



**Whitpain Township
Shade Tree Commission
Montgomery County
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**

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**SHADE TREE COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 3rd at 5:30 PM

Location: Virtual Meeting - *Zoom*

Members Present: Edgar David, John Casani, Andrew P. Meehan, Vince Marrocco, Celia Cameron

Township Liaison: Mike Richino

Minutes: Courtney Clemmer

Also Present: Joyce Keller, Board of Supervisors; Madge Monser, Growing Amber Greener; Charles Christine, Parks & Open Space Board

West Ambler

Madge Monser, the project manager for “Growing Ambler Greener” presented the opportunity to partner with the Shade Tree Commission with a goal to plant trees in West Ambler parks. Edgar David recommended the use of the Free Tree Giveaway and the Free Street Tree Planting Program. Edgar recommended that Madge reach out to John Casani regarding the Free Street Tree program. Courtney Clemmer will forward her information to John. The Shade Tree Commission agreed that it would be a beneficial partnership.

Welcome to Celia Cameron – New STC Member

Edgar welcomed new member Celia Cameron to the Shade Tree Commission. Celia introduced herself to the Commission.

Review Minutes – January 6th

A motion was made by Edgar David and seconded by Vince Marrocco to approve the minutes from the January 6, 2021 meeting, subject to the edit discussed. Celia Cameron abstained from the vote because she was not in attendance. The motion passed 4-0.

Discussion: Mission & Direction of the STC

John asked for a discussion on the mission of the STC, specifically narrowing down the main goals and concerns. He shared his concern for taking on too much and spreading the STC too thin, causing a decline in productivity. Andy agreed with John’s concern and also noted the progress made throughout his tenure on the Commission. Celia recommended a reevaluation of the mission statement to include a shorter description listing prioritized action items.

Edgar recommended, when time and money permit, a qualitative study on the woodlands and a study on the carbon release in the Township. Edgar suggested working with the Board of Supervisors on the carbon study. Joyce noted that she is looking to convene an environmental board with volunteers to help educate the public, which in turn would increase the respect for the trees in Whitpain. Along with the environmental board, Joyce recommended sharing educational tools on the Township website. Celia mentioned the benefit of using a “what’s in it for me” outlook and recommended presenting the benefits of the woodlands and trees to the public.

2021 Free Tree Giveaway – Sunday, April 25th

Edgar confirmed the date of the Tree Giveaway is April 25th. Andy confirmed that he has coordinated with the Rhodes Garden the purchase of 100 bare root trees and will also be responsible for 225 bags of mulch. He will confirm pricing with the Rhodes Garden and report back.

Free Street Tree Planting Program

John said that the goal for the Free Street Tree program in 2021 is to use the allotted \$10,000 budget in its entirety by planting the maximum number of trees possible. He said he will confirm pricing per tree with the contractor.

Turnpike Corridor Restoration

Celia offered to look into grant opportunities for future site reforestation. Mike will forward her past grant submissions for reference.

Canopy Study

Edgar shared the canopy “tracker” he created comparing the studies done by Davey Tree Experts and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Both share similar data and show approximately 35 acres of canopy loss per year.

Township Parks

Mike said that there will be at least three concept plans proposed for the Mermaid Lake site and shared the potential for reforestation in the existing parking lot along Jolly Road.

Current Development Projects

Edgar said that there was an informal presentation to the Board of Supervisors regarding proposed development at 795 Jolly Road. He explained that the proposal showed over 100 townhomes and it would require the clearing of 11 acres of woodland. Vince explained that unless they requested a change in zoning, 50% of the site would be required to remain untouched. Joyce recommended that the STC make a motion to oppose the application pending its submission. A motion was made by Edgar David and seconded by Vince Marrocco to oppose the presented application, pending submission. The motion passed 5-0.

Heritage Tree Registry

Edgar questioned, as part of the Earth Day activities, could students take photos of Whitpain’s Heritage Trees and submit them for use on the website. Mike said that all student submissions have already been coordinated with the schools but the STC could ask community members to help take photos through advertisements in the Whitpain Wire.

Andy said that due to winter weather, he was unable to access the Tulip Poplar in Armentrout Preserve to cut back vines. He said he will try once the weather improves and the snow melts.

Deer Management for Canopy Health

Edgar mentioned he will reach out to the Police Department for statistics regarding deer related traffic accidents. He also noted that a discussion on the STC’s stance on deer management will be scheduled for a future meeting.

Whitpain Wire Topics

Mike said that the Free Tree Giveaway was promoted in the most recent Wire and will be advertised two or three more times prior to the event. John recommended keeping a mention of the Spotted Lanternfly in each Wire, too.

Open Floor

Andy questioned if the contractor responsible for the Turnpike corridor planting will replace the dead and dying trees. Edgar said he will follow up with the contractor and verify with the warranty and maintenance agreement.

Joyce reported that there have been no new updates regarding the ordinance work to allow meadows in residential yards. She will report back with new updates.

John asked if there is a master plan for Centre Square Park for the STC to review. Mike said there is not a planting plan currently but the budget to develop one is in the 2021 STC budget.

John asked if there is a planting plan for Erbs Mill Park. Mike said no.

2021 Meeting Schedule – All meetings to be held at 5:30 PM

April 7th

May 5th

June 2nd

July – No Meeting

August – No Meeting

September 8th

October 6th

November – No Meeting

December 1st