

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE COMMISSION

Public Hearing
Monday, October 16, 2017
6:30 pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Tree Commission held its public hearing on Monday, October 16, 2017 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission: Howard Fescemyer, Vice Chairman
Mike Jacobson
Jerry Learn
Darlene Chivers

Staff: Lance King, Arborist

Others in attendance: Janet Blew, Jenny Blew and Fred Cannon.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Fescemyer called the Monday, October 16, 2017 Ferguson Township Tree Commission meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

III. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 18th MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Chivers made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 18th meeting minutes with correction. Mr. Jacobson seconded the motion.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING ON TREE REMOVALS AND REPLACEMENTS

Ms. Janet Blew and her daughter Jenny Blew were in attendance tonight to learn more about the tree that is marked for removal in the Township right of way in front of their property. They live at 2518 Harvest Ridge Drive. The tree in question was lost during the storm that occurred in Ferguson Township on May 1st 2017. Mr. King showed the Ferguson Township Tree Commission (FTTC) exactly where the tree was located and that tree is going to be replaced in the spring of 2018. The placement of the tree may be moved if needed during planting so the tree is not too close to the road. Mr. King specified that these trees will be 2.5" caliper, rather than the normal 1.5" caliper as Chestnut Ridge Manor has requested. The Blews also inquired about a tree that was lost in the island on that road. Mr. King told them that usually it is up to the HOA to replace trees in those areas as those trees are not Township trees. He has not yet contacted Mr. Mark Noel to see if there is any interest in the HOA replacing the tree.

Mr. Fred Cannon was in attendance tonight to learn more about oak wilt since he has oak trees on his property. Mr. Cannon lives at 107 Ridgewood Circle which is located in Patton Township. Mr. King gave Mr. Cannon a brief history of the cases of the oak wilt that occurred in Ferguson Township in Park Forest. Mr. King went over how oak wilt is contracted, transmitted, discovered, and treated, as well as how the Township has tried to educate the public about this disease. Mr. Cannon asked if there were any other cases of oak wilt in the local areas. Mr. King said that there has been confirmed cases in Patton Township and the State College Borough. The FTTC reiterated how quickly this can spread if it is not monitored and dealt with.

V. ARBORIST REPORT

Mr. King said that the pruning contract is out to bid and will be due by October 31, 2017. There are 657 trees to be pruned in the contract and his estimate of cost is close to the allotted amount in the 2017 budget of \$33,000. Mr. Learn asked if there are less trees to prune this year and Mr. King said that there are roughly 200 more in 2017 compared to 2016.

Mr. King has been out working with the GPS to update more of the trees in the tree inventory data base. He has started on the next phase of that project which involves going to older developments that do not have sidewalks and determining the size of the right of way. This will then determine if any trees that are planted along the roads are Township trees. He started in Over Look Heights. As he completes a development he will send letters to the homeowners that have trees in the right of ways to let them know that their trees are Township trees. Ms. Chivers said that a neighbor has planted a tree in the right of way down the road from where she resides. She asked Mr. King how that is going to be handled since the homeowners have paid for the tree. Mr. King said a letter will be sent and the results will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Ms. Chivers suggested a future newsletter item include educating the residents on the Right of Way.

Mr. King showed the FTTC a sugar maple tree at 1244 Park Hills that a resident would like to have removed. Mr. King drove out to the location and took pictures of the tree in question. He offered to remove some of the dead wood in the tree but since the tree is still very much alive he will not remove the tree.

Mr. King requested funding in the 2018 budget for a resistograph, 70 additional tree plantings, certification as a Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (stormwater, rain garden, MS4, and other related topics), and a summer intern to assist with the tree inventory.

Mr. King updated the FTTC on the issue of the missing tree on Barnstable Lane. The judge ruled in favor of the homeowner and found him not guilty. The FTTC members expressed their frustration at having an ordinance that will not be upheld by the legal system. At this time, it is not known if the Board of Supervisors will appeal the judge's decision. Mr. Modricker would like Mr. King to organize a meeting at Ferguson Township and invite local landscapers and contractors. The purpose of the meeting would be to meet the Township Arborist and help educate those in attendance about the ordinances and regulations of Ferguson Township. Mr. King stated that he feels that in order to have people attend he may be able to offer continuing education credits. The FTTC members felt that having the meeting will not achieve much in the way of stopping companies or individuals from breaking the ordinances in Ferguson Township.

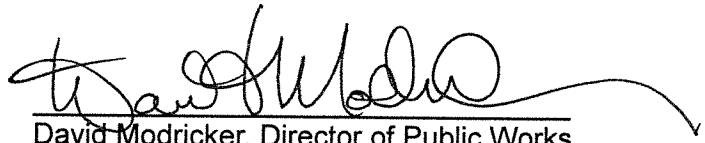
VI. COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION MEMBERS

No communications.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the October 16, 2017 Tree Commission public hearing was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Modricker', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

David Modricker, Director of Public Works
For the Tree Commission