

# MARLBORO TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMITTEE

Minutes from January 22, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Administrative Complex, Room 1

Meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Ellen Simonetti at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken:

Joanne Boretta—present

Terry Ebert-- present

Mary Eng- present

Elliot Gross-- present

Beth Hutter-- not present

Bob Mellert-- present

Pat Ondar-- present

Ellen Simonetti-- present

Patricia Cleary (guest)--present

Shari Spero – CME Associates—not present

Opening Statement was entered into the record by Ellen Simonetti, chairperson:

As the presiding officer of this meeting of the Marlboro Shade Tree Committee, I hereby declare that the notice requirements in accordance with the provisions of the open meeting law chapter 21, P.L. 1995 has been provided in accordance with the annual notice procedures of C 10.428 of said Act. I further order that this public announcement be placed in the minutes of this meeting.

The minutes of the October 16, 2023, meeting were approved as published.

Chair's Report:

1. The Chair announced that Venkatesh Patrachari, whose term is expiring, has decided to withdraw from the committee and that former Councilwoman Randi Marder, who did not run for reelection to the Town Council, will be replaced as the Township liaison to the committee. On behalf of the committee, she thanked both of them for their years of service.
2. The ten Continuing Education Units required for membership in NJUCF/Tree City for 2024 should be completed by the end of this month.
3. A notice inviting residents to apply for membership in the Marlboro Community Garden was published by the Township this week.
4. A possible Eagle Scout project to improve the garden is being developed.
5. A request by Marlboro's DPW to consider partial tree removal along one side of Wyncrest Road has been addressed. Bob Mellert and Ellen Simonetti visited the site and agreed with DPW that there is adequate reason to remove some of the trees to better protect the roadway from winter icing.
6. DPW has moved the shed in the community garden in order to install a concrete subfloor. The shed should be replaced in its original place as soon as the weather is favorable.
7. The quarterly report on tree-removal permits granted by the township has been forwarded to the committee.
8. The committee's end-of-year report has been submitted to the township.
9. Data for the annual report to the New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry (NJUCF) have been sent to Mr. Jon Capp, township administrator, for submission to that organization.

#### Old Business:

1. The committee's request that the township remind residents of their obligation to obtain a permit before removing trees will result in a notice in an upcoming weekly township email to the residents. The committee has also been advised that there will be a follow-up via telephone to residents who have removed trees to determine whether their obligation to replant replacements has been fulfilled. When necessary, an in-person visit by a township employee will then be made to verify that the replacement has been made.

2. Ellen Simonetti suggested that the theme for the Shade Tree Committee on Marlboro Day should be alerting residents to the township ordinance regarding tree removal.
3. Terry Ebert will follow up with DPW about replacing the trees that were removed near the sports fields and along Wyncrest Road.
4. A planned presentation to the Township Council by Ellen Simonetti was deemed unnecessary, since the items of concern have been addressed with the township administrator.

#### New Business:

1. Bob Mellert presented his proposal for establishing an official Level 1 Arboretum, registered with Arbnet, an international accrediting agency affiliated with the Morton Arboretum in Illinois. The committee had been sent the proposal via email for their review. After a short discussion, Joanne Boretti moved and Pat Ondar seconded a resolution to approve the initiative. All members voted in the affirmative. The application names the Shade Tree Committee as the official overseer of the proposed arboretum, with the duty to appoint an administrator as needed.
2. Ellen Simonetti moved, and Joanna Boretti seconded, the appointment of Bob Mellert as the current administrator. The vote was unanimous.
3. A discussion followed with respect to how the trees could best be labeled. Pat Ondar suggested tagging each tree with a QR code. A lively discussion followed with more suggestions: perhaps this would be a great Eagle Scout project; a map of the proposed arboretum might eventually be developed and made available, etc.
4. A parcel of land on Haven Drive now owned by the township had previously been deforested by a developer who later abandoned the project. Ellen Simonetti and Bob Mellert visited the site, and the former wrote up a "scope of the project" for the township to plant the area, using funds from the township's tree replacement budget. It is being submitted to the township for their action.
5. A discussion followed about the need to follow up on tree removal and replacement. Joanna Boretti shared that the township ordinance, Chapter 377, indicates that there is a "conservation officer" responsible for

enforcement, which the Shade Tree Committee is not empowered to do. Patricia Cleary noted that there is a problem with developers who do not fulfill their commitment to replanting trees in new developments.

6. The committee concluded that going forward they would work with the Open Space Committee to identify areas that have previously been deforested and put their weight behind one such project every six months. The first project will be the parcel of township land on Haven Drive.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 15, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment was at 7:50 p.m.

