

**Swissvale Shade Tree Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes, February 8, 2017**

**Members Present:** Heather Lyle, Gib Miller, Kurt Summersgill, Terry Ward

**Others Present:** Borough Councilman Tim Ward; Jared Manzo, NMRWA Urban Forestry Manager; Swissvale resident, Kirsten Raether

The meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

**Old Business:**

In recent communication, Jeff Bergman, the Director of Tree Vitalize, indicated to Gib that there is no money for applications other than for the city of Pittsburgh. However, he encouraged SSTAC to complete the application process in case money did become available. Jared agreed that it was worth it for us go through the process.

Kurt provided the committee with a list of Swissvale residents interested in street trees. Gib had marked the locations on a map, making it easy to identify clusters to include in the Tree Vitalize application. There are 14-15 possibilities that will be shared with Brian Crooks, the forester/arborist for Tree Vitalize with whom Gib, Heather, and Terry will meet on February 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. Each proposed site must be reviewed as to sidewalk width, nearby utility poles/wires, access to residences, etc. Tree Vitalize also reviews each location before awarding a grant to plant trees. Some tree requests shall be denied if proposed sites aren't up to standards, and Tree Vitalize selects the types of trees to be planted.

The committee worked on completing the application. Jared will create the map to be included with the application. Heather will complete a letter to the Borough describing any in-kind services necessary before planting. Greg Bachy will have a copy of the draft and the application will be submitted to Clyde Wilhelm to be put on the Council agenda for February 22<sup>nd</sup>; up for approval at the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting to meet the submittal deadline of March 17<sup>th</sup>.

Jared, Heather, and Gib discussed the new NMRWA Forest Master Plan and its steering committee. The first meeting, held on Feb. 2, included an analysis of the canopy coverage. Jared informed the committee that Edgewood is starting a tree committee. One proposed result of the master plan will be a professional tree inventory for Swissvale, Wilkinsburg, and Edgewood. Jared shared that NMRWA has some dedicated funding for this inventory. As lead, Jared is asking for input from the 9 Mile Run watershed communities, and will be doing lots of outreach activities. Outreach activities are needed to learn how people within the Watershed feel about trees. Surveys and continued tree information in the Swissvale newsletter are two ways to gather needed data. Jared will send out his notes from the steering committee.

**New Business:**

Kirsten Raether is interested in being appointed to the SSTAC to replace Matt Mecurio. Gib will get in touch with Clyde Wilhelm concerning this matter and present her name to Council at the next meeting on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Action Items:**

March 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.-Pruning event in Wilkinsburg along Douglass Drive.

**All committee members:**

- review grant application sent by Gib
- solicit more tree requests
- edit Open Tree Map as we notice problems with data. The username is **SSTAC** and password is **Swissvale**.

**For the March meeting:**

- Ways to commemorate Arbor Day this spring (Some ideas besides Arbor Day included Earth Day on April 22, hosting activities on Clean-Up Day or during Community Days, mulching/tree care could be included.)

- Develop a plan informing Swissvale residents about the tree process (how residents are selected for trees as well as informing residents if they are not selected.)

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 8 at 7 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Terry Ward