

APPENDIX

D

June 12, 2006

Boyertown Tree Program Partners Meeting Minutes:

The following individuals were present from 6:30pm -7:40pm:

Renee Gladieux – BBB Tree Committee
Carolyn Harris - BBBDesign/Tree Committee
Julianne Schieffer – PA Ext. Svc
Jake Lea – BBB Design Committee
Frank Dech – Hopewell Nursery
Marianne Deery – Borough Council
David Horn – Architerra, PC
MaryLou Haddad – BBB Design Committee
Tom Moore – Berks County Community Foundation (BCCF)
Kristie Fach – Berks County Conservancy (BCC)
Richard Mappin – Berks County Community Foundation (BCCF)
Nancy Boyer – Tree Fund/BCCF
Linda Flederbach – BBB Main Street Manager

The purpose of the meeting was to come to an agreement about how to successfully establish and sustain the Boyertown Tree Program.

I. Introduction of Partners – Renee introduced herself and the group each introduced themselves and what organization or interest they represented.

II. Background of Greening Initiative – Many of those present at this meeting were present at an initial meeting in June 2005. Renee asked if someone from the June 2005 meeting could briefly state the purpose of that initial meeting. Tom Moore stated that a vision of a tree lined Boyertown was outlined. That vision was given a beginning with the establishment of a Tree Fund by Nancy Boyer through the BCCF whereby funding grants for the planting and maintenance of trees would be awarded to Borough residents and business owners who applied. Renee gave a brief accounting of the progress that has been made in making that vision a reality:

June 2005: Twin Turrets Bed and Breakfast plants three street trees in accordance with currently accepted street tree specifications. Boyertown Tree Fund established through BCCF and fundraising event to promote interest in the greening effort. BCC receives a grant from the BCCF Tree Fund to conduct a feasibility study and Street Tree Inventory for the Boyertown Tree Program.

July 2005: The BBB establishes a Tree Committee.

Dec. 2005: First beautification project in downtown Boyertown completed by the Design Committee of the BBB. The Inner Walkway receives first grant from the Tree Fund and generous donations from the business community.

January 2006: BBB Tree Planting Guidelines and Informational Flyers approved and made available at the BBB office. BBB Design Guidelines for facade and property improvements finalized and approved.

April 2006: Earth Day dedication of the Inner Walkway project.

June 2006: Two downtown businesses, Body-Borneman Insurance and Bause's Super Drug Store have contracted with a local landscaper to plant trees in front of their locations. That means 7 new trees going in on Philadelphia Ave.

Renee stated that because of this progress and community effort she thought a mandate for a Shade Tree Commission was in evidence. A Shade Tree Commission would have to be authorized by an ordinance. Renee stated that she had spoken with Pat Spaide, Borough Manager, and gotten a tentative spot on the Public Works Committee agenda on July 26th in order to make a presentation to them on the viability of a Shade Tree Commission. Kristi said that the BCC was going to try and finish the 2nd phase of their study by mid July.

Dave Horn spoke about "hardscape" improvements such as resurfacing of roadways and replacement of heaving and crumbling sidewalks and their effect on newly planted trees. He stated that as long as the resurfacing was superficial there would not be significant risk involved to newly installed trees. Sidewalks can be replaced without much damage as long as care is taken to protect the tree pit. Ideally, hardscape improvements would take place and trees would go in after or as the work is being completed. However, regardless of when the tree is planted, the key is to provide root channels for the maturing trees within a relatively short period of time. Continuous plantars, under sidewalk channels and garden beds provide critical air and water pathways for root systems. If this is provided than roots will not damage roads, curbs and sidewalks and the tree will thrive.

III. Updates:

A. Summary of BCCF Tree Fund – Tom Moore briefly outlined the purpose of the Tree Fund. That is to provide a source for funding the planting and maintenance of trees within the boundaries of the Borough of Boyertown. Richard said that the Fund would review projects on a case by case basis. Marketing the Fund at this time is not taking place but Richard stated that money for worthwhile projects would be available.

B. Summary of BCC's grant for Boyertown Tree Program Project – Kristi Fach outlined the BCC Boyertown Tree Program. She distributed copies of the map that was used to illustrate the Tree Inventory. John Hackman of the BCC used a GPS software program to manipulate the data that was inputted. The data, once it is collated can be used to develop a tree maintenance program. Julianne mentioned that a field be added to the spreadsheet to prioritize problem trees so that the group developing a maintenance program be absolved of liability should any legal questions arise. Kristi discussed the four phases of the Boyertown Tree Program. Phase Two will encompass the main Street boundaries. Phase Three will encompass one block outward from the Main Street boundaries and the Fourth Phase will reflect the Borough Boundaries. Kristi needs cost estimates for planting and maintenance. She asked Marianne what the Borough spends currently on these things. Marianne stated that the Borough operates on a shoestring. The Street crew of three men collect leaves and handle debris but they do no pruning, felling or stump grinding. No figures were available at the meeting. Kristi said she would try to contact pat Spaide. Renee said that she would gather some cost estimates

from business owners and try to assist in gathering the information from Borough Hall. Julianne said that she could also forward Kristi cost information to add to the BCC study.

C. Summary of BBB Tree Committee – Renee said that the Tree Committee has, in effect, served as a steering committee for the Boyertown Tree Program and that she thinks it should continue to coordinate the combined efforts of the various groups present until a Shade Tree Commission is formed. She suggested that a short term goal for the Tree Committee should be to achieve Tree City USA status through the National Arbor Day Foundation. The group felt that would be appropriate and worthwhile. Julianne said that we were just about there after discussion concerning the four criteria that the Arbor Day Foundation sets for Tree City USA status. It was pointed out that funding from the Arbor Day Foundation is substantial and opens the door for other state and federal grant opportunities.

D. Summary of the BBB Design Committee – Jake Lea told the group that the Tree Committee is part of the BBB Design Committee and works with the Design Committee on beautification projects. The Design Committee has published guidelines for façade improvements in the Main Street area. The current focus is on the South Reading Avenue sector where there are few overhead wires and encumbrances for street and building improvements. Dave Horn has designed a streetscape concept of South Reading Avenue and this was presented to downtown business owners at an educational event in April. The concept design was also presented to the community in the Boyertown Times along with an article on the subject.

E. Summary of Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forest Council – Julianne Schieffer told the group that she is available to offer technical support as we continue to develop our Tree Program. The Borough is empowered by State law to establish a Shade Tree Commission. There is an archaic state law on the books that limits how much money a Borough can receive for tree planting and maintenance. She shared with the group about Pottstown and how they have been able to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles in establishing a tree program. They have established a sustainable maintenance program as well as a capital funding campaign to achieve their goals. Julianne feels that we have accomplished much in a short time and that we are on the right track towards a model green community. She cautioned that we must establish solid organizational control with the full support of the Borough before we rush ahead with projects. She also cautioned about placing the correct tree in the proper location to avoid future maintenance costs. Frank Dech shared with the group his knowledge about a new cultivar of *Zelkova serrata* that is designed to work well under utility wires and along narrow streets. It is called “Musashino”. The lack of a maintenance plan and improper planning in general is the single biggest reason for future problems such as heaving sidewalks and dead, diseased or dying trees. Again, Julianne felt that a Tree City USA goal would set our community apart and give the community a valuable psychological boost towards future greening efforts.

F. Summary of Borough of Boyertown's current tree maintenance –

Marianne Deery explained that the Borough is a “lean machine” that operates on a very tight budget. The Borough contracts with an outside source to handle dead, dying and diseased tree removal. They do no pruning or watering. Pesticide/Herbicide application requires a license and the street crew is receiving training in this. Borough Ordinance requires property owners to care for the trees that are on a public easement.

G. Summary

***On Going** - The BBB Tree Committee will continue to coordinate and cooperate with the BCC as the BCC works to complete the 2nd Phase of the Boyertown Tree Program. Target date for completion of this phase is mid July.

*** Short Term Goal** - The BBB Tree Committee will begin the process for applying to the National Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA Program. No target date set yet.

*** Long Term Goal** - The BBB Tree Committee will prepare a presentation for the July 26th Borough Public Works Committee to consider a proposal to form a Shade Tree Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm and no date was set for another meeting.