

**METUCHEN SHADE TREE COMMISSION
MAY 12, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM

Present: Kathy Dopart, George Fromm, Laurie Hart, Coleen Hines, Dorothy Rasmussen, Rick Dyas

PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

The Minutes of the April 14, 2008 meeting were read and approved. Laurie will send them to Bonnie Lacina for submission to Borough Council.

SPRING PLANTING CONTRACT

- Planting will start very soon.
- Since this is a new contractor, there was some delay until references and certifications were filed with Borough Administrator.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CFMP) CONSULTANTS

- ForesTree Consultants, engaged to assist us with our for CFMP, drove through Borough with George for a preliminary review of our tree resource.
- Their brief assessment confirms that
 - Metuchen is unique in having so many old and beautiful trees; but our tree resource will deteriorate rapidly over the next 20 years, and we must take action to replenish our inventory.
 - The Borough's Tree Ordinance is strong.
- CFM Plan Elements are: Inventory and Assessment; Tree Planting; Tree Maintenance; and Hazard Reduction
- Suggested goals are 1) to create a plan for the next 20 years; 2) to plant more trees than are removed; and 3) to undertake a tree inventory and assessment
- A tree inventory is a key element - it will enable us to prioritize areas for maintenance and planting.
 - An inventory can cost up to \$10 per tree. An inventory records each street tree's location, condition, species, and size
 - Grants are available from the State, and ForesTree will advise us on how to apply for these grants
- Essential elements will be to
 - build a good working relationship with the Dept. of Public Works
 - implement effective outreach practices to take our message to the public and the schools
 - establish a liaison with the utility company
- ForesTree will take our input and their assessment of our situation and write a draft Plan that will prioritize our objectives and implement a plan to maintain our tree resource in a way that allocates resources most effectively.

NEW BUSINESS

- We welcome our newest member, Dorothy Rasmussen, who was appointed by Mayor Vahalla at the most recent Council meeting.

- Members of the Garden Club of Metuchen and the Woodwild Park Association attended meeting with another proposal for renovating the horse trough triangle on Middlesex Avenue.
 - This plan also requires removal of the two blue spruces that presently flank the trough.
 - Discussion of necessity for removing these fine trees, and whether they represent a traffic safety issue.
 - Rick Dyas will ask Police Dept. to evaluate any traffic safety issues, and the Shade Tree Commission will review the revised plan from the Garden Club before the Commission makes a final recommendation.

- Coleen has received and returned the application for the October Fair.
 - This year's theme is "Under the Sea"

- Tree City Signs - Coleen will ask Bill Boerth and Public Works to mount the signs

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:35 PM