

Leonia Shade Tree Commission Meeting Minutes for March 8, 2023

Present: Imarnta Bergmanis, Kathy Verbeek, Vivian Demarco, Bill Ziegler (Council Liaison), Soo Joung Woo, Laura Lindsey Sewell, John Villareal (DPW),

Absent: Christine Healy-Sammis, Mark Spiegel, Julie Ulbrich

Statement of Compliance with Sunshine Law

Presentation by 8th Graders as part of a STEM project on Spotted Lantern Fly in

Leonia

Students will share the location of the tree of heaven at the Wood park and Fireman's park with STC then STC will pass on the information to DPW.

Public Portion: Open to comments questions from Leonia residents (none present)

Minutes of February 8, 2023 were approved

Council Liaison report : Bill Ziegler

The STC ordinance was enacted last night with two provisions the first amendment required contractors to confirm that home owners had taken out the appropriate permit.

The second amendment now allows the borough to publicize the names of any violators, a little bit of public shaming to accompany substantial fine.

I hope we don't have to do that but in bad behavior is repeated among the same homeowner group then we will certainly consider and it's an option we now have available.

According to the borough attorney, town can impose the fine on the residents only not on the contractors.

We can talk about that being not only a penalty but now names could be posted when we send out notification about the tree removal permit.

Chairperson report :

*Broad Ave project (Pavement & Sidewalk improvement) is continuing section 10 between Highwood & Oakdene then to section 11 which is business section. Christine, Chuck and John have been walking the properties to identify trees that can be come down due to their current condition. Borough engineer, Drew indicated that to the extent possible we're not going to be removing the sidewalk or the curve. There's going to be a joint meeting next Tuesday and I am waiting to hear back of Christine can because I can make it.

We might want to announce to the public so that there isn't complaints, concerns, questions about what's going on.

*Tree with a sculpture to honor Dr. Bertolini – The joint home and school association approached me about they've commissioned a sculpture to honor Dr. Bertolini his service to the school community. Allen Terrell will be the artist. He's come up with a proposal and they'd like to incorporate as part of the sculpture a tree and they've asked whether or not the STC would be willing to donate the cost of the tree. I talked to Alan he was thinking of a dogwood.

Discussion on enforcement of Tree Removal Permitting Process

*Tree Removal Permit – In order to find out the permit was issued or not, all residents can call the Building Dept during working business hours and police department when the building dept. is closed including Saturday. Posing this on the borough website too.

*Reminding the updated contents related to the tree removal ordinance, such as green permit, checking tree removal permit, publicizing the names of any violators on electronic bulletin board at the library via the Town Website, Tax bill and Nixel messages.

Commissioners' Reports: A tree at 203 Cumley Terrace was not properly pollarded.

2023 Capital Budget: The capital Budget proposal \$29,300 was submitted after adjusting \$14,700 STC trust fund \$30,000 allocated to the Spring planting (60 trees) it also includes special planting project at wood park as well as 8 trees as a business revitalization project.

Spring 2023 Planting: 5 planting areas for each commissioner will be helpful.

Giving out PPP letter is helpful. Master list of PPP is needed and volunteer is needed.

Borough property needed too. Deadline for providing at least 5 planting sites is the end of March.

Send a letter to all town architects about the tree policies including PPP & Informational flyer is available at the building dept so it could be handed out by building dept. with permits.

Notify the planning board too. Ex) protective fences are needed to protect town trees during the construction.

New/Old Business: Under the current STC ordinance, any hazardous dead trees can be removed by DPW or other commercial tree company 30 days after notifying the property owner to remove and there was not done. The cost for removal will be charged to the home owner who ignores the removal request. If the homeowner does not pay it then it will be lien against the property.

Transcribed by Soo Joung Woo