

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
SHADE TREE COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 5, 2024**

The Shade Tree Commission met on Monday, February 5, 2024 at Borough Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. with Chairperson Patrick Kaag; Commission Members Zachary Shaver and Carol Leiendecker; Borough Manager Dean Murray; and Public Works Director Kerry Grassley. Members Lynne Burns and Michael Hayes were unable to attend.

Visitors: None

Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of the October 2, 2023 meeting was made by Mrs. Leiendecker and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried.**

New Business

Ash Tree Preventative Maintenance – Held a discussion about one of the trees on the Borough side of the creek, next to the newly installed Palmer victim memorial, that seems to have died and is consistently losing branches. Originally believed it to be an Ash Tree but the Borough Manager thinks that it is most likely a Tree of Heaven that was damaged by a recent Lanternfly infestation. The Public Works Director stated that he will look more into the issue and see if it can be remedied before it drops larger branches. Discussion was had about the recent activity of the Lanternfly because the population seems to have decreased in recent years.

London Planetree at 3rd Avenue & Pine Street - Held a discussion about the health and life expectancy of the tree on the northwest corner of the intersection. Public Works director will have it evaluated by Bartlett. An idea was presented by a resident at the September 2023 Traffic & Infrastructure meeting about potentially closing off that short section of Pine St between 3rd Ave & Sunset Rd, to convert it into additional greenspace and be added to the existing greenspace that exists within the triangle. Gathering information to form a comprehensive report on behalf of the Shade Tree Commission regarding this proposed idea. The tree in question is affecting the curbing and street to the point where it may not be feasible to cut back the roots enough to repair the infrastructure without harming the health/integrity of the tree.

Tree Plantings – Held a discussion about when planting would likely begin this year and the Public Works Director stated that early Fall (October) would be when many of the new plantings will be performed for approx. 15-20 trees. Last year's plantings will be checked for viability to see if this approach is effective. The nursery used for last year's plantings seems to be a source of knowledge and higher quality specimens. Will be starting from the West side of the Borough and move Eastward for plantings, filling in areas along the way. In the next month or two, Public Works will be stump grinding some of the previous removals to prepare the site for future plantings.

Tree Trimming – 100-200 of Elm Street & Olive Street done already. 300-500 block of Chestnut Street will be done. 600-700 block of Reading Avenue is aimed to be done. A section of Walnut Street and South 7th Avenue needs to be evaluated once the leaves come in, to effectively trim.

Tree Removals – (2) on Sunset Road near the 400 block need to come down, (1) on Olive Street as well.

Tree Watchlist – (1) at 4th Avenue and Chestnut Street, (2) on 2nd Avenue and Spruce Street, various trees on Buttonwood Street to be coordinated during road repairs.

PSU Training – Classes have begun for the Tree Tender series offered at PSU Extension. Members Carol Leiendecker and Patrick Kaag are attending the class.

Park Tree Mulching – Held a discussion about organizing another volunteer event for mulching trees in the park. The Public Works Director stated that they will provide the tools and local wood chippings needed for this event.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 p.m. was made by Mr. Shaver and seconded by Mrs. Leiendecker. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Kaag, CBO
West Reading Borough Council