

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Tree Commission**  
**September 30, 2015**

The State College Borough Tree Commission (TRC) met on Wednesday, September 30, 2015 in the Council Room of the State College Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. Chairman Kerlin called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Members Present**

Nicholas Kerlin, Chairman; Bruce Rohrbach and Ken Tamminga

**Also Present**

Alan Sam, Arborist/Environmental Coordinator; Terree Michel, Office Manager and other interested parties.

**Public Hour**

No one in the audience wished to discuss items not on the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes**

There were no minutes to approve.

**Public Hearing**

Chris McMullen of 345 Ridge Avenue is on the list approved at the last Public Hearing to have a tree removed and replaced with a Red Oak. Mrs. McMullen would like to have a Coffeetree, which was recommended by landscape designer Derek Kulp, planted instead. Chairman Kerlin asked if there were any comments and Mr. Tamminga stated that was a nice tree and recommended a motion to approve, Mr. Rohrbach seconded the motion.

Marie Buss of 433 East Mitchell Avenue had a tree replaced with a Tulip Poplar recently and it reminded her to ask about the side of her property. Ms. Buss is requesting to have two trees planted along November Alley or allow them to plant the trees at their expense. Mr. Sam commented that nothing had been proposed for this site and it would cost the property owner approximately \$100 per tree for the planting if approved. Ms. Buss stated there had been two trees there before that had not been replaced and if this would be possible, could the trees be planted in the spring. Mr. Sam noted he would check out the site before the November meeting.

Brenda Carver of 280 Nimitz Avenue said they purchased the home in March. There are two trees that are to be taken down, one do to lawnmower damage, and she doesn't feel they should be responsible for the replacement costs of this tree. Mr. Sam was in agreement.

Mr. Sam read an email from a resident at 500 East Foster Avenue (Attached). At the corner of Hetzel Avenue and Foster Avenue, a tree was planted by the family which now holds sentimental value. The tree is causing a site distance problem which the Engineering Department confirmed. Mr. Sam's recommendation was to remove the tree or offer to allow the property owner to relocate the tree onto their property. The Commission agreed.

Mr. Sam read another email from a resident at 296 Nimitz Avenue (Attached). The resident is in support of removing the tree, but is also asking that tree not be replaced. The property owner thinks the replacement tree will cause a site distance problem as well as issues with snow plowing. The proposed replacement tree is the American Linden. Mr. Tamminga does not see a problem and recommends going forward as planned. The other Commission members agreed.

The resident at 1151 Westerly Parkway is not in favor of the Hybrid Elm (as approved at the September 16, 2015 Public Hearing) as the suggested replacement tree. Mr. Tamminga indicated he would agree on a suitable replacement and Mr. Sam suggested a Red Oak. The Commission was in agreement with Mr. Sam's suggestion.

Chairman Kerlin asked for a motion to approve the removals and replacements as presented except for alterations made at this Hearing. Mr. Tamminga motioned to approve, Mr. Rohrbach seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

This closed the Public Hearing.

### **Items of information**

Mr. Sam provided a draft of the 2016 Tree Commission Work Plan and asked for any recommendations for corrections, additions or deletions to the work plan. Mr. Tamminga asked that the tree list be updated and if there were any areas to focus on during the drive-arounds. Mr. Sam suggested looking at the Parks which he would add to the work plan and asked the Commission to look over the work plan and provide feedback by the next meeting in November.

Chairman Kerlin asked if there was any information on the vandalism of trees and have any steps been taken to help with this problem. Mr. Sam responded that it is mostly in the Fraternity District and around the High School. Larger trees have been planted in these areas, as well as an anti-vandalism informational program several years ago which seemed to help. Mr. Rohrbach inquired about placing tree guards around trees and Mr. Sam replied that they do routinely add them to trees in the downtown. Chairman Kerlin asked what type of damage had been done to the trees and Mr. Tamminga and Mr. Rohrbach both commented that it is mostly broken or bent tree branches.

Mr. Sam noted that in November, the Commission will be requested to give an update to Council. The Work Plan will be used for the basis of this update.

## **Reports of Interest**

Arborist Report: Mr. Sam noted that he had completed his inspections of the parks and has identified the trees that should be removed. Many of the recommended removals are dead or dying ash trees. Following is a summary of trees to be removed in Borough Parks:

- Lederer Park – 16 trees
- Clover Leaf – 2 trees
- East Fairmount Park – 3 trees
- Sunset park – 4 trees
- Tussyview Park – 1 tree
- Orchard Park – 13 trees
- Highpoint Park – 1 tree
- Holmes Foster Park – 5 trees

A device called a “Resistograph” was used to drill questionable trees in the Parks, which will show the amount of internal decay in the tree. Mr. Tamminga asked if the threshold was at least 30% of the wood decayed and Mr Sam replied he usually uses 35%.

Mr. Tamminga updated the Commission on the discussion by the Penn State Tree Commission concerning improvements along East College Avenue near the Health and Human Development Building. Along with a new 10 foot shared use path, they have removed the fence and old landscaping but added new trees. Ken is in favor of adding more trees similar to other recent Penn State projects. Although the Commission has no direct control over the area he encouraged members to voice their opinions to the Penn State Tree Commission.

Mr. Tamminga also asked about the status of the College Heights School and plans for landscaping it. He suggest they could add more trees and possibly even develop a small neighborhood park.

Chairman’s Report: Chairman Kerlin had nothing to report.

## **Future Meeting Dates**

- Thursday, November 12 at 12 p.m.

## **Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Tamminga motioned to adjourn and Mr. Rohrbach seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Terree Michel, Office Supervisor