

WESTWOOD SHADE TREE COMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by the chairman at 7:01pm.
2. **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dan Zambrano, Christine Blaney, Michael Murtaugh, Fred Rella, Beth Staples, and Councilwoman Erin Collins. Absent: Terence Beutel
3. **APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES:** The minutes of August 1, 2023 were approved.
4. **ABBOTT 169 CARVER AVE.:** Warren Saunders (93 Westwood Boulevard), Gordon Hampton (owner of 136 Carver Avenue), Fred Collado (87 Westwood Boulevard), Dave Palatta (30 6th Avenue), and Rudy Jaeger (48 James Street) appeared before the committee to express their concerns about the proposed development at 169 Carver Avenue. The committee reviewed our draft report to the Borough Zoning and Planning boards which was amended to include sections of the Borough Code that reference the potential fines for unlawfully cutting, destroying, or removing trees.
5. **6th AVENUE POWER COMPANY TREE DAMAGE:** Resident Dave Pallatta (30 6th Avenue) provided the committee with pictures of the tree pruning done by PSE&G to the trees along 6th Avenue. Photos showed that the trees were drastically cut in an unbalanced “V.” Mr. Pallatta offered to pay personally for the trees to be correctly pruned to give the trees the best chance for future survival. Councilwoman Collins will explore a protocol for such donation offers. Mr. Pallatta was advised to complete the online “Report a Tree Concern” form so that the matter could be referred to the proper Borough department for action. Fred Rella suggested that the Borough contact PSE&G’s municipal liaison as other towns have been successful in having more judicious prunings of the trees around the power lines. Ridgewood was used as an example. Mr. Pallatta also showed a photo of a town tree that had been girdled by a saw. It was suggested that the address of this tree be compared to the list of denied tree removal requests to see if it was vandalized as an effort to hasten the trees death and thereby its removal.
6. **SPOTTED LANTERN FLY GRANT:** A total of \$9,800 remains from our grant monies. The Borough arborist recommended not spray for SLF but deploying traps instead. A total of 18 traps have been requested. The grant provisions require that the name and address of each trap location be noted. It was decided to offer additional traps to our residents.
7. **RESOLVED BOROUGH TREE CONCERNS:** Chairman Zambrano reported that the following tree issues were resolved:
 - a. **104 ASH STREET** – The Borough Arborist evaluated the tree on 7/20/23 and found the tree to be in good condition. Minor deadwood is to be pruned.
 - b. **TREE OBSTRUCTING LIGHT AT BRYANT PLACE & BERKLEY AVE:** The tree was pruned on 8/18/23.
 - c. **17 ADDICKS ROAD:** The arborist evaluated the tree on 8/18/23. Per her recommendations, one Norway was removed and one was pruned.
 - d. **TREE AT FINNEGANS:** It was noted that the tree had already been removed. At our August 1, 2023, the committee had reviewed a photo of the tree in question and

discussed alternative options such as creating a curved bench around the tree facing the building and covering the tree roots. The committee then decided to refer the matter to the Borough Arborist for a review of the tree's condition and pedestrian safety. Councilwoman Collins reported that the removal of the tree was not authorized and that the Council will discuss the jurisdiction of Borough trees including those within the CBD/SPE and the possibility of requiring a replacement tree in or near the same location.

8. NEW BOROUGH TREE CONCERNS PENDING DPW/ARBORIST EVALUATION:

The following tree issues were reported:

- a. **32 CLINTON AVE:** The DPW pruned the Borough tree in the curb strip. No justification was found for removal. The homeowner claimed that the tree's roots were clogging their sewer line. Shade tree requested images/video of the sewer line. Homeowner has yet to provide them.
 - b. **11 NEWARK AVE:** The homeowner claimed that the tree bark from the sycamore tree was clogging the storm drains. DPW was notified.
 - c. **671 BROADWAY - OBERG & LINDQUIST:** Property owner requested that two trees be removed as they were blocking the company sign from street view and the roots were damaging the sidewalk/curb. It was decided to request that DPW gently prune the trees so that the signs are more visible. After reviewing photos of the sidewalk/curb damage, shade tree was unsure if the damage was from tree roots or from stormwater. Councilwoman Collins will ask the Borough's legal counsel to review and report as to responsibility.
 - d. **BERGEN STREET:** The trunks of a number of trees were damaged due to work installing new curbs. It has been reported to the DPW and the Construction Code official
 - e. **175 ROOSEVELT AVENUE:** Heavy and out of recommended season tree pruning of a Borough tree was reported. The Construction Code official instructed the homeowner that the tree would have to be removed and the homeowner would have to pay for a replacement tree. Shade tree recommended that the tree not be removed, but that it be given a year to recover. There was more discussion of jurisdiction to be addressed in 7(d) above.
 - f. **80 DOGWOOD COURT:** Chairman Zambrano showed photos of mushrooms growing at the root crown of the tree and referred the tree to DPW for removal
- 9. NJ UCF CONFERENCE – CORE TRAINING 10/26/2023:** Chairman Zambrano will attend. A DPW worker should also attend as required for NJUCF certification.
- 10. FALL TREE PLANTINGS:** Sixteen (16) trees have been requested for the fall planting. The requesting homeowners will be queried as to whether they would like the tree within the curb strip or on the homeowner side of the sidewalk. Chairman Zambrano will, again, review the trees to be selected for the fall planting.
- 11. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

Next Meeting: October 10, 2023