

Borough of Hightstown Environmental Commission

Environmental Commission Meeting

Meeting Date/Time August 23, 2011 / 7:30 PM

Meeting Location: Council Meeting Room

Attendees: Barbara Jones, Chair

Gary Grubb

David Zaiser

Donna LePrevost

Keith LePrevost

Guests included:

Joan McGee (Stony Brook Watershed), Kevin L. Scibilia (Arboricultural Consultant) and Christine Obrien (with Alexis and Emily from the Girl Scouts)

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by the Chair, Barbara Jones

The Chair announced the meeting conformed to the Open Meetings Act stating its date, time and location advertised in the Borough's newspapers of record.

Discussion Summary

Kevin L. Scibilia gave a presentation to the board regarding our Shade Tree inventory. He has noticed we have a very low percentage of trees per mile with a high vacancy rate which makes the grant process much easier for our town. He suggested trees be located approximately 40 feet from a corner or intersection and 35 to 50 foot spacing along the street. He will work with us to recommend trees with adequate diversity to prevent major losses due to disease.

Kevin and David discussed our policies regarding sidewalk conflicts and tree removal. Kevin suggested not grinding the roots, but using brick pavers to bridge the root zones. We should be advising the homeowners to do this. He suggested an ordinance could be drafted to address this issue with specific penalties. Kevin will work with David on our plan.

Girl Scouts, Alexis and Emily are working on their Silver Medal project and would like to plant a tree in Hightstown. They have raised \$220 dollars to plant a tree and purchase and install an anti idling sign. They will take a walk about and look for a good location. Barbara suggested they consider the borough parking lot near the cabinet shop due to the number of taxi's that sit there.

Joan McGee discussed the 2005 federal mandate to all municipalities to enact a statewide storm water management plan. The ordinance never covered small parcels under 1 acre like is typical in Hightstown. Joan suggested the ordinance could be revised to reduce the lot and disturbance area from one acre to 2500 square feet in Hightstown. Joan will forward key issues to Barbara for consideration by the board in September. The board discussed the silting of Timber Run and the effect the Turnpike construction is having on the waterway and Peddie Lake. Barbara has written a letter without response. Joan asked for a copy and she will address and forward also.

1.0 Agenda Approval. The agenda was moved by Keith LePrevost and seconded by Donna LePrevost and unanimously approved.

2.0 Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the July meeting were reviewed and approved

3.0 Planning Board Applications.

3.1 Issues were discussed regarding the application on Sunset and recommendation will be sent to the planning board.

4.0 Shade Tree Matters.

4.1 Federal inspectors came to Hightstown and reviewed the tree and the street improvement project on Stockton Street. The balance of the grant has been received and approved.

4.2 Tree issues:

4.2.1 310 Lincoln to be removed(dead)

4.2.2 325 Lincoln to be pruned

4.2.3 Dawes Park. We had a lightning strike. Tree to be removed.

4.2.4 Nelson Tree Service came back and has pruned the large elm tree in Memorial Park.

4.2.5 David has received a request to have the trees pruned along Railroad Avenue on the Housing Authority Property. This was passed along to Keith at the Housing Authority.

5.0 Parks and Recreation.

5.1 Gary has gone around and pruned the trees in the park in preparation for the October festivities.

5.2 October 16th. Completion of the Green Way at Bank Street. Kenny will assist in moving the walkway pieces to the area for us to install.

6.0 Snow Removal and Dumping.

6.1 Keith and Donna to photo and create document for town to consider.

7.0 ANJEC Grant.

7.1 ANJEC and DVRPC kick off meeting on September 27th. Barbara will develop a press release for the event. We will be doing our environmental walk through on Sunday, October 9th at 1PM

8.0 Meeting Conclusion.

8.1 The meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm.