

**RAMSEY SHADE TREE COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING, THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2020**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the July meeting for the public was held via teleconference. Masks were worn and social distancing was practiced by the Shade Tree Commission in borough hall. The regular meeting of the Ramsey Shade Tree Commission was called to order by Mr. Melso at 8:00 p.m., Thursday, July 18, 2020. Also present were Mr. Beltramini, Mr. Englishman, Ms. Geist, Mr. Martone, Mr. McMahon, Mr. Schumacher, Commission members, Mr. Geist, Board Attorney, Mr. Trouf, Coordinator, and Mrs. Dey, Secretary. Mr. Gubala, Mr. Rutkowski, and Mr. Kilman, Council Liaison, were absent.

Mr. Melso announced that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Sunshine Laws of the State of New Jersey. Public notice of this meeting was published in the legal ads section of the BERGEN RECORD and the RIDGEWOOD NEWS on Friday, January 3, 2020. The public notice specifying the details for the meeting appeared in the newspaper on Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Melso led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Mr. Beltramini, seconded by Mr. Schumacher, the minutes of the June 18, 2020 meeting were unanimously accepted as received.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Melso thanked Mr. Gubala and Mr. McMahon for filling the gator bags on the new trees, utilizing Mr. Beltramini's equipment who was also thanked.

Mr. McMahon initiated a series of comments, beginning with the lack of thought which went into the new landscaping at the municipal pool. He questioned why the Shade Tree Commission had not been brought in as a resource. Everything done was fundamentally wrong including the plant material which is deer food, the lack of irrigation, the use of wood chips not mulch, no staking of the trees, no deer barrier, and substandard caliper trees. He re-emphasized the competence of the Shade Tree Commissioners. Mr. Englishman agreed with Mr. McMahon, noting that the Shade Tree Commission has no support from the borough. It's as if the Shade Tree Commission does not exist. Mr. Beltramini further commented upon the issuance of a certificate of occupancy without signoff by the Shade Tree Commission. Mr. Martone cited Treehouse Pediatric as the latest example. Burger King is another example. If Mr. Beltramini and Mr. McMahon had not stayed on top of that project, it would not be the excellent example of landscaping that it is. Mr. Melso indicated that Mayor Dillon, Borough Administrator Vozech, and Borough Engineer D'Agostaro should be part of the Shade Tree team but are

not. There is no support from the council; Councilman Kilman's subpar attendance was noted. No one seems to care about the work of the Shade Tree Commission.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Amended Site Plan-Big Tows, 35 Grant Street, Block 3607, Lot 8.01  
They will present a landscaping plan at the next meeting.

### TREE REMOVAL APPLICATIONS

#### 44 Lillian Court, Block 4205, Lot 9

Mr. Gubala and Mr. McMahon both visited the property. Mr. McMahon was okay with the removal of ten white pines.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Mr. Beltramini	X			
Mr. Gubala				X
Mr. Martone, Vice-Chairman	X			
Mr. McMahon	X			
Mr. Rutkowski				X
Mr. Schumacher	X			
Mr. Melso, Chairman	X			
Ms. Geist, Alt. 1	X			
Mr. Englishman, Alt. 2	X			

#### 142 Summit Avenue, Block 2904, Lot 6

Mr. Englishman visited the property and agreed that the twenty-four hemlocks should be removed. Green Giant arborvitae will most likely be planted on the property to establish a screen.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Mr. Beltramini	X			
Mr. Gubala				X
Mr. Martone, Vice-Chairman	X			
Mr. McMahon	X			
Mr. Rutkowski				X
Mr. Schumacher	X			
Mr. Melso, Chairman	X			
Ms. Geist, Alt. 1	X			
Mr. Englishman, Alt. 2	X			

**Peach Hill Condos, Block 4001, Lot 16.01**

The application for the removal of twenty-one trees was withdrawn.

**26 Mayfair Drive, Block 3501, Lot 29**

Mr. McMahon visited the property and found that the tree of heaven, cherry, maple, and oak trees slated for removal need to come down. The property owner is utilizing Perfect Cut who confirmed they will adhere to the regulations to remove the sixteen trees.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Mr. Beltramini	X			
Mr. Gubala				X
Mr. Martone, Vice-Chairman	X			
Mr. McMahon	X			
Mr. Rutkowski				X
Mr. Schumacher	X			
Mr. Melso, Chairman	X			
Ms. Geist, Alt. 1	X			
Mr. Englishman, Alt. 2	X			

**SITE PLAN REVIEW****Lithia Group, 1096 Route 17 North, Block 4301.01, Lot 15**

Jim Jaworski, attorney for the project, spoke first, providing an overview of the project before turning the presentation over to Mike Dipple, engineer for the project. Toyota and Lexus had been sold to the Lithia Group. Only signage was changed on the Lexus site. Some landscaping is proposed by the new sign. Toyota is making substantial site changes, re-working the front of the property, allowing service drive-up. The area in the front with steps will be eliminated and the landscaping scheme will be continued there. There are a couple of island areas which need re-grading and landscaping. He presented a landscape plan with grass and mulch and some low-level shrubs throughout the property. They are moving the impervious coverage. Lot 14.03 was supposed to have been conveyed to the borough many years ago and therefore is not part of the application. Mr. Martone asked about an existing plant list and a detailed proposed plant list including species, quantity, and size, and irrigation on site. Mr. Beltramini also indicated that more detail in the various areas is necessary; just grass and/or mulch is not acceptable. Mr. Melso asked about the removal of the dead material which he was told has been done. There is a dead tree in the front of the building which is part of the original plan and is the responsibility of the owner. Mr. Melso further noted that the Shade Tree Commission does not plant in the state right-of-way on Route 17. Re-submission of a revised plan with the required plant list was requested prior to approval. Mr. Trouf was asked to pull the plan for Lexus.

**Ramsey Energy, LLC, 1065 Route 17 South, Block 4603, Lot 40**

The plan had been approved by the Planning Board, subject to Shade Tree Commission approval. Josh Klein of Stonefield Engineering, a licensed civil engineer, was in attendance to present the landscaping plan. There will be evergreen screening with groundcover, perennials, and a row of shrubs. They have addressed the runoff on the northwest corner of the property, putting in an asphalt berm to help divert runoff; they are working with Dave Hals. The drawing indicates that there are seven trees to be planted in the back. New cedar trees are proposed for the area; Mr. Martone thought that nine trees would better fit the area. Mr. Beltramini requested an Ilex Winter gem substitution due to the deer in the area. Landscaping is needed for a small island on the property. Mr. Klein suggested a mix of perennials which should be salt-tolerant. The status of the required irrigation system needs to be added to the drawing. All of the lawn areas need to be remediated. Mr. McMahon asked about increasing the size of the plantings which would lower the number of plants needed. Upon motion by Mr. Beltramini, seconded by Mr. Martone, approval of the project was unanimously postponed until a revised plan is submitted.

**Konica Minolta, 101 Williams Drive, Block 3902, Lot 2**

The project is finished and is in great shape. Mr. McMahon noted that Konica Minolta should be considered for the Shade Tree Commission’s landscape award. The Konica Minolta project is approved and has been completed according to plan.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Mr. Beltramini	X			
Mr. Gubala				X
Mr. Martone, Vice-Chairman	X			
Mr. McMahon	X			
Mr. Rutkowski				X
Mr. Schumacher	X			
Mr. Melso, Chairman	X			
Ms. Geist, Alt. 1	X			
Mr. Englishman, Alt. 2	X			

**TREE REMOVAL PERMIT VIOLATIONS**

**Corner of Biscayne Drive and East Crescent Avenue**

The house has been sold. Currently, there is a baled tree in the driveway.

**38 West Cedar Place, Block 3101, Lot 49**

Mr. McMahon and Mr. Trouf had visited the site prior to the June meeting. Perfect Cut had removed a lot of trees, at least nine, without a permit. A letter was sent, indicating that the work needed to stop due to the violation. There is now a court date in September. They did get a cease and desist letter, but, according to Mr. Beltramini, they are still working. Therefore, the court administrator should be apprised of that ongoing work.

**LANDSCAPING PLAN REVIEW****Ramsey Invest LLC, 70 Hilltop Road, Block 3702, Lot 4**

Mr. Beltramini will wait until late August/September to re-visit the site. The dead trees on the perimeter of the parking lot need to be looked at. There are a number of issues which need to be addressed.

**Tree House Pediatrics**

Mr. Martone and Mr. McMahon did a final inspection of the project. An amended site plan is needed since some changes in quantity, size, and species were made. Mr. Trouf will contact Mr. Lynch.

**PLANNING BOARD APPLICATION STATUS-None**

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPLICATION STATUS-None**

**RESIDENTIAL SITE INSPECTIONS**

All trees must be marked and there must be a decision about what to do with the stumps. The Commissioners were reminded to keep up with their residential inspections since everything is currently up to date.

Work Order 4 has been completed.

**291 Nottingham Road**-Six trees will be removed.

**55 Ronald Court**-Two trees will be removed.

**41 Highwood Road**-Two trees are marked for dead wood and elevation.

**2 Morton Drive**-Branches at the wires will be pruned.

**5 Morton Drive**-A heavy limb will be removed.

**116 Prospect Street**-A branch will be trimmed at the wires.

**18 Norman Drive**-The stump will be ground.

**11 Indian Valley Road**-Two trees will be removed.

**82 Cherry Lane**-Branches will be trimmed back to make the Stop sign visible.

**108 Myrtle Avenue**-One tree will be removed.

**2 Indian Valley Road (across the street)**-Three branches, one broken, two leaning, will be removed.

**186 Grove Street (walking path behind house)**-Three trees will be removed.

**288 Canterbury Drive**-The tree in the wires will be taken down.

**55 Ronald Court**-Two trees will be removed.

**59 Ronald Court**-One tree will be removed.

**87 Beech Street**-Two trees will be removed.

**455 Elizabeth Avenue**-A branch will be removed from the phone wires.

**32 Franklin Street**-A dead tree will be removed.

**11 Goose Cove Lane (borough lot on right)**-Four marked trees will be dropped.

**18 Linden Street**-Dead wood will be trimmed, and two oak trees will be elevated.

**18 Linden Street (behind house on bike path)**-Three marked tree of heaven will be removed.

**11 Linden Street**-Dead wood will be removed from one oak tree.

**17 Linden Street**-Two oak trees along the road will be checked for dead limbs,

**119 Buckingham Drive**-The twin trunk will be removed, watching for the cable.

**44 Eton Court**-Dead branches will be removed.

**100 Buckingham Drive**-Dead branches will be removed.

**116 Chestnut Street (behind on bike path)**-The branches hanging over the fence will be trimmed.

**8 Quail Run**-One tree will be removed.

**12 Quail Run**-One tree will be removed.

Work Order 5

**5 Quail Run**-One tree will be removed.

**6 Holly Court (left side in Green Acres)**-Two trees will be dropped.

**15 Center Street**-One tree will be removed.

**260 Grove Street (Bike path)**-Three trees leaning towards the house will be trimmed.

**52 Elbert Court (behind on soccer field)**-Three trees will be removed; the stumps will be left.

**Circle End Drive (cul-de-sac)**-One tree will be removed; the stump will be left.

**103 Park Street**-One tree will be removed.

**50 Ackerman Avenue**-One tree will be removed.

**367 Woodland Avenue (tree is on Shadyside Road)**-One tree will be removed.

**227 Shadyside Road**-One tree will be removed.

**33 North Central Avenue (Rear lot)**-One tree will be elevated.

**26 Rose Avenue**-One tree will be removed and two trees will be pruned.

**250 Shadyside Road**-One tree will be removed.

**2 Pine Tree Road (Shadyside Road)**-Two trees will be removed.

**50 New England Drive**-One tree will be removed.

**11 Van Gelder Court (Rear lot)**-Two trees will be taken down; stack as per Mr. Garafola.

**84 Church Street (Cedar Street)**-The hanging branch will be removed.

**5 Amanda Court (next to mailbox)**-The dead wood will be trimmed.

**20 Knollwood Drive (Walk path towards Dogwood Terrace)**-Twelve evergreens will be flush cut.

**84 Mayfair Drive**-Two trees will be elevated, and dead wood will be removed from one, on the right side.

Work Order 6

**62 Balfour Lane**-Two oak trees will be elevated, and dead wood will be removed.

Additionally, the trees at Finch Park need to be elevated at an approximate cost of \$2,000. The work needs to be done properly. Mr. Beltramini noted that tree elevations are needed on West Oak Street. Oak trees on Fawn Hill Court/Woodland Avenue and 11 Joshua Drive need to be added to the list.

### **COMMERCIAL SITE INSPECTIONS**

Art Schnaar who works for the landlord at Brothers Barbecue, 900A Route 17 North, Block 4702, Lot 1.01, joined the meeting. The only landscaping plan is one for Macaroni Grill from 1994. Some of the landscaping from that plan is still there and they are willing to put back what is missing. The responsibility for maintenance of the landscaping, tenant or landlord, appears to be a gray area at this point. The tenant was the one who applied for the approvals, not the landlord. Step one is to put back what was on the 1994 plan. If improvements are desired, a new landscaping plan would be subject to approval.

**OLD BUSINESS**-None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The work requested at 9 and 15 Wyckoff Avenue will be discussed further.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**-None

Mr. Melso announced that the Public Comment portion of the meeting would last approximately five minutes per person.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:44 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Martone, seconded by Mr. Beltramini, and carried unanimously.

