

WESTWOOD SHADE TREE COMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES
Tuesday, August 23, 2022 –6:00 pm

1. **Call to Order** – the meeting was called to order by the Chairman Dan Zambrano at 6:01pm
2. **Members Present:** Dan Zambrano, Fred Rella, Casey Christopher, Beth Staples, and Councilmember Erin Collins – Absent: Jeff Ocher
3. **Minutes** - The minutes of the July 12, 2022 meeting were approved as read.
4. **Items for Discussion**
 - a. Fall Tree Planting Requests – Twelve (12) new requests were received from July 13 through August 5 following three (3) postings on Facebook. Two (2) of the residents who received trees in this year’s Spring Planting have requested additional tree(s). Six (6) previous requestors who were denied curb strip trees might want yard side trees pending the approval of new Release form. The Release form has yet to be approved, but Councilwoman Collins in meeting with the DWP, the Borough Clerk, and the Borough Administrator on August 30th to finalize the form. If all are in agreement, the form could be voted upon by the Mayor and Council at their September 6th meeting. If all of these requests are approved, there will be a total of twenty tree requests with three (3) remaining. The Fall planting will be in late September/early October.
 - b. Shade Tree Facebook Page – Currently, the page has 124 followers. The first post, which featured a photo thanking Columbia Bank, reached 2300+ people. Two days later, a post of a heat wave weather screen shot reached 500+ people. The post about the success of our Spring Planting Program reached 4100+ people. “I Heart Westwood” shared the post and two commenters stated that they were still waiting for their trees:
 - i. Heidi Sandiford (66 Garden Place) requested a tree in Spring 2021 but, after DPW inspection, it was determined that there was not enough room in the curb strip for a town tree. Chairman Zambrano spoke to Ms. Sandiford who would like to sign a release for yard side tree planting once the form is approved.
 - ii. Liliana Amaral (27 Wheeler Avenue) commented that she had written a letter in January including a picture of where the town tree was to be planted. DPW said that a tree was planted per their request in 2021 on the 7th Avenue side of the house. Chairman Zambrano sent her a new tree request form.

- c. Pruning Request – The resident at 32 Clinton Avenue requested pruning of their town tree. They had requested that a small tree be planted but the tree has now grown into the power lines and is also close to their house. The pruning request was forwarded to the DPW.
- d. Tree Removal Requests – The two (2) town trees at 131 Second Avenue have been removed. There are a number of ash trees on Wheeler, Clairmont, Ash, and Lafayette, Beech, etc. that need to be removed. They were killed by the ash borer. Councilwoman Collins will make a request for additional fund to replace the trees on those streets. DWP inspected the tree at 125 Second Avenue as did members of the WWSTC. It was determined that the tree was healthy and, even if planted by a previous owner and not the Borough, it does not need to be removed. Amy Stewart the owner at 87 Lexington Avenue requested that the town maple in front of her house be removed as it was causing unevenness in the sidewalk and was growing near the power lines. Beth Staples inspected the property and provided the WWSTC with photos. It was decided that, since the tree is healthy and the sidewalk lifting is minimal, that the tree should not be removed but that the resident be provided with information on sidewalk repair options.
- e. Future Tree Removal Request Form – Beth will research and provide draft for review.
- f. Tree Company Annual Permits – Councilwoman Collins reported that the Mayor and Council were “not keen” on the idea.
- g. Authority over town trees – Councilwoman Collins reported that the Building Department Construction Code Official does have the authority to authorize the removal of town trees. Councilwoman Collins will request that a procedure will be put in place whereby the WWSTC and the DPW will be informed in advance of any such authorizations.
- h. Sponsor a Tree Program – There was discussion of starting a tree sponsorship program whereby parents, relatives, friends, etc. could sponsor a town tree upon the birth of a child.

5. Adjournment – the meeting was adjourned at 6:44pm

Next meeting will be Wednesday, September 7 at 6:00pm

Action Items:

1. Operations Plan – Erin to resubmit
2. Salem Oak – Members will continue to grow saplings at their homes
3. Additional funds to replace Ash trees - Erin
4. Release for trees to planted on homeowner side of the easement - Erin
5. Stewardship Grant Core Training – Dan, Beth, and Erin
6. Procedure for notification of Building Department tree removal authorizations - Erin