

**MINUTES OF THE SHADE TREE COMMISSION
OF THE BOROUGH OF SEWICKLEY
February 8, 2021**

The Shade Tree Commission (STC) convened on February 8th, 2021 via a recorded Zoom Meeting due to COVID 19 social distancing requirements. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kathy Brandt at 7:00 p.m.

In attendance were:

Members

Kathy Brandt, Chairperson
Brian Finley, Vice Chairperson (absent)
Andrew Frishkorn, Secretary
Katie Kirsch, GIS Manager
Dave Parker, Treasurer

Of Council

Cynthia Mullins - Council Representative

Arborist

Burlton Griffith

Visitor

Kinsey Miller – Tree Pittsburgh Community Forrester
Wayne Carney – Owner 312 Ohio River Blvd

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dave Parker made a motion to approve the minutes which were seconded by Katie. The minutes of the January 2021 meeting were subsequently unanimously approved by those attending.

II. STAFFING UPDATES

2021 Licensed Tree Experts include:

Adler Tree Service, Bartlett Tree Experts, Carl’s Tree service, Graham’s Tree Service, LLC, Horhut Tree Experts, Lyle Blum, LLC, Tall Timbers Tree Experts.

III. OLD BUSINESS AND TREE ACTIVITY SHEET

Arborist indicated that there were no new updates to the existing entries on the Tree Activity Sheet. The updated listing including new applications is provided as Attachment A.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Tree Pittsburgh

Kinsey Miller from Tree Pittsburgh gave a brief talk concerning Tree Pittsburgh. Their data shows an on-going loss of tree canopy in Allegheny County including Sewickley Borough. Their mission is to increase the tree canopy in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. The organization offers various educational and volunteer opportunities. For example, there is an upcoming Tree Tenders Course. They have example ordinances from other municipalities and lists of trees appropriate for planting in urban environments that may be helpful to the Sewickley STC. They also sponsor networking events with other STCs and

monthly newsletters that are issued via e-mail. Kinsey will share additional information to the STC via our Arborist.

Arborist Report

The tree failure on Ohio River Blvd. was discussed. It was fortunate that no one was hurt, although a flatbed truck was damaged, and another vehicle scratched. The Arborist will inspect other trees along that stretch for any signs of root weaknesses this week, although the tree that failed had not been previously identified as a tree of concern. As a second step, we may consider hiring another firm to provide an additional assessment of a subset of the pin oaks along that stretch of roadway. After the failure the fire department and borough maintenance were contacted after the incident. However, the Arborist and Borough Manager were not contacted initially.

The application for a removal at 540 was not submitted by the property owner, so it cannot be considered at this time. Kathy Brandt made a motion to approve the arborist report which were seconded by Dave Parker. The arborist report was subsequently unanimously approved and is provided in Attachment B.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

None

VI. BUDGET

The budget report was not available at the time of the meeting and will be provided in the amended meeting minutes, when available. The 2020 Arborist bill will be applied to the 2021 budget due to the Borough cash accounting method.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE

Some issues discussed to date that need further clarification in the STC ordinance include:

OLD

- (1) Clarified language about tree ownership between the sidewalk and curb
- (2) Clarified language about responsibility for tree maintenance in Borough Parks
- (3) Hazard zone definition (distance to right-of-way, power lines and/or to neighboring structures)
- (4) Authority to order removal of dead or dying trees on private property for trees that pose an obvious and imminent danger, as identified by the Borough arborist
- (5) Policy related to sidewalk heave related to borough owned tree roots
- (6) How to manage donations for special projects
- (7) Develop standard procedure for Borough and/or Zoning officer communication with STC related to Borough Trees and/or private tree to be removed within the hazard zone identified during building permit applications.

- (8) Develop a policy concerning costs recovery for damages to Borough Trees by vehicles, etc.
- (9) A roll-call vote is required going forward, while voting via Zoom meetings
- (10) Zoom meetings will be recorded and will remain on-line until the recording can be replaced by the approved meeting minutes.
- (11) Add information to the STC website or to the application for residents who desire a tree be planted in an open space near their home.

NEW

- (1) Consider review of example ordinances available via Tree Pittsburgh when ordinance is updated.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS:

OLD

- Determine responsibility for approval of pruning requests in Borough Parks (TBD)
- Plaque Inventory (Luke Hotchkiss – Eagle Scout Project)
- Solicit Bids for winter pruning and removals (Arborist)
- Develop Informational Post Card using advertising budget to request residents avoid use of lawn herbicides around trees. (Brandt/Mullins)
- Mulch party needs arranged for many trees in the Borough (TBD)
- Notify residents of upcoming removals (Brandt/Vierling)
- Planning for spring planting, prepare draft list of trees (Arborist)
- 816 Hill Street - Need Code enforcement to tell them they need to remove the tree. We will send a letter telling them to go to code enforcement. (Brandt)
- Review the GIS dashboard that Kirsch sent around (all).
- Check with construction team about the unauthorized removals of Ginkgos (Parker).
- Tree Tenders Meeting- details TBD (all)

NEW

- Inspect Oaks along Ohio River Blvd. for basal decay fungi and have tree risk assessment performed (Arborist)

IX. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business before the STC, on motion from Andrew Frishkorn and seconded by Dave Parker and unanimously approved, Chairperson Kathy Brandt adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:50 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: March 8, 2021, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Meeting ID: To be determined.

Respectfully Submitted, Andrew Frishkorn (STC Secretary)

Attachment A
Sewickley Shade Tree Commission
Tree Activity Sheet

**SEWICKLEY SHADE TREE COMMISSION
TREE ACTIVITY SHEET**

APPLICATION SUMMARY						SHADE TREE COMMISSION ACTIONS				STATUS					REMARKS
TRACKING NUMBER	REQUEST DATE	APPLICANT ADDRESS No.	APPLICANT STREET	APPLICANT NAME	REQUEST TYPE	TREE DESCRIPTION & STC RECOMMENDATION	DECISION	RESPONSIBILITY	LETTER ISSUED? (DATE)	REMOVAL COMPLETE	MAINTENANCE COMPLETE	LANDSCAPING PLAN PROVIDED	REPLANTING COMPLETE	DATE CLOSED	
40	Dec-18	700/702	Washington	Ferguson / Evans	R	Arborist inspected, one spruce tree under STC oversight. Landscape plan to be submitted.	A	O	Jan-19	Y	N/A	N	N		Landscape Plan to be submitted. Eisler Landscaping working on it
83	Mar-20	306-310	Henry	Arborist	R	Declining tree #978 - structurally deficient. Replace with black gum	A(1)	B	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	N		Removal complete 7/17
85	Mar-20	432	Centennial (Locust)	Arborist	O	Tree needs protected from delivery trucks. Tree on Locust Pl.	A	B	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Coordinate with Boro to install protective fencing
86	Apr-20	Ball-field	Chadwick	J.Davis	R	J. Davis of QVRA requested removal of #1399 and 1400 due to interference with ballfield lighting. Bartlett directed to remove 1399 by M Marcinko.	A	B	V	Y	Y 1399 N 1400	N/A	N/A		Tree 1399 removed 4/7/2020. Pruning Elm recommended for #1400. To be performed in the winter.
87	May-20	634	Beaver	Borough Maint.	M	Callery Pear #245 in front of Hyde Travel needs pruning	A	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Add to fall/winter 2020 pruning list
89	May-20	224	Thorn	J Platt	R	Dead Tree - removal requested and approved. Replanting recommended	A (1)	B	Y	Y	N/A	N/A	N	Jul-20	Add to 2021 replanting lists.
90	May-20	615	Nevin	No App	O	Inspection of tree requested of potentially dangerous trees. #1454 squeaking/declining	A	B	N/A	N	N	N/A	N/A		recommendation changed from pruning to removal on 6/8/20. Scheduled for October 2020, bid being sought.
95	May-20	703	Harbaugh	No App	R	Declining Hardy Rubber Tree #807. Tree pruned by Bartlett following resident complaint. Arborist recommends removal in next bid package.	A	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		Add to removal list for this fall/winter 2020

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98	May-20	--	Walnut St	Grapevine Garden Club	R	Removal of Norway Spruce #1762, hew and pruning of Oak in parklet. Plans for replanting provided, including planting 1 new deciduous tree and shrubs.	A (1)	B	V	Y	N/A	N/A	N		Pruning should be performed between Nov 1 and Apr 1. Soil test and nutrient application recommended. Council approved plan and Club will take care of expenses.
100	Jun-20		Grove	Arborist	R	Norway Maple (#1075); Declining/Storm Damaged	A (1)	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N		Scheduled for Fall
101	Jun-20		Centennial	Arborist	R	Hose Chestnut (#472), Declining/Storm Damaged	A (1)	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N		Scheduled for Fall
102	Jun-20	302	Beaver	Arborist	R	Application pending for removal of 2 damaged/declining trees	P	O	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N		No action until application received.
103	Jul-20		Varies	Arborist	R	Eleven (11) small caliper dead trees need removed: #691, 763, tree at 544 Centennial, 517 Broad, and about 7 others. Lawn care herbicide use is suspected for several of these trees.	A (11)	B	N/A	Partial	N/A	N/A	N		Bartlett can remove some but slow. Unlikely that Borough Maintenance can remove these. May need to hire an open end contractor to handle removal of small trees on a more timely basis (3 days to one week).
104	Aug-20	310	Bank	Resident via Franco	M	Silver Maple - pruning of Dead Branches (no application)	A	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Scheduled for Fall
105	Aug-20	340-342	Henry	Resident via Franco	M	Norway Maple (#984) and Sugar Maple (3985) - pruning of Dead Branches (no application)	A	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Scheduled for Fall

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106	Aug-20	220	Bank	Barton & DeForest	R	Bald Cypress (#858); application for removal (although application references Beech). Same tree requested in 2018 (#24) and 2019 (#54), and previously denied. Resident offers to pay for removal but did not offer to pay for replanting as specified during previous years. The cost for tree replacement is typically \$800 to \$1000. The proposed contractor is not licensed in Sewickley. Additional pruning recommended.	D	O	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Pruning Scheduled for Fall.
107	Aug-20	310-316	Peebles	Rice	R	Declining Freeman Maple (#369), impacted by bleeding canker disease. Non-urgent removal recommended	A (1)	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N		Not scheduled yet. Consider for 2021.
108	Sep-20	248	Linden Ct	Borough Maint.	R	Emergency Removal. Replacement with Blackgum recommended Tree #1278.	A(1)	B	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	N		Replacement considered for Spring 2021
109	Sep-20	727	Thorn	Borough Maint.	R	Autumn Flowing Cherry (#183) - Dead tree removal. Stump grinding needed. Recommend replacement with Redbud	A(1)	B	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	N		Stump grinding required. Replacement considered for Spring 2021
110	Sep-20	56	Beaver	Courtney	R (5)	Requested removal of Five Trees. Replacement with four new trees	A(4)	R	at meeting	N	N/A	N/A	N		

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111	Sep-20	402	Pebbles	Arborist	O/R	Ash Tree #190 damaged. Recommended for routine inspection. Possible removal in 2022 and replacement with smaller tree (redbud, hornbeam, serviceberry, etc.)	A	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Monitor
112	Sep-20	205	Bank	Arborist	R(1)	Declining Sugar Maple (#851) recommended for removal. Replace with dogwood or Hornbeam	A(1)	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N		On removal list. Tall Timber gave price
114	Sep-20		Borough Wide	Arborist	M	Mulch needed around trees to protect from string trimmers	A	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		
115	Oct-20	318	Grant	Pollino	R	Maple with Dead Branches	A	R	N	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		Other trees on side of property are marked for removal
118	Oct-20	623	Cochran	D'Antonio	R	Callery Pear #1324 -dropping debris and sticky fruit	A	B	N	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		Not a priority. Other Callery pears in parking areas greater priority like 500 and 600 blocks of Centennial
120	Oct-20	600	Chestnut	Krey	R	Pruning of Honeylocust	A	B	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		on the list
121	Oct-20	884	Thorn	Minn	R	Pruning of Norway Maple #814	A	B	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		on the list
122	Oct-20	320	Peebles	Kenneweg	R	Maintenance Pruning of 4 trees requested. Arborist to inspect on 10/15	TBD	TBD	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		on the list
123	Nov-20	720	Maple	Eakes	M	Structural and Clearance Pruning of #1528 and 1599	A	B	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		on the list
124	Nov-20	264	Bank		M	Maintenance Pruning for Bald Cypress. Branches near power drop causing problems and away from houses. Also root knees need removed.	A	B	N	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		on the list

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127	Jan-21	818	Hill	Burrelli	R	Arborist observed 2 dead spruces in hazard zone. Recommends resident be requested to remove them.	A	O	Y	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		
128	Jan-21	607	Maple	Schaerli	R	Removal of dead and dying Hemlocks. Recommend that resident decide how to proceed.	A	O	N	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		
129	Jan-21	847	Thorn	Kubinski	R	Zelkova with structure problems and lifting sidewalk	A (1)	B	Y	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		Replant with Redbud, Serviceberry or Hawthorn
131	Feb-21	540	Academy	Simonsen	R	Multiple trees, white pines in back, unspecified trees in front. Denied because applicant not owner.	D	O	N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Feb-21	Revisit if owner applies
132	Feb-21	312	Ohio River	N/A	N/A	Failure of Pin Oak - Tree #1702	N/A	TBD	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	TBD		Inspect other nearby trees

Abbreviation key

Request: R = Removal; M = Maintenance; C = Commemorative; O = Other **Letter Issued:** Y = yes; N = No; N/A = not applicable; V = verbal or e-mail communication

Decision: A = Approved; A (LP) = Approved Landscaping Plan Requested; AR = Removal Approved/Replanting Required (number of trees); D - Disapproved; P = Decision Pending;

Responsibility: O = Owner/Applicant; B= Borough **Status:** Y = Yes; N = No; V = Verify; TBD = To be Determined; W = Initial Requirement Waived; P = Response from Owner Pending

= Action Required

Attachment B
Borough of Sewickley Tree Commission
Arborist's Report
2/8/2021

Miscellaneous Items

- No tree work completed since last meeting.
- Sent winning bid for one tree removal project to Borough Manager for approval.
- Met with several contractors to review specifications of upcoming pruning projects.
- Met with L Hotchkiss to discuss identification of potential planting sites.
- Spring Plant list is not yet complete.

Requests for Tree Work

540 Academy Rd- Removal of Multiple trees. Errors on application. Siberian Elm at front right of property has public ROW w/in hazard zone. Large Spruce (engelmann?) at back right may also be tall enough to warrant STC oversight. Applicant is not titled owner, yet. Have been in communication with applicant. He now plans to entertain bids for preserving/transplanting large Japanese maple at left front foundation. I will be providing some potential contractor names for such work. Applicant was hoping to preserve Siberian elm at right front side of property, which will be difficult given proposed demolition and rebuilding of house. Also, Siberian Elms are exotic, invasive trees and are notoriously failure prone due to weak branch attachments. This tree may well be volunteer seedling of very large tree on Pine Rd. RECOMMEND THAT APPLICANT REAPPLY WHEN TITLED OWNER, AND STC REVIEW APPLICATION ACCORDINGLY. RECOMMEND THIS APPLICATION BE REJECTED/DECISION POSTPONED UNTIL THEN.

Unpermitted Tree Work

Two mature maple trees at 323 Ferry St were removed without a permit. The Borough Manager has been in communication with resident/contractors. RECOMMEND THAT THE REMOVAL CONTRACTORS NOT BE BOROUGH APPROVED TREE EXPERTS UNTIL THEY CAN MEET ALL EXPECTED SAFETY AND INSURANCE STANDARDS.

Emergency Tree Work

312 Ohio River Blvd- Pin Oak (#1702, ~40" dbh)- Catastrophically failed and fell during early afternoon rush hour (~3:30-3:40pm, Friday 2/5/20). The engine compartment/cab body of tractor of a flatbed tractor trailer were severely damaged. Another car was scratched. ORB was shut down for several hours. Failure of tree related to basal/root white rot wood decay on northern side of tree. Old fruiting bodies of polypore fungi present. PennDOT overseeing removal of debris. Resident was very fond of tree and hopes that borough will replant. This tree was valued at over \$18,000 with a "Good" Condition class rating in 2018. However, at that time, fruiting bodies of decay fungi were noted at tree base. This tree was pruned in 2018. RECOMMEND ALL LARGE OAKS ALONG 65 BE EXAMINED FOR SIGNS OF BASAL DECAY FUNGI AND HAVE TREE RISK ASSESSMENTS PERFORMED BY CONTRACTOR. THOSE FOUND TO BE HIGH RISK SHOULD BE REMOVED ASAP.

ATTACHMENT C

**Revenue/Appropriation Analysis Report
Borough of Sewickley
For 1/31/2021**

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General Fund

	Prior Year Budget	Prior Year Actual	Estimated Budget (Adopted)	Y-T-D Actual	M-T-D Actual	Budget Remaining
<u>Revenue Analysis</u>						
Total Revenue Analysis	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<u>Appropriation Analysis</u>						
01 455 450 Tree Trim/Removal	45,000.00	32,920.00	46,000.00	0.00	0.00	46,000.00
01 455 451 Tree Maintenance	18,000.00	4,542.50	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
01 455 452 Tree Maint-Mun&Parks	5,000.00	3,080.00	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
01 455 455 Plantings	11,000.00	8,711.72	24,000.00	0.00	0.00	24,000.00
01 455 457 Arborist Services	8,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	5,600.00	5,600.00	400.00
01 455 459 Advertising & Mailings	600.00	182.00	600.00	0.00	0.00	600.00
Total Appropriation Analysis	85,600.00	49,436.22	86,600.00	5,600.00	5,600.00	81,000.00

**Revenue/Appropriation Analysis Report
Borough of Sewickley
For 1/31/2021**

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General Fund

	Prior Year Budget	Prior Year Actual	Estimated Budget (Adopted)	Y-T-D Actual	M-T-D Actual	Budget Remaining
<u>Revenue Analysis</u>						
01 321 620 Tree Expert License	200.00	275.00	300.00	150.00	150.00	(150.00)
Total Revenue Analysis	200.00	275.00	300.00	150.00	150.00	(150.00)
<u>Appropriation Analysis</u>						
Total Appropriation Analysis	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Revenue/Appropriation Analysis Report
Borough of Sewickley
For 1/31/2021**

Run: 2/12/2021 at 1:55 PM

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General Fund

	Prior Year Budget	Prior Year Actual	Estimated Budget (Adopted)	Y-T-D Actual	M-T-D Actual	Budget Remaining
<u>Revenue Analysis</u>						
01 367 500 Tree Plaques & Donations	2,500.00	1,535.00	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	(2,000.00)
Total Revenue Analysis	2,500.00	1,535.00	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	(2,000.00)
<u>Appropriation Analysis</u>						
Total Appropriation Analysis	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00