

Westwood Shade Tree Advisory Committee - Minutes – March 14, 2011

Attendance: S. Scherba, L. Hayes, V. Sauer, C. Leyden, J. Russo and P. Grefrath

Meeting began at 7:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Linda Hayes at 7:30 PM, Sheryl Scherba read the Open Public Meetings Law Statement: "This meeting which conforms to the Open Public Meetings Law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a regular Westwood Shade Tree Advisory Meeting. Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board."

Telephone Messages:

- resident at 170 Lexington Ave requests a tree
- resident at 400 Washington Ave requests a tree
- resident at 57 Clairmont wants tree removed
- resident inquired if he could plant an apple tree on his property.

This meeting was attended by the following guests :

Westwood Mayor John Birkner

John Anlian, Ridgfield Park Commissioner, lawyer, and community forester.

Chris opened the meeting with a statement explaining our jurisdiction in the borough of Westwood.

A discussion was had on the concerns of STAC:

Lack of ordinance enforcement

No copies of building plans are provided to STAC

The building plans that are finally obtained do not always show trees on the sites.

Linda brought the following recent building sites and the problems STAC encountered:

Paragon – Plans were received in early 2009 – STAC counted and measured trees on property and provided written statement as to the restitution required for this project within weeks of receiving the plans – it was determined that no one on the board ever saw our written restitution request and therefore no restitution was awarded.

Westwood Blvd – again as soon as we were able to get the plans, trees were counted and measured and restitution was set by STAC – the building code official cut the amount down by more than half.

Mayor Birkner

Mayor Birkner stated that we should have copies of the plans or at the very least notification that the plans exist and are available in the building department for our review – this notification should state clearly the address of the property in question, not just the lot and block#.

He asked that STAC provide him with guidelines for communicating with our committee – a directive to the protocol for maintaining the information flow with our current code. Mayor Birkner will relay our concerns to the Planning and Zoning boards and building department officials. Stressing communication and cooperation between the boards to bring us all together.

Birkner also stated that all members of STAC should have a westwood.gov email address and that email correspondence should go through this. – no longer use personal email. Peter will get that in the works.

John Anlian

John spoke to STAC about the following:

- Committee vs. Commission – stressing that for liability purposes becoming a commission is the better option.
- Side walk program
- Questions and concerns regarding the new ordinance helping us create through the csip grant we received.

Council Liaison – Peter G.

Peter reported that at the line-by-line budget meeting we requested \$22,978 for our 2011 budget – this was cut down to \$10,000 – but by the end of the meeting Raymond Herr brought up the restitution account as having \$21,884 and so the budget got further cut to zero.

Meeting ended at 10PM