

Abington Shade Tree Commission
Minutes – June Meeting
Tuesday, June 11, 2024, 7:30 pm via Zoom

Minutes

- 1) Commissioners in attendance: John Kennedy, Trish Gallagher, Anna Nicholaides (enough for quorum). Associate Members in attendance: Tanya B-V and Andrew C

- 2) Public Comment

Diana W. is concerned about new residents cutting down trees after closing and before they move into their homes (sometimes on the advice of realtors). She's interested in developing educational materials to present to the public. Trish suggested that she connect with Tanya and Anna to present her ideas and discuss the materials and ongoing efforts of the STC to educate people about the benefits of trees.

Krystyn K, president of the Greater Glenside Civic Association (GGCA) joined to comment on the success of the STC/GGCA strategic partnership to plant trees in Glenside. GGCA used Arbor Day Foundation data to document that 95 trees from the tree giveaway were distributed to Glenside residents. She would like to extend our strategic partnership through the fall tree giveaway to meet the goal of planting 100 new trees in Glenside this year. The strategic partnership involves a shared flyer and allowing early access to the tree giveaway for Glenside residents. The STC agreed to extend the partnership.

Krystyn also discussed working with Boy Scout Troop 309 in the fall to pilot a tree planting service for residents who might want trees but are unable to plant them (e.g. elderly, disabled individuals).

Krystyn also asked if there are grants to help homeowners to care for mature trees.

- 3) Land Development review: 365 Cedar Road (public comment only)

There was no public comment on the 365 Cedar Rd LD application. EAC and STC drafted a joint letter that the STC approved previously. The EAC did not approve the letter at their public meeting on June 12, so the STC submitted an individual letter to Allison Lee on June 14, 2024.

- 4) Update and proposed timeline and process for establishing Consultant Arborist role – John/Trish
The timeline for hiring a consulting arborist is as follows:

- June 4, 2024 – Issued Notice on Website
- June 26, 2024 – Question Deadline
- July 2, 2024 – Submission Deadline (12 PM)
- July 2 – July 18, 2024 – Review and Evaluation of Submissions
- July 19, 2024 – Recommendation to Township
- August 8, 2024 – Selection of Consultant

- 5) Communications & Public Engagement – Tanya

- Tanya noted that Anna is posting tree care videos on our Facebook page. Anna is looking for ideas for other videos.
- Worked with Trish to complete the annual report

- Talked to Rodon Printing about purchasing sturdy yard sign frames. They are expensive at Rodon so she will investigate other options.

6) Budget

- a. Andrew requested that the STC approve the request to hire Arbor Day Foundation to handle logistics for fall tree giveaway. STC approved the request.
- b. Potential budget items for 2025 budget request. Discussion revolved around renewing existing budget items (Tree Vitalize, Grow the Friends of Parks, Consulting Arborist, Free Tree Giveaway, Demonstration Gardens) and discussed potential new items (hiring consultant to develop township-wide invasives management plan, hiring a landscaper to plant and tend trees in public spacing).

7) Update from meeting to discuss possible DCNR grants and process that was held June 6 – Trish/John

The DCNR was productive. Attending were Robin, Trish, Ashely McIlvaine (township) and Patti Platt (township), Drew Gilchrest (DCHNR) and Emily ____ (DCNR, Drew's replacement upon retirement in August).

Drew was helpful in answering questions about different types of grants available, and how they might apply to different areas of the township. He recommended that we attend the November DCNR webinar that goes into details of the grant application process.

As part of this discussion, the group discussed the feasibility of applying for the Giant2024 Healing the Planet Grant. After discussion, it was decided that we don't have enough time to apply for the grant and get approvals this year. Andrew suggested that Robin follow up with the grant coordinator to see if the grant is offered every year. If so, we can talk with the township about potential projects for next year and have a grant ready to go since the lead time for the grant is short (announced June 1, due July 1). John and Trish

8) Open STC Commissioner positions

The STC voted to recommend Robin for the commissioner position vacated by Steve. Trish will follow up with the township and make the official recommendation.

I don't have any notes for these items (I guess it was getting late)

9) Other Business – All

Trish and John noted that they will be meeting with Jess Tholey, the new Parks and Rec director on Thursday June 13.

Trish and John announced that they will be interviewed for the Plant a Trillion Trees podcast Friday June 14.