

**MINUTES OF THE SHADE TREE COMMISSION  
OF THE BOROUGH OF SEWICKLEY  
May 11, 2020**

The Shade Tree Commission (STC) convened on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 via Zoom Meetings 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  
Andrew Frishkorn, Secretary  
Dave Parker  
Katie Kirsch

**Of Council**

Cynthia Mullins - Council Representative  
**Arborist**  
Burlton Griffith

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion by Brian Finley, seconded by Dave Parker, the minutes of the March 2020 meeting were unanimously approved with one minor edit to the attendance list. There was no meeting in April due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

**II. STAFFING UPDATES**

None.

**III. OLD BUSINESS – TREE ACTIVITY SHEET**

The Tree Activity Sheet was discussed and updated (see Attachment A). The tree inventory update remains incomplete by Bartlett. The Borough Manager and Bartlett are reportedly in discussions about this long overdue report update. Sewickley GIS license for ESRI has expired and needs renewed before the data can be added as a layer to the Borough GIS.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

On motion by Andrew Frishkorn, seconded by Katie Kirsch, the arborist report was approved, subject to address corrections for two trees (Nevin not Centennial). The corrected arborist report is provided as Attachment B. The Tree Activity Sheet was updated accordingly (see Attachment A).

Discussions are needed with the Borough manager about what removal/pruning/planting tasks can be performed by the Borough Maintenance following the development of removal/pruning/planting lists by the Arborist.

One quote was received for removal of two failing trees on Grove and Henry and two stump removals was received. It was recommended that we obtain additional quotes, prior to giving notice to proceed.

Several voiced their desire to see trees planted in the fall since the spring planting was cancelled due to COVID 19. The Arborist indicated that Oaks can be planted successfully in the fall, while most other trees do better with a spring planting. It was discussed that we should get a quote to perform fall plantings by an outside vendor if Borough Maintenance staff are unavailable to help. In the fall Borough Maintenance is generally busy performing leaf removal and preparing for light-up night. Someone suggested seeking help with planting by a non-profit such as Western Pennsylvania Conservancy as possible option to hiring professional planters, although there were no volunteers to pursue this option.

**V. CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**VI. BUDGET**

The 2020 budget is as follows:

Budget Code	Description	Budget	YTD Bid Awards	YTD Invoiced	Budget Less Invoiced Funds	Percentage Remaining
01.455.450	Tree Trim & Remvl	\$45,000		\$16,500	\$28,500	63%
01.455.451	Tree Maint.	\$18,000			\$18,000	100%
01.445.452	Mun & Parks	\$5,000			\$5,000	100%
01.455.455	Plantings	\$11,000			\$11,000	100%
01.455.457	Arborist Svcs.	\$6,000			\$6,000	100%
01.455.459	Advertising	\$600			\$600	100%
1.455	TOTAL	\$85,600	\$0	\$16,500	\$69,100	81%

Estimated 2020 Income

Budget Code	Description	Estimated Income	YTD Income	YTD Pledges	Comment	Percentage Received
01.321.620	Licenses	\$200	\$0	\$0		0%
01.367.500	Donations	\$2,500	\$0	\$0		0%
	TOTAL	\$2,700	\$0	\$0		0%

## **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;
- (8) Develop a policy concerning costs recovery for damages to Borough Trees by vehicles, etc.

## **VIII. ACTION ITEMS:**

### **OLD**

- Update Tree Inventory to be performed ASAP (Bartlett Inventory Tech)
- Develop plan for removal Callery Pear trees and replanting along Centennial and elsewhere in the Borough as needed. (Arborist)
- Incorporate ArborScope™ database into the Borough ESRI database (Katie Kirsch)
- Notify Laura Mikush of need to submit an application (Arborist)
- Determine responsibility for approval of pruning requests in Borough Parks (TBD)

### **NEW**

- Develop tree removal, pruning and fall planting lists. Determine if some of the work can be done by Borough Maintenance Crew. (Arborist)
- Obtain additional bids for removal or hazardous trees on Grove and Henry (Arborist)
- Obtain bid for Fall planting from vendor. (Arborist)
- Seek help with fall planting from non-profit (e.g., West Penn Conservatory) (TBD)

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:** There being no other business before the STC, Chairperson Kathy Brandt adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** June 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

*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 in August 2019.
62	Aug-19	308/312	Thorn	Ford	R	Request removal of Tree #73 & #74 that are dead	A (2)	B	Y	TBD	N/A	N/A	N		Borough maintenance crew could handle if available.
76	Dec-19	517	Centennial	D. Beyer	R	Callery Pear Boro # #540 is dropping fruit and damaging car paint, replace with something else	A(1)	B	Y	N	N/A	N/A	N	Apr-20	Add location to replanting list
79	Feb-20	516	Grove	Arborist	R	Arborist recommends removal of critically damaged tree	A	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N/A		Priority removal. Seek bids ASAP
80	Feb-20	818	Centennial	Benedict	R	Removal/Relocation of Hop Hornbeam for driveway installation	D	B	Y & V	N	N/A	N/A	TBD	May-20	It was determined that the tree could remain, if precautions taken to protect the tree during driveway installation.
82	Mar-20	--	Park Place	STC	C	Plant Bur Oak	A	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N		Memorial Tree - Jim Edson Borough Arborist 19XX to 2019
83	Mar-20	306	Henry	Arborist	R	Decling tree #978 - structurally deficient. Replace with black gum	A(1)	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N		Prompt action needed prior to leaf expansion
84	Mar-20	--	War Memorial Park	Arborist	R	Decling tree - structurally deficient. Replace with Bald Cypress	A(1)	B	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N		Prompt action needed prior to leaf expansion
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

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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	N	N/A	N/A		Tree 1399 removed 4/7/2020. Pruning 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 pruning list
88	May-20	527	Hill	J. Green	R	Removal of Maple requested. Arborist recommends pruning but not removal	D	B ?	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Add to pruning list
89	May-20	224	Thorn	J Platt	R	Dead Tree - removal requested and approved. Replanting recommended	A (1)	B	N	N	N/A	N/A	N		Add to removal and 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/A	N	N/A	N/A		Add to pruning list. Monitor tree condition.
91	May-20	620	Nevin	No App	O	Inspection of tree requested of potentially dangerous trees. #1508 declining	A	B	N/A	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Add to pruning list. Monitor tree condition. Supplemental irrigation recommended during dry periods.

**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**  
**5/10/2020**

**Requests for action of Borough trees:**

**Borough Elm Trees blocking N Chadwick baseball field lights**

4/20/20 Brough trees on Chadwick were Identified by J Davis of QVRA as nuisance and creating hazard for evening game ball play because limbs blocked light to home plate. Toured site same day w/ Mr. Davis and found two street trees blocked lights (#1400, and #1399). Both trees displayed poor structure and neglect of required corrective pruning doses. Last maintenance pruning appeared to have occurred at least five years ago. No maintenance issues noted in 2018 inventory. Upon inspection, #1399 was found to have extensive (peeling) cracks at every point of scaffold limb attachment; failure was imminent with full leaf expansion. Electric service line to field was within canopy dripline as was metal perimeter fence; failure of tree and electrical breaker could have been catastrophic. Asked A Kuzma w/ Bartlett of feasibility of installing brace rods: determined that cost would exceed benefit (would require 8-12 rods!) and not recommended for such a young tree. Following communications between J Davis, K Brandt, and M Marcinko determined to remove #1399 ASAP (Done 4/7, *stump must be ground*). #1400 and others on Chadwick are recommended for winter maintenance pruning. *That list is still being compiled.*





**Move Hophornbeam at 818 Centennial (M Benedict) for driveway install:**

As previously communicated to STC, M Benedict marked driveway route and following inspection, best plan is to proceed w driveway installation without moving tree: level of infringement is tolerable as long as workers do not injure tree in building process. Tree is more likely to survive infringement than being moved. *If workers and machines can avoid injury to crown and trunk and root infringement does not exceed marking of intended driveway path by more than 3" (to allow for concrete forms), recommend that installation proceed.*





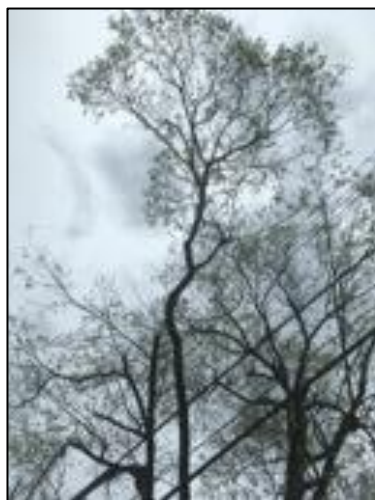
**Maintenance Prune Callery Pear (#245) at Hyde Travel**

Following 4/7 wind event, this pear dropped a few limbs. Viewed Tree w F Verbene 4/14/20. Crown is lopsided. Recommend pruning to remove deadwood larger than 2" and to reduce branch length and weight of overextended branches growing toward building. *Will include on list for upcoming maintenance pruning.*



**Removal request: Resident Terrified of Maple failing at 527 Hill Street**

Following 4/7 wind event, this private property Norway Maple w utility wires, public right of way, structures and parking w/in hazard zone, sustained broken branches that resulted in power outage. The tree was correctively pruned for safety on 4/8 by Tall Timbers. Spoke w J Laird (rep) from Tall timbers 4/14 after F Verbene indicated that the resident wanted to have tree removed. Mr. Laird said the tree no longer presented threat and did not have to go. Viewed tree personally on 4/14 and found that reduction pruning of one branch/lead could further mitigate risk of failure. *Recommend that this tree receive regular inspection and pruning doses to maintain safety, but removal not recommended.*



### **Dead Hawthorn 224 Thorn**

5/11/20 Verified that tree is dead (etiology unknown), Following removal application. Thorns are not w/in reach of general public. Will further evaluate cause of death prior to recommending replacement. ~7in dia. *Recommend removal.*



### **“Dangerous Trees” near 620 Nevin, request for inspection**

Following 5/11/20 email request, investigated two squeaking and/or hollow potentially dangerous trees on Nevin. Found squeaker London Plane Tree (#1454) at 615 Nevin to have declining partial (broken) leader on house side and a live, fairly vigorous lead on street side, An open (0-1/2”) and moving vertical wound wood seam punctuates trunk of tree and is source of squeak. Wood column subtending broken lead is dead for ~12” circumference at least 8ft length at house side of seam. Tree is largely hollow. *While this tree is likely not an immediate danger Recommend that it either have hazardous deadwood and live branch end weight reduction pruning or be removed within the next twelve months. Without correction this tree is at moderate risk of failure in the next few years.*



Found London Plane Tree (#1508) at 620 Nevin to be located beneath distribution lines and to have been long subjected to line clearance pruning. Tree has numerous hollows. Its dwarfed by pruning form means that it's structure is subject to comparatively low loading forces. Tree hollows are a result of large diameter topping and reduction cuts applied some years ago. However, The tree appears to have more than adequate sound wood to support itself. Also, It is again beginning to encroach on distribution lines (communication and electrical) and will likely soon receive another dose of clearance pruning from power company contractor. *Beyond line and road clearance pruning, no other cutting necessary. Recommend that this (and all) large diameter street tree receive volunteer supplemental irrigation during periods of drought to promote its longevity.*



Please everyone stay safe and healthy.  
Respectfully submitted,

Burlton Griffith  
Sewickley Borough Arborist