

WESTWOOD SHADE TREE COMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES
Tuesday, July 12, 2022 –6:45 pm

1. **Call to Order** – the meeting was called to order by the Chairman Dan Zambrano at 6:45pm
2. **Members Present:** Dan Zambrano, Casey Christopher, Beth Staples, and Councilmember Erin Collins – Absent: Jeff Ocher and Fred Rella
3. **Minutes** - The minutes of the June 14, 2022 meeting were approved as read.
4. **Items for Discussion**
 - a. Tree Removal Request, 131 Second Avenue – Tony and Luigi Migliore residents at 131 Second Avenue appeared before the WSTC for an advisory opinion on the removal of two large trees within the town easement. The residents testified that the tree roots are lifting the sidewalk which is used as a walk-through by commuters and children attending the WW Middle School. The residents are completing a new home construction at this address and must replace the sidewalks. There was discussion of allowing the removal of these trees and replacing them with six new trees (two at the subject location and four elsewhere in town). However, the final motion that was voted upon only called for allowing the removal of the two town trees at the resident’s expense and calling for only a one-to-one replacement on the subject property. Motion was made by Casey and seconded by Erin. Dan and Casey voted in favor and Beth voted against. After the motion passed, there was discussion of the parliamentary process involved with requiring the donation of additional trees (as it was not included in the motion). The residents were then advised that the WSTC is an advisory body only and the ultimate approval of their request resides with the Mayor and Council and the DPW. Due to concerns about the motion, it was asked of Councilwoman Collins that she obtain clarification from the Mayor and Council as to who (M/C, DPW, or Construction Code Official) has the final authority on such removal requests and what is WSTC role and authority in this process.
 - b. Ash Tree Removals – Approximately 12-15 ash trees along Wheeler, Clairmont, Ash, and Lafayette must be removed do to ash borer infestation.

- c. Jefferson Avenue tree removals – The property owner without the knowledge of the WSTC or the DPW removed three town trees from Jefferson Avenue. Upon investigation, Councilwoman Collins learned that the owner originally planted these trees approximately 40 years ago and had received approval from Armand, the Borough Construction Code official. The property owner plans to replace each tree after making repairs to sidewalks. Permission was given without any penalties, fines, or requirement to replace. Councilwoman Collins will request clarification on the Building Department’s authority to authorize such removal.
- d. Sidewalks vs. Tree Roots – Beth requested clarification from the Mayor and Council as to the Borough’s preferred policy on tree removal when a tree’s roots are lifting the sidewalk. She referenced other options contained in the Appendix to the WSTC Operations Plan. Councilwoman Collins will resubmit the Operations Plan for approval by the Mayor and Council.
- e. Gritman Park – Dan, Fred, and Erin met with Tony Pallogudis, Branch Manager of Columbia Bank, for a photo opportunity with the tree that the bank donated. It is a Dogwood and was staked with wrapping in the Gritman Park.
- f. NJUCF – The core training will be held on October 13th in Cherry Hill with registration in September. Casey and/or Beth will attend.
- g. FaceBook page – The WSTC FaceBook page opened on July 7th. The page is maintained by Dan with access by Fred and Beth. It is listed as “Westwood Shade Tree Advisory Committee.”
- h. Front Yard Plantings – The release to allow for front yard plantings is to be voted upon at the next Council meeting to be ready for the Fall plantings. Councilwoman Collins will also check on the status of the Ordinance regarding the tree removal permits.
- i. Tree Wrapping – There was discussion about the wrapping of the trees of our newly planted trees to prevent the deer from stripping the bark. The wrapping currently in use is secured with a provided tape which releases over time. Other options will be explored.

5. Adjournment – the meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm

Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 6:30pm

Action Items:

1. Clarification on Authority relative to tree removals – Erin
2. Operations Plan – Erin to resubmit
3. Salem Oak – Members will continue to grow saplings at their homes
4. Tree Removal funds – ordinance for annual tree removal permit (Erin)
5. Release for trees to be planted on homeowner side of the easement (Erin)
6. Stewardship Grant Core Training – Dan, Beth, and Erin
7. Spotted Lanternfly – ask Green Team and WW Garden Club to plant milkweed (Dan and Erin)