



Minutes of STAC Meeting of July 14, 2004

Attending: Ruth Bowers, Arny Galpern, Arnold Henderson, Gary Minkoff, Karen Swaine

Meeting commenced 8:10 p.m. **Minutes of June.** Approved.

Correspondence. 1) The Shade Tree Federation sent subscription forms; Ruth will handle this. 2) The National Gardening Association sent a bill for zinc plant tags for the Path to Donaldson. Arnold will pass it to Loren Muldowney of the Environmental Commission, who has been handling that project along with Carol Avelsgaard.

OLD BUSINESS

Fall Street Tree Planting. DPW tree staff is changing. Frank Troy, who has been handling this project for DPW, has been promoted to foreman and may have less direct a role. The borough may choose its contractor from the NJ DOT Good Neighbor State Planting Contract if the contractors and rates seem acceptable. This avoids seeking bids. Derek Green, assistant to Nick Trasente, is awaiting the list-posting on the DOT web site. Frank estimates that by August 1, DPW will have sent letters to residents (to agree to water), with October a likely planting time.

Path to Donaldson Park. The project is complete. Treegators (watering bags) and some tools were purchased by Loren Muldowney for this grant project. She has already placed treegators on most plantings, with the rest soon. DPW will water. Sloping parts of the mulch beds should be leveled under the bags to improve flow.

NEW BUSINESS

Street-Tree Pruning by STAC. Some years ago, the Borough asked STAC to remove tree ties and trim lower branches as a new street tree grows during its first two or three years. These small branches can be trimmed by volunteers with hand tools (rather than DPW), preventing future interference with passers-by. We thought some members would like training. Karen will email members to join her for a pruning demonstration. Members can then do sections of the town, perhaps in two-person teams so one drives while the other observes trees. Members can ask the Borough for a photo ID.

Membership. The Borough's list is outdated. Arny will distribute a revised list and also talk directly with members to be sure who wishes to continue. The mayor may then wish to make the appointments formally.

Ideas for More Volunteers. STAC needs more volunteers (members or not) for workdays at the Native Plant Reserve or elsewhere. Is some time other than Sunday morning better? Does the workday itself offer enough satisfaction?

Announcements & Miscellaneous Business.

- **Workday 18 July at Native Plant Reserve, 9-11 a.m.** Try to come at least part time. Arnold will bring juice as refreshment.
- **Sites Around Town.** 1) **Cleveland Ave.** DPW has had two street trees near 51 Cleveland examined and recommended for removal. (One has base rot.) The owner may ask an arborist for a second opinion. 2) **South Seventh Near Woodbridge.** Karen reported a tree with ropes on the root ball still in place, and will cut them. 3) **"Sticks"** left standing after a tree has been partly removed are normally removed in a later contract. Sometimes (as at Fourth and Raritan) a tree resprouts. Gary will mention to DPW that in such cases the tree crew should consider whether the tree is sufficiently healthy and attractive in its new form to leave it. 4) **Trash Can.** Karen will recommend to DPW that the trash can at Second and Raritan be moved farther from the bench and planters, as its presence deters bench use. Gary may find the opportunity to point this out to DPW personnel during this Friday's survey walk on Raritan Ave. Gary discussed next spring's transformation of Raritan Ave. under the Main Street Program, and possibly Cool Cities. Both include trees.
- **Native Plants to Tend.** Ruth has been holding in her yard native plants (shrub dogwoods, spruce and pine seedlings, etc.) for later planting in our open spaces. Karen agreed to take them for tending during Ruth's August trip.

Adjourned: 9:40 p.m. No August meeting. Next meeting 8 September, 8 p.m.