

AGENDA FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HIGHTSTOWN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Tuesday October 26, 2021 at 7 PM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://peddie.zoom.us/j/99569940569?pwd=R1hMdldQaGcxWWVKbmdMdTlZengrQT09>

Meeting ID: 995 6994 0569

Passcode: 899055

One tap mobile:

+19294362866,,99569940569# US (New York)

Dial by your location:

+1 929 436 2866

Meeting ID: 995 6994 0569

Join by Skype for Business:

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1. Approval of Agenda
2. Open Public Meeting Act Statement: In Compliance with Chapter 213 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of the Annual Notice published in the Trenton Times and Princeton Packet by the Borough Clerk and posted on the Borough Website.
3. Attendance
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from regular meeting on Sept 28, 2021
5. Shade Tree Matters:
 - a. Shade Tree Official's Report – attached
6. Parks and Recreation:
7. Planning Board Update:
8. Grants and Funding Update:

- a. Proposal and Invoice for Kevin Scibilia's workshop on October 9 were forwarded to the Borough office for payment. Total was \$475.00. This cost was included in the approved 2021 EC budget.
9. New Business:
- a. Flooding along Mercer St./Main St.
 - b. Complete Streets Committee – Mobility Plan Implementation (recurring item on agenda)
 - c. Sustainable Jersey
10. Plan Review:
- a. No new plans to review.
11. Liaison updates:
- a. The Watershed Institute –
 - b. Meadow Lakes –
 - c. Peddie School -
 - d. Hightstown High School –
12. Correspondence:
- a. Email from Angela Castaneda, 2nd grade teacher at the Ethel McKnight School offering volunteer assistance from students for future events.
 - b. Marisa Immordino - the current AmeriCorps New Jersey Watershed Ambassador for WMA 10, also known as the Millstone Watershed. Administered by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Watershed Ambassadors are assigned to each of New Jersey's twenty watersheds for the purpose of raising awareness about water, water quality, and watershed stewardship. Provide community members with free educational presentations as well as opportunities for direct community involvement in the form of events like clean-ups, tree plantings, invasive removals, etc.
 - c. George Chin emailed C regarding two people dumping oil in a storm drain. Provided George with the NJDEP hotline (1-877-WARNDEP) to report environmental abuse, releases, etc. George stated the Hightstown Police have issued summons to the two individuals.
13. Conferences and Workshops:
- a. 5th Annual Watershed Conference, which will take place in a hybrid format on Nov. 3, 4, & 5.
14. Calendar: No current scheduled events.
15. Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting Date is November 23, 2021.

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HIGHTSTOWN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Date and Time: September 28, 2021 at 7pm

Meeting Location: Held virtually through Zoom

Attendees: Todd Frantz (Chair)
David Zaiser (Shade Tree Official)
Julie Bond (Secretary)
Gary Grubb
Sheila Hittesdorf
Joseph Studholme
Cristina Fowler (Council Liaison)
John Laudenburger (Planning Board Liaison)
Shani Peretz (Peddie School Liaison)
Sophie Glover (Watershed Institute)
Frankie Sielski (East Windsor resident)

Absent: Tom Musa (Vice Chair)
Haritha Chityala

Open Public Meeting Act Statement: In Compliance with Chapter 213 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of the Annual Notice published in the Trenton Times and Princeton Packet by the Borough Clerk and posted on the Borough Website.

Approval of Agenda: Julie Bond motioned to approve the agenda which was seconded by David Zaiser.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Regular meeting minutes from August 24, 2021 were approved. Motioned by David Zaiser and seconded by Sheila Hittesdorf.

Shade Tree Matters: Shade Tree Official's Report added as an attachment to the regular meeting minutes.

Parks and Recreation:

1. Dawes Park project continues toward completion.
2. Beekeeper for Community Garden in Rocky Brook Park has requested a permanent structure for bee boxes.

Planning Board:

1. Councilmember Montferrat asked if a member of the EC would like to join the PB and have a dual role on each entity. Discussion ensued without a decision.

Grants and Funding: EC budget was approved for \$5,770 of \$13,970 requested.

New Business:

1. Complete Streets Committee - Mobility Plan Implementation - Recently completed a study examining the cross section of Franklin St. and North Main St. to simultaneously help traffic flow and create safer pedestrian crossing. The committee recommended a dedicated right turn lane on Franklin St. and adding a “cross scramble” to increase safe pedestrian crossing at the intersection. Continuing to study vehicle traffic on N. Main St.

Plan Review: No new plans to review.

Liaison updates:

1. The Watershed Institute – EC will develop a sub-committee to discuss the opportunity to partner with TWI building on efforts to connect with the Latino community in Hightstown to advance 2022 goals, offer environmental education and build environmental engagement.
2. Meadow Lakes – No updates
3. Peddie School - Students contributing plantings to Meadow Lakes and offering composting education.
4. Hightstown High School – No updates

Correspondence:

1. Borough resident contacted the Commission to review potentially diseased trees on their property. It was recommended to contact a professional tree service/arborist for inspection.
2. Zoning Official George Chin requested insight into a residential dispute regarding tree removal. Prompted discussion of considerations for a new tree ordinance through permit and notification for adjacent property owners.

Calendar:

1. Tree Seminar led by Arborist Kevin Scibilia 10/9 in Association Park.

2. 5th annual Watershed Conference Nov 3-5.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday October 26, 2021 at 7pm.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned.

Borough of Hightstown

Environmental Commission

Shade Tree Official's Report

To: Environmental Commission
From: David Zaiser, Shade Tree Official
Date: 26 October 2021 Meeting
Re: Shade Tree Official's (STO) Report – New items in **boldface**

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1.0 Tree Work

- 1.1 Tree removal at Mercer and Rogers was not authorized and is under investigation. **Still attempting to determine how these removals were authorized.**
- 1.2 Reviewed Sweetgum street tree at 109 Taylor with Borough Engineer, Cameron Corini and residents in reference to adjacent street improvements. Plan to avoid impacting tree and its roots. **Curb has been installed with only minor impact to roots.**
- 1.3 Investigating the unauthorized removal of a street tree at 129 Monmouth. **Google Earth images indicate tree was in poor condition prior to removal.**
- 1.4 **Recommended removal of street tree at 133 South Street near corner at Taylor Ave.**

2.0 NJ DEP (Forestry) Grant Project

- 2.1 Scope of Work: Plant 43 street trees along North and South Main Streets. Targeting Mid-May 2021 for planting.
- 2.2 North and South Main Streets re-surveyed for existing tree conditions in July 2020.
- 2.3 Grant Executed by Borough/ State on 11/2/2020.
- 2.4 Letter of Support received from Mercer County DOT dated 10/15/2020.
- 2.5 Approval of Tree Species Schedule by Mercer County DOT on 12/3/2020.
- 2.6 Planting Plan submitted to NJ DEP for review on 12/4/2020. State responded on 12/14 that their review is ongoing.
- 2.7 State has returned comments and STO has responded with additional questions (1/26/21).
- 2.8 State has addressed STO questions (2/10/2021). Final submission w/ minor edits due to State. Final Submission approved by the State. (2/27/21)
- 2.9 Bid Documents reviewed by Borough Clerk (3/15/21). Project is out to Bid. Targeting planting between April 15th and May 31st.
- 2.10 Two proposals received. Low price proposal from Brightview. Proposal reviewed with Brightview to confirm scope. Plant letters hand delivered to residents at potential tree locations. P.O. being processed by Borough. P.O. issued.
- 2.11 Utilities marked and tree locations determined.
- 2.12 Tree Planting Begins Monday 5/25. Yan Troizier and Adam Zaiser observing for EC. Tree work completed Thursday 6/17 with some replacements for early

losses. Gator bags installed and DPW is filling frequently. Trees are guaranteed for 2 years.

- 2.13 Submission to State for Grant Reimbursement Underway.
- 2.14 State has approved the virtual inspection and 90% Grant Reimbursement paperwork is underway.
- 2.15 STO has submitted paperwork with volunteer hours to Borough of inclusion in the 90% Grant Reimbursement submission. Awaiting Borough reporting.
- 2.16 **STO has asked DPW to remove and store gator bags.**

3.0 Lincoln/ Hagemount/ Rocky Brook Streetscape Project

- 3.1 Investigating participation in the 11-month walk through with respect to new street trees.

4.0 Improvements to Railroad Ave, Dey St, Center St, and S Academy St Project

- 4.1 **STO has been asked to identify locations for new street trees to be included in the project.**

5.0 Other

- 5.1 **Tree Seminar (Girdling Roots) was held on Saturday, October 16th. Only 2 CE credit hours were achieved. Will need to identify additional CE opportunities that generate 6 additional credit hours.**

End of Report