

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, September 16, 2019  
5:30 PM**

**I. ATTENDANCE**

The Tree Commission held its public meeting on Monday, September 16, 2019 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

**COMMISSION:**

Howard Fescemyer, Chairperson  
Marc McDill  
Mike Jacobson  
Scott Pflumm  
Allyson Muth

**STAFF:**

Lance King, Arborist  
David Modricker, Public Works Director  
David Pribulka, Township Manager

Others in attendance were: Summer Krape, recording secretary; Student (declined to disclose name), here on assignment from Penn State.

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Fescemyer called the Monday, September 16, 2019 Ferguson Township Tree Commission meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

**III. CITIZEN'S INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

A Penn State student was present to learn more about community sustainability and the role of the Tree Commission for a class assignment. Dr. Fescemyer stated that the Tree Commission's role in the Township is to help decide what trees to plant around the Township consider, the health of trees, advise on tree planting in new developments, and tree protection. Mr. Modricker stated that the Township website has a lot of information that she may find helpful as well.

**IV. AUGUST 19<sup>TH</sup> MEETING MINUTES**

Dr. Fescemyer asked for a motion to approve the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, per the corrections the Commission discussed. **Dr. McDill made a motion to approve and was seconded by Dr. Muth. The motion passed unanimously.**

**V. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

**Dr. Muth nominated Mr. Pflumm to be the Vice Chair of the Tree Commission and Dr. Fescemyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**VI. RIDGE OVERLAY DISTRICT**

Dr. Fescemyer asked Mr. King and Mr. Modricker what a Ridge Overlay District is and where it's located in the Township. Mr. King showed the Commission a zoning map and explained where the Ridge Overlay District is located Mr. Pribulka explained that an overlay district is a set of regulations that supersedes

the underlying zoning regulations. The Ridge Overlay District has more specific regulations for that specific area, it is as an overlay on top of the underlying zoning district. Mr. King stated that this district has a lot of preservation components such as tree preservation that maintains or replaces 25% of the trees in that area.

#### **VII. OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

Mr. Pflumm stated to the Commission that he and Dr. Muth were nominated for the outreach and education subcommittee. They decided their first order of business was to make a mission statement. Their plan is to formulate a mission statement, decide on strategy, identify goals, come up with possible programs, and then propose budget requests. Mr. Pflumm and Dr. Muth drafted a mission statement and reviewed it with the Commission. The Commission discussed wording and came to a conclusion to blend the language found in ordinance 911 with the language proposed by Mr. Pflumm and Dr. Muth. Mr. Pflumm stated that he wants to make sure residents are okay with how money is being spent and the Commission is addressing the outreach/education correctly. Dr. Fescemyer stated that an example of possible outreach would be talking to a civic group and providing refreshments.

Mr. Pflumm stated that the next meeting he would like to discuss specific goals the Commission would like to achieve and from there figure out appropriate programs. Dr. Muth stated that there is an event being held in the Township the Musser Gap called "A Walk in Penns Woods." Dr. Muth asked if any Commission members would be interested in attending to greet people and answer questions. The event will be held Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:00 PM. Dr. Muth asked if staff could print some publications, and supply tables, chairs, a tent, and possibly some sort of refreshments. Dr. Muth and Mr. Pflumm will be attending. **Dr. Fescemyer made a motion to staff this event, Mr. Pflumm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **VIII. TREE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

Dr. Fescemyer stated that he and Dr. Elmendorf have made great strides with drafting the preservation ordinance. They almost have a full draft ready to share with the Commission. Dr. Fescemyer stated that the ordinance will be a lot like the tree preservation ordinance from White Marsh Township.

#### **IX. OAK DISEASE MITIGATION PROPOSAL**

Dr. McDill stated that there are dozens of trees that are dead and dying in Patton Township. Dr. Fescemyer stated that he spoke to Ted Martz from Bartlett Tree Experts and Ted stated that he believes the issue in Patton Township is a combination of oak wilt and chestnut oaks dying a natural death. Mr. King stated that Ian Groy from Bartlett Tree Experts did a presentation for Patton Township and Mr. Groy stated that 90% of the trees he looked at were chestnut oaks and 90% of the trees looked at he couldn't find the root collar and he has no idea where they are. Mr. Groy believes they have been buried for a long time and this could be contributing to the high mortality. Mr. King explained that Bartlett would

like to set up a test plot area in the Park Forest area on chestnut oaks to determine what is going on. Dr. McDill explained that he would like Ferguson to be prepared and approach this better than Patton Township did by offering residents to pay for testing and offer education. Dr. Fescemyer and Mr. King both agreed they don't recommend tax payer money would be appropriate for this. Dr. McDill stated that he believes education is a good start. Dr. Muth suggested having Bartlett come use trees in Ferguson as a test project.

**X. 2019 C-15 STREET TREE PRUNING CONTRACT**

Mr. King stated that GIS staff is currently working on the street tree pruning maps the Commission will see at the October meeting. The areas in this contract will be Greenleaf manor subdivision, Saybrook, and Pine Grove Mills neighborhoods. Mr. King stated that there will be between 750-800 trees in this contract. The contract will go out to bid on October 7<sup>th</sup> with a bid opening on Nov 12<sup>th</sup>, and consideration for award by the Board of Supervisors on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

**XI. ARBORIST REPORT**

Mr. King updated the Commission on new planting opportunities. Stonebridge HOA will hold a meeting this week and will decide on the plantings they want for the common areas. He proposed a plan of forty two trees and he is waiting for feedback on species. Mr. King will start the Tree City USA application next month. This will be the fourth year he has applied for Tree City USA designation. Mr. King stated that last week some public works employees attended chainsaw training. The training included safety and tree removal techniques. Mr. King stated that he was notified about another tree in Pine Grove Mills that could possibly have oak wilt. The tree was tested and came back negative. Mr. King asked Bartlett Tree Experts to retest. Mr. King stated that he will be inspecting trees from the fall planting contract. He will be looking to see if these trees have any leaves or buds and will do final inspection in April. Last week he met with staff from COG and Centre Region regarding the Whitehall Road Regional Park. They brought the same plan that was previously submitted. Mr. Pflumm asked about the tree software that was discussed at the last meeting and where that stands. Mr. Kings stated that there is a record of all public trees but not private trees. Pruning contracts can be searched in Township Capital Project folders or by using GIS software.

**XII. COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Dr. Fescemyer stated that he was contacted by Dr. Song who is a resident living in Teaberry Ridge. Dr. Song is concerned about a tree that is in front of his property. He stated that tree is dead/dying and wants to know what can be done about it. Mr. King stated that they are purple sand cherries a species that was picked by the development or HOA not the Township. Mr. King explained that there are two trees in that development and they do have black knot. Mr. King stated that if it is a sizable tree he could try and save it. Dr. McDill and Dr. Fescemyer are both in favor of cutting them down and replacing them.

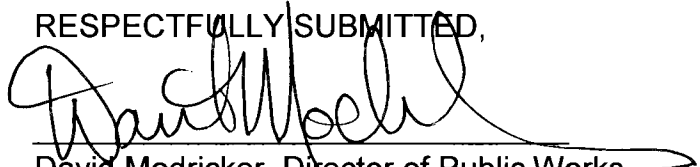
**XIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**XIV. OTHER**

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

The September 16, 2019 Tree Commission meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



David Modricker, Director of Public Works  
For the Tree Commission