

**RAMSEY SHADE TREE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Ramsey Shade Tree Commission was called to order by Mr. Melso at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, October 19, 2023. 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 Ms. Cusick, 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 on Wednesday, December 7, 2022 and the RIDGEWOOD NEWS on Friday, December 9, 2022.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Melso led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Martone, seconded by Mr. Englishman, the minutes of the September 21, 2023 meeting were unanimously accepted as received.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Englishman noted that there were no spotted lanternflies in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, when he visited recently, in comparison to swarms of them two years ago. They are more an annoyance than a threat, unlike the Emerald Ash Borer. Regarding the spotted lanternfly grant, Mr. Milde has exhausted the funds through his work on the bikepath and behind Finch Park.

Mr. Trouf reminded the Commissioners about the memorial service for Harry Smith on Friday, October 20th.

Mr. McMahon reported on the tree inventory. He and Mr. Melso participated in a Zoom meeting with Davey Tree regarding their software package which would include tree species, diameter, health of tree, risk assessment for the borough's street trees. The work would take between three and four weeks. A quote is awaited. Two other companies, Urban Forest Metrics and Count the Street Trees, have also been contacted. For Count the Street Trees, the Commissioners would need to enter the data.

COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS

Councilwoman Cusick was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Melso reported for her, noting that at the Tuesday, October 17th Planning Board meeting the presentation for 92 West Main Street was carried to Tuesday, November 21st. At the meeting of the

governing body, she had reported on the Shade Tree Commissioners’ training with Mr. Milde on Saturday, October 7th, which earned eight CEUs which is what is required.

COMMUNICATIONS

Planning Board-August 15, 2023

TREE REMOVAL APPLICATIONS

Cambridge West, Block 4001, Lot 23

Robert Bourdeau, president, and Danielle Hillman, property manager, were present to discuss the removal of seven trees. Mr. Martone has walked the property and is familiar with the property issues. Trees have grown into the swale and are impacting the drainage on the property, especially with some of the units. Initially there were only six trees to be removed but a damaged cherry tree brought the number to seven. The work which has started on the property has stopped until the permit can be issued. A total of seven trees will be removed and a new swale will be cut. It was suggested that two October glory red maple trees or one October glory red maple tree with evergreens on either side be planted as close to the berm that leads to the brook. Living Earth from Suffern is the landscaper doing the work. Upon motion by Mr. Martone, seconded by Mr. McMahan, and approved unanimously, seven trees will be removed, a new swale will be cut, and the suggested planting will be completed in the spring/May.

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

Jason Junkers, 41 Orchard Street

Jason Junkers shared a situation on his property where trucks cannot pull into the driveway partially because of curbing which was put in across the street. It would appear that the problem could be solved by removing a big oak tree which is a borough tree. Those involved have not exhausted every avenue including having a spotter help drivers pull in or asking Amazon to send a smaller truck. Mr. Melso told Mr. Junkers that borough policy is to not remove a healthy tree. Upon motion by Mr. Martone, seconded by Mr. Englishman, removal of the tree was unanimously not allowed.

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

SITE PLAN REVIEW-None

TREE REMOVAL PERMIT VIOLATIONS-None

LANDSCAPING PLAN REVIEW-None

RESIDENTIAL SITE INSPECTIONS

All curbs must be marked, and there must be a decision about what to do with the stumps. Mr. Trouf also included the tree work which is being done by DPW. It was noted that they are doing an excellent job for the borough, but they are currently working on left removal.

Work order #8

32 Franklin Street-The dead wood will be trimmed.

491 Darlington Avenue (left side towards soccer field)-The multi-trunk tree will be dropped.

158 Norman Drive-The tree will be removed; dead wood will be trimmed from two trees.

8 Hubbard School Lane (West Oak Street side)-The tree will be elevated, and dead wood will be removed.

345 Elbert Street-Dead wood will be trimmed.

14 Pine Tree Road-One tree will be removed; one tree will be elevated, and branches will be pruned away from the wire.

13 Pine Tree Road-The tree will be removed.

157 Orchard Place (behind, next to wellhouse)-The tree will be dropped, and the stump will be left.

322 Elizabeth Avenue-Dead wood will be trimmed.

117 Sherwood Drive-The suckers will be removed at the wires; dead wood will be removed.

98 Dogwood Terrace-Dead wood will be trimmed.

34 Linden Street-Two trees will be removed.

25 South Central Avenue (New Street side)-Three trees will be removed; two trees will be trimmed.

54 Center Street-One tree will be pruned.

46 Garland Avenue-One tree will be pruned.

269 East Crescent Avenue-Four trees will be elevated, two on East Crescent Avenue and two on New England Drive; branches over the roadway will be removed.

146 North Spruce Street (across the street)-Dead wood will be removed.

243 South Central Avenue-The tree will be removed, and the stump will be left.

Work order #9

292 Elizabeth Avenue-Work needs to be done on the two oaks.

250 Grove Street (left side in Green Acres)-Two trees will be removed and the stumps will be left.

4 Vaughn Drive-Two trees will be elevated, and the dead wood will be removed.

145 Alder Drive-The tree will be shaped, and the dead wood will be removed.

Work order #1 (2024)

142 North Spruce Street (across in Green Acres)-The tree will be dropped, and the stump will be left.

36 Tulip Street-Two maple trees will be elevated.

4 Brittany Court-Two trees will be elevated.

9 Brittany Court-Two trees will be elevated.

11 Linden Street-The dead wood will be removed.

DPW Tree Work #1 (2024)

5 Park Place-Five pine trees will be removed.

115 Sherwood Drive-The tree will be elevated.

1300 Route 17 (Franklin Turnpike side)-Three dead trees will be removed; the other trees will be elevated.

Regarding the budget, \$45,912 was left after the August meeting. Work order #7 was \$25,452, and work order #8 is approximately half of that; that bill has not been received yet. Very little money will be left for the end of the year. Residents should be told that the work orders for 2023 have been completed. Mr. McMahon observed that there is the same issue regarding funds at the end of each year. He suggested that the estimated quantities be increased, leading to the request for more money in the budget. Mr. Trouf did prepare such a spreadsheet which he shared with the Commissioners. The expenses which he included were Dues and Tuition; Trim/Prune/Spray; Emergency/Storm Damage; Miscellaneous Expenses; Tree Removal; and Stump Removal. The removal of ash trees in the borough has caused a major budget impact. Over 350 borough ash trees have already been removed, with approximately one hundred more which still need to be removed. It was observed that should a borough ash tree cause any damage or injury, the liability could be quite substantial. Perhaps a line-item budget could be utilized, with the ash trees as a sub-line, with a "not to exceed" amount. Once all of the ash trees are removed in the borough, they will no longer be an issue. Mr. Beltramini suggested completion of an inventory of the remaining ash trees in the borough which are street trees and trees in Green Acres, particularly those with a house target. He further noted that the utility companies may become involved since the ash trees could take down power lines. Mr. Martone will talk to Councilwoman Cusick about the budget and the necessity to increase it so that the ash trees can be taken down as soon as possible.

COMMERCIAL SITE INSPECTIONS

It was decided that it is too late to determine a Green Thumb winner for 2023.

OLD BUSINESS

Regarding **69, 87, and 99 Spring Street**, the check for \$7,500 has not yet been received although the terminology for the payment has been worked out. Mr. Geist will call Mr. Jaworski again.

NEW BUSINESS-None

PUBLIC COMMENT-None

Mr. Mello announced that the Public Comment portion of the meeting, beginning at 8:34 p.m., would last approximately five minutes per person.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Martone, seconded by Mr. Beltramini, and carried unanimously.