

Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission
Meeting January 12, 2021
Meeting Held on Zoom

In Attendance: Ken Grasso, Bill Thorne, Rich Lerner, Fred Callis, Lori Montana, Mary Trank, Janet Grote, Lori Hohenleitner (Council liaison), Adam Hubeny (Borough Administrator), John Meeham (guest and representative of JCP&L), Maureen Campbell (guest, arborist, JCP&L), Ashley Cruz (guest, member of Atlantic Highlands community). Sarah Colasurdo (guest, member of the Atlantic Highlands community)

Meeting will be cut short due to Adam Hubeny's commitment to the Harbor Commission use of Zoom at 7:00 PM

The monthly meeting was called to order by Ken Grasso at 6:00 PM, in accordance to the Sunshine Law. Mr. Grasso thanked the representatives from JCP&L for coming. He introduced himself and the people who were at the meeting.

Maureen Campbell spoke to the commission and guests about her 15 years as an arborist for JCP&L. She explained that her goal was to reduce power outages and to achieve that goal, she has targeted a few locations in Atlantic Highlands including two substations. To keep the power flowing from these substations she will: keep tree growth away from transformers, have a clearance of 8 to 12 feet, and trim trees away from wires.

Maureen Campbell also told the group that 16 trees were removed in Atlantic Highlands. She does not want to come every year to inspect, so she looks at the trees she feels are in decline. She opened the floor for questions.

Ken Grasso asked if a resident has a tree removed would JCP&L replace it? Ms. Campbell's answer was: no.

Maureen Campbell added that on East Avenue there are Bradford pear trees that are growing in the wires. They will be trimmed. She said JCP&L are trained in safety first and compared the tree trimming they do to a "bad haircut."

Ken Grasso asked for a list of trees that are at risk and ones that residents have asked to be removed. Maureen Campbell said yes, she would give the commission a list. Adam Hubeny said he would give the commission her email address.

Fred Callis invited Ms. Campbell to come to a Shade Tree Commission meeting and she said she would attend.

Adam Hubeny sent an email to the commission with a list of trees that are slated to be trimmed.

John Meehan added that trees will not be removed unless it is necessary and when they trim, they will take as little as possible.

Lori Hohenleitner spoke of the "tree drama" that took place in Atlantic Highlands and the problem she spotted with her oak trees. Maureen Campbell said that oaks have a "blight on their leaves."

Lori Hohenleitner said many residents disliked the way the trees were trimmed (although she didn't agree with them). Maureen Campbell said she would do a "walk-through" with the Shade Tree Commission so the members can see how JCP&L trims trees.

Fred Callis thanked Maureen Campbell for coming and speaking to the commission. Maureen Campbell, John Meehan and Adam Hubeny leave.

Ken Grasso begins the part of the meeting where the commission conducts its business.

Treasurer's Report:

Opening Balance: September 9, 2020 - \$14,755.87

Closing Balance: January 12, 2020- \$8,755.87

The motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Fred Callis, seconded by Ken Grasso; all in attendance agreed.

Reorganization 2021:

New member, Mary Trank was introduced. New member, Warren Kotzas has withdrawn.

Fred Callis thanked Lori Montana for being the Shade Tree Commission's secretary and for being a member of the commission.

Officers as follows:

Ken Grasso and Fred Callis: Co-Chairs. Rich Lerner made the motion, Janet Grote seconded it; all in attendance agreed.

Mary Trank: Secretary. Ken Grasso made the motion, Fred Callis seconded it; all in attendance agreed.

Bill Thorne: Treasurer. Rich Lerner made the motion, Janet Grote seconded; all in attendance agreed.

Meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM.

New Business:

Ken Grasso told the commission members that A. Casola Farms did not plant the trees they agreed to plant. Mr. Grasso will be in touch with them and he will report his findings to the commission.

Guests Ashley Cruz and Sarah Colasurdo are interested in volunteering.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 PM. Ken Grasso made the motion to adjourn, Janet Grote seconded it; all in attendance agreed. The zoom connection was cut precisely at that time.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Montana