the Codes Department. This document was intended to serve as a commitment from the borough to preserving our Street tree and as a tool in which to evaluate the condition of the trees for consideration of removal, and also to consider options to repair/replace sidewalks based on the evaluation.

Update: 137 Olive Street Crab Apple Trees will be removed this week.

Discussion had about the Tree Inventory portion of the Borough website, where there is a link to the Open Tree Map of our area and also details about the volunteer effort to inventory our trees.

Owner of 409 South Fifth Avenue wanted to thank our Public Works and Borough Administration for the help with shaving roots on his tree before replacing his sidewalk, and for helping him through the process for permitting and approval.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Kaag
Commission Member