



## West Reading Shade Tree Commission

### Draft Meeting Minutes

July 1st, 2024

#### 1. Call to Order (6:09pm)

- Members present: L. Burns, M. Hayes, P. Kaag, K. Grassley (Boro Rep)

#### 2. Public Comment

- Jean Witmer 300 Block of Oak Terrace: concerns about the replacement of trees with Pin Oaks. Resident did not believe that this species of tree would serve as a good shade tree. After some discussion, found that these trees grow between 70-90' tall and provide a proper canopy upon maturity. M. Hayes & K. Grassley spoke with resident for a few minutes about fastigiate trees. Resident seemed to be satisfied with this discussion and expressed interest in joining the commission.

#### 3. Approval of Minutes (February 5th, 2024)

- Moved by L. Burns & 2<sup>nd</sup> by K. Grassley

#### 4. Old Business

- K. Grassley: Late September, Early October for planting. August, Public Works will pick out at a local nursery in Kutztown. Expressed that these are better quality trees but more costly. Higher chance of success with planting. 2"-3" caliper w/ 2' round ball.

- P. Kaag: Extended dry, hot weather and windy conditions have been leading to loss of branches on many trees. Asked Public Works to be on the lookout for large fallen branches. K. Grassley: Since last meeting, trimming took place on the following streets (Reading Ave – Olive St – S.7<sup>th</sup> Ave – Sycamore Ave – Chestnut St). Looking at trimming Wayne Ave next.
- P. Kaag: Received update from Public Works that the recently purchased stump grinder is helping greatly with the efforts to replace portions of the sidewalk throughout the Borough. K. Grassley: 5 or 6 sections of sidewalk have been replaced on Kent Way, Reading Ave, Summit St. Would like to create a 5 year plan on addressing trimming around the Borough, utilizing the help of an Arborist. This way a budget can be presented each year to obtain the most value when it comes to volume of trees being completed. Currently, (3) 70' trees can be removed in a day with a specialized crane for just under \$5,000.

## 5. New Business

- P. Kaag: Adding a potential action item to next month's agenda to include a recommendation to Council to increase the trimming/removal budget for Shade Tree by \$10,000 for safety concerns with aged, taller trees.
- P. Kaag: Updated the rest of the Commission following a 7 day online course for PSU Extension for Tree Tenders. This was a great source of knowledge for managing the street trees in our community. Carol Leiendecker also completed this course at the same time back in February/March.
- P. Kaag: Requested approval from Public Works Director to coordinate a volunteer effort to lay mulch around the park trees. Boy Scouts of America has been contacted after previously expressing that they wish to assist in community projects. They will be available late July for a potential mulching. Mulch will be placed strategically throughout the park system and tools/wheelbarrows will also be dropped off.
- P. Kaag: Carol Leiendecker has expressed that she wishes to resign from the Commission. Her consideration during meetings was important, and she engaged in good discussion. She was encouraged join again in the future.

Adjournment (7:05pm) by M. Hayes & L. Burns.