



Swissvale Shade Tree Advisory Committee
March 10, 2021 meeting minutes

Members Present: Gib Miller, Julie Ann Mountain, Cynthia Pagesh, Perry Recker, Kurt Summersgill, Mike Takacs, Terry Ward,
Other Attendees: Jan Raether, Randy Geysens - NMRWA,

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

- **Status of Tree Prep for Spring 2021**

The Swissvale application for trees from Tree Vitalize was approved, with 4 trees being planted on Harrison Street and the remaining 18 in the Swissvale Business District. The DPW for the Borough of Swissvale will be cutting the tree pits and remediating the soil for the planting. As of this meeting, three pits have been cut. Gib has been informed that trees will be delivered to their locations on Tuesday, April 6th. Half of the trees will be planted by the WPC on the 6th with the remaining trees planted on April 7th. Following Covid protocol, volunteers are not to attend to help plant, although SSTAC members familiar with this type of tree planting are welcome as long as wearing masks and proper planting gear.

- **Recap of Tree Pruning Event on February 20th**

Trees in the Park Avenue Square and those at Church Street and Braddock Avenue were pruned. Bagworms were found at the sites and removed. Randy discussed ways to remove bagworms. Physically removing them is the best way, however, chemical control can be used as a last ditch effort. The SSTAC should check yearly, either in the spring or winter, to make sure the bagworms have not returned to the trees from which they were removed. Records should be kept of their removal.

- **Arbor Day Celebration**

Julie Ann will create tree tags for those trees which have been planted but not yet tagged. The tags will contain the tree name, Latin name, and planting date. Included on the tag will be the names and logos of the groups responsible for planting the trees including Swissvale Shade Tree Advisory Committee, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Swissvale Rotary, and Nine Mile Run Watershed Association. We will have the new proclamation for Arbor Day to read on that day. We will need to get in touch with the mayor as soon as we finalize our plans.

The actual date of this event will be decided at the next SSTAC meeting on April 14th.

- **New Interest in Street Trees**

The committee is looking to find ways to increase interest from residents for street trees. Trees can be put in front yards. Nine Mile Run Watershed Association does have a program for yard trees.

- **Duquesne Light Pruning Updates**

Jan met with Duquesne Light about the removal of trees in surrounding boroughs. Duquesne Light wants to plant saplings in available open spaces designated by the boroughs in which trees have been severely pruned or removed. Gib will talk to Greg about available sites in Swissvale. Memorial Field or behind Dickson School were mentioned as possible locations.

- **Other business**

Three new people attended this month's meeting. To bring them up to speed, Gib gave a brief overview of events and activities in which the committee has been involved including spring and fall pruning and/or planting events, the yearly Arbor Day event, Tree City USA, and involvement with Tree Vitalize, Tree Pittsburgh, and Western PA Conservancy. The SSTAC does spring and fall events each year. Open Tree Map provides a map of all the trees in the borough. Gib is sending the information to those who attended the meeting.

Cynthia asked about planting trees in the vacant lots within the borough. Julie Ann suggested that some of these lots could perhaps be turned into little park lets. Since these lots are not necessarily Borough of Swissvale property, it would need to be discussed with Borough government. This is a good start to the conversation.

Cynthia asked about removing the invasive vines that are choking the trees in the woods behind her home. It was said that these woods actually are part of Edgewood and their Shade Tree Committee has been discussing them at some point. This could be a good project in which Swissvale's committee could partner in a project with Edgewood's committee. Jan will bring it up at the next Edgewood meeting.

Next meeting: April 14th at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.