

Interlaken Shade Tree Commission Meeting Minutes-December 8, 2020

- A. Roll Call: Peter Hughes, Marguerite Dalton, John Insabella, John Finn, and Arthur Fama, Interlaken Council. Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM. Meeting conducted via Zoom due to Covid 19. Tom Papp attended as a resident.**

November 10, 2020 meeting minutes approved. Motion to approve: Dalton, Second, Insabella. The Sunshine Law was read prior to beginning of the meeting,

- 1. Recognition of service by Christine Papp. Chris was on ISTC for 10 plus years and performed an outstanding service to the town. Additionally, Laura Fikus and John Finn were approved by the town council as new members of the ISTC.**

- 2. NJDEP-Community Forestry Management Plan 2020-2024 review. Our plan has been approved through 2024. P. Hughes explained that the principal functions of the plan were: 1. Provide a structure for the protection of the canopy of the town's trees. 2. Insure protection for the town of liability if someone were to be injured on a town sidewalk. 3. Provide funding for various potential grant applications. 4. Facilitate planting and care of 'street trees', those that are Borough owned and are between the street and the sidewalk.**

- 3. Develop preliminary 2021 site plans. Committee recommended that we plant 10 trees this year rather than the usual 11-12 as we can expect there will be additional costs incurred in the upcoming year for pruning activities. Furthermore, M. Dalton suggested planting in the fall season seems better than customary spring as there is less concern about summer heat for the new trees. This suggestion will be further evaluated at January STC meeting as 2021 planting plans are evaluated. All tree watering bags were collected and stored at DPE. We have total of (16) bags.**

- 4. 2020 and 2021 pruning. It was proposed that the ISTC develop a policy to evaluate and guide inquiries/requests by residents to possibly engage a private tree company to trim public/street trees in front of their property, if the DPW cannot accommodate resident request due to branch height, work schedules, or other valid reasons. A suggested draft policy will be offered for Committee review and consideration at the January meeting. P. Hughes will prepare preliminary draft policy for review. Proposed by P. Hughes and seconded by M. Dalton.**

5. Heritage Tree (HT) preserve ordinance subcommittee report. M. Dalton reported that from 1/20 to 12/20, the HT subcommittee conducted (33) evaluations for possible tree removal, some of which involved multiple trees on the property. The evaluations resulted in (26) approvals, (2) partial approvals, and (5) denials. One of the denials resulted in an appeal for which the permit was granted. Review was made of the form issued by the town to the resident advising of approval/disapproval.

6. Community Forestry Master Plan goals/2020-Annual Accomplishment Report-DEP. We met our CEU requirements for 2020 and are planning for new member J. Finn to undergo Core training in 2021, if possible.

7. 2020 ISTC budget status review. It appears as though we are right on our budget number, but are waiting for some final costs to be tabulated.

8. New agenda topics. A review of policy re residents who may wish to do pruning on street trees in front of their houses.

9. Communications updates/comments from residents/public. T. Papp asked about street tree pruning approval for his house which was requested in November and he was informed that approval had been granted.

10. Adjournment. The next scheduled meeting is 1/12/21 at 7:00. Proposed meeting dates to be evaluated at January meeting are as second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at: 1/12; 2/9; 3/9; 4/13; 5/11; 6/8; 7/6; 8/10; 9/14; 10/12; 11/9; 12/14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 based on motion by J. Finn, seconded by J. Insabella.

Respectfully submitted by John Insabella