

Swissvale Shade Tree Advisory Committee

March 9, 2016

Members present: Melissa Jenereski, Heather Lyle, Matt Mercurio, Gib Miller, Kurt Summersgill, Terry Ward

Others present: Jared Manzo, Greenlinks Coordinator, NMRWA; Darryl Rapp, Swissvale Borough Council Member

The meeting began at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Tree Ordinance

The Tree Ordinance was passed unanimously by Swissvale Borough Council at the March 2nd Council meeting.

Tree Vitalize Grant

Jared will be submitting an application to Tree Vitalize for trees to be planted in the fall, if awarded. The grant will be fulfilling tree requests received for Harrison and Michigan Streets.

Website

Matt can do a mock up and get the committee's comments for the website. The committee needs to decide what to put on the website: Duties of the SSTAC, FAQ, maps, grants, etc.

DCNR Meeting

Darryl reported on the DCNR meeting he attended with Greg Bachy, Clyde Wilhelm, and the representative from the DCNR that was held on March 1st. Grant money for two possible surveys, a tree survey and a pruning grant, was discussed at the meeting. However, a borough must have a valid tree survey to be eligible for a pruning grant. Since the DCNR provides grants throughout the state of PA, it would be unlikely that Swissvale would receive both grants. The tree survey grant from the DCNR would be for roughly the same amount of money as the survey done with Wilkinsburg coordinated by NMRWA. The pruning grant would be for a maximum of 20 trees, at approximately \$1000 per tree, resulting in a grant of around \$20,000.

Swissvale has never had a professional tree survey. The last one done in 2010 was done on a volunteer basis. Data collected from a professional survey would be of more valuable as a tool for maintaining and increasing Swissvale's urban canopy. Ideally, this survey should be completed for data use for the fall.

After discussion, the committee's decision was to recommend that Council pay for the tree survey to be done with Wilkinsburg and then apply for larger grant from the DCNR. This recommendation will be taken to the next Council meeting. The SSTAC needs to work closely with the Borough and the DPW and establish a good working relationship. Clarification of the role and focus of the SSTAC is also needed to

help with this. Gib will be creating an outline for the committee to critique before the next Swissvale Council agenda meeting on March 30th.

Future plans

After discussion, the SSTAC is interested in becoming a Tree City, USA through the Arbor Day Foundation. This would recognize Swissvale as doing the minimum for trees but sounds good.

Things to do before the next meeting

- *read and critique Gib's outline to be presented to Council
- *Plan to attend the March 30th Swissvale Council meeting
- *read and add more detail to the Tree Guidelines/add stump removal guidelines
- *compile ideas for the webpage

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40.

Next meeting: April 13 at Wilkins Community Center

Minutes prepared by Terry Ward