

STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
APRIL 09, 2024
6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: THE STRATFORD REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING FOR APRIL 09, 2024

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND PRAYER:

STATEMENT OF ADVERTISEMENT:

Notice of this meeting has been provided to the Courier Post and The Retrospect and is posted on the Borough Hall Bulletin Board stating the time and the place of the meeting.

ROLL CALL:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| MAYOR LINDA HALL | DONNA PLATT, BOROUGH SOLICITOR |
| COUNCIL PRESIDENT MICHAEL TOLOMEO | RON MORELLO, POLICE CHIEF |
| COUNCILMAN PATRICK GILLIGAN | JOHN D. KEENAN JR, BOROUGH ADMIN/DEPUTY CLERK |
| COUNCILWOMAN TINA LOMANNO | |
| COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN | |
| COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY | |
| COUNCILMAN JIM KELLY | |

PUBLIC PORTION FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: (5 min per person)

Motion to go to open public portion on agenda items only:

Motion: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

Motion to close public portion on agenda items:

Motion: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

REPORTS:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ORDINANCE & PROPERTY | Councilman Patrick Gilligan |
| FINANCE & REVENUE | Councilwoman Tina Lomanno |
| POLICE | Councilman James Kelly |
| EMERGENCY SERVICES | Councilman Michael Tolomeo |
| PUBLIC WORKS & LIGHTING | Councilman Stephen Gandy |
| PUBLIC EVENTS | Councilwoman Dawn Martin |

OLD BUSINESS:

ORD. 24:04 TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

Motion to open the public hearing on ORD. 24:04: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

Motion to close the public hearing on ORD. 24:04: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

Motion to adopt ORD 24:04 _____ Second: _____ RCV: _____

NEW BUSINESS:

ORD. 24:05 TITLE 39 STATUTES STRATFORD COMMONS HOA (Public Hearing will be May 14, 2024)

Motion to Introduce ORD. 24:05 on First Reading by Title Only

Motion: _____ Second: _____ RCV: _____

STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

APRIL 09, 2024

6:30 P.M.

ORD. 24:06 AMEND CH 10.44 TRAFFIC SCHEDULES (Public Hearing will be May 14, 2024)

Motion to Introduce ORD. 24:06 on First Reading by Title Only

Motion: _____ Second: _____ RCV: _____

RESOLUTIONS:

THE BELOW LISTED RESOLUTIONS WILL BE ADOPTED AS A CONSENT AGENDA

Council may at this time request to remove any of the resolutions from the consent agenda and they can be voted on separately.

RES. 24:64 TOTAL DISABLED VET – B. 6, L. 12 14 Cooper Ave

RES. 24-65 AUTHORIZE APPLIC POLICE GRANT – FY23-24 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure/Safety \$156,000

RES. 24-66 AUTHORIZE SHARED SERVICE STRATFORD COMMONS HOA – Trash/Recycling Collection

RES. 24-67 GRANT APPLICATION COUNTY OPEN SPACE – SAO \$25,000

Motion: _____ Second: _____ RCV: _____

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

| | | | | |
|--|--|---------|--|-----|
| Animal checks | | through | | |
| Manual checks | | through | | |
| Payroll checks | | through | | and |
| Payroll checks | | through | | |
| Automated checks | | through | | |
| Various electronic transfers and potential interim payments to | | | | |

Motion: _____ Second: _____ RCV: _____

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Motion to open the meeting to the public for Good and Welfare: (5 min per person)

Motion: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

Motion to close the public portion for Good and Welfare:

Motion: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

ADJOURN:

Motion: _____ Second: _____ Voice Vote: _____

ORDINANCE 24:04
AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH CHAPTER 2.48 - TREE REMOVAL

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stratford:

SECTION I. Purpose:

An ordinance to establish requirements for tree removal and replacement in Borough of Stratford to reduce soil erosion and pollutant runoff, promote infiltration of rainwater into the soil, and protect the environment, public health, safety, and welfare.

SECTION II. Definitions:

For the purpose of this ordinance, the following terms, phrases, words, and their derivations shall have the meanings stated herein unless their use in the text of this ordinance clearly demonstrates a different meaning. When consistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words used in the plural number include the singular number, and words used in the singular number include the plural number. The use of the word "shall" means the requirement is always mandatory and not merely directory.

- A. "Applicant" means any "person", as defined below, who applies for approval to remove trees regulated under this ordinance.
- B. "Critical Root Radius (CRR)" – means the zone around the base of a tree where the majority of the root system is found. This zone is calculated by multiplying the diameter at breast height (DBH) of the tree by 1.5 feet. For example: a tree with a 6" DBH would have a $CRR = 6" \times 1.5' = 9'$.
- C. "Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)" means the diameter of the trunk of a mature tree generally measured at a point four and a half feet above ground level from the uphill side of the tree. For species of trees where the main trunk divides below the 4 ½ foot height, the DBH shall be measured at the highest point before any division.
- D. "Hazard Tree" means a tree or limbs thereof that meet one or more of the criteria below. Trees that do not meet any of the criteria below and are proposed to be removed solely for development purposes are not hazard trees.
 - 1. Has an infectious disease or insect infestation;
 - 2. Is dead or dying;
 - 3. Obstructs the view of traffic signs or the free passage of pedestrians or vehicles, where pruning attempts have not been effective; or

4. Is causing obvious damage to structures (such as building foundations, sidewalks, etc.);
- E. "Person" means any individual, resident, corporation, utility, company, partnership, firm, or association.
- F. "Planting strip" means the part of a street right-of-way between the public right-of-way and the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic or between the abutting property line and the curb or traveled portion of the street, exclusive of any sidewalk.
- G. "Resident" means an individual who resides on the residential property or contractor hired by the individual who resides on the residential property where a tree(s) regulated by this ordinance is removed or proposed to be removed.
- H. "Street Tree" means a tree planted in the sidewalk, planting strip, and/or in the public right-of-way adjacent to the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic. This also includes trees planted in planting strips within the roadway right-of-way, i.e., islands, medians, pedestrian refuges.
- I. "Tree" means a woody perennial plant, typically having a single stem or trunk growing to a considerable height and bearing lateral branches at some distance from the ground.
- J. "Tree Caliper" means the diameter of the trunk of a young tree, measured six (6) inches from the soil line. For young trees whose caliper exceeds four (4) inches, the measurement is taken twelve (12) inches above the soil line.
- K. "Tree removal" means to kill or to cause irreparable damage that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. This includes, but is not limited to, excessive pruning, application of substances that are toxic to the tree, over-mulching or improper mulching, and improper grading and/or soil compaction within the critical root radius around the base of the tree that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. Removal does not include responsible pruning and maintenance of a tree, or the application of treatments intended to manage invasive species.

SECTION III. Regulated Activities:

A. Tree Replacement Requirements

1. Any person who removes one or more street tree(s) with a DBH of 2.5" or more, unless exempt under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table below.

2. Any person, who removes one or more tree(s), as defined as Tree removal, with a DBH of 6" or more per acre, unless otherwise detailed under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table.

The species type and diversity of replacement trees shall be in accordance with Appendix A

Replacement tree(s) shall:

1. Be replaced in kind with a tree that has an equal or greater DBH than tree removed or meet the Tree Replacement Criteria in the table below;
2. Be planted within twelve (12) months of the date of removal of the original tree(s) or at an alternative date specified by the municipality;
3. Be monitored by the applicant for a period of two (2) years to ensure their survival and shall be replaced as needed within twelve (12) months; and
4. Shall not be planted in temporary containers or pots, as these do not count towards tree replacement requirements.

Tree Replacement Requirements Table:

| Category | Tree Removed (DBH) | Tree Replacement Criteria (See Appendix A) |
|----------|---|--|
| 1 | DBH of 2.5" (for street trees) or 6" (for non-street trees) to 12.99" | Replant 1 tree with a minimum tree caliper of 1.5" for each tree removed |
| 2 | DBH of 13" to 22.99" | Replant 2 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed |
| 3 | DBH of 23" to 32.99" | Replant 3 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed |
| 4 | DBH of 33" or greater | Replant 4 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed |

B. Replacement Alternatives:

1. If the municipality determines that some or all required replacement trees cannot be planted on the property where the tree removal activity occurred, then the applicant shall do one of the following:
 - a. Plant replacement trees in a separate area(s) approved by the municipality.

SECTION IV. Exemptions:

All persons shall comply with the tree replacement standard outlined above, except in the cases detailed below. Proper justification shall be provided, in writing, to the municipality by all persons claiming an exemption.

- A. Residents who remove less than four (4) trees per acre that fall into category 1, 2, or 3 of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table within a five-year period.
- B. Tree farms in active operation, nurseries, fruit orchards, and garden centers;
- C. Properties used for the practice of silviculture under an approved forest stewardship or woodland management plan that is active and on file with the municipality;
- D. Any trees removed as part of a municipal or state decommissioning plan. This exemption only includes trees planted as part of the construction and predetermined to be removed in the decommissioning plan.
- E. Any trees removed pursuant to a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved environmental clean-up, or NJDEP approved habitat enhancement plan;
- F. Approved game management practices, as recommended by the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife;
- G. Hazard trees may be removed with no fee or replacement requirement.

SECTION V. Enforcement:

This ordinance shall be enforced by the Borough Code Enforcement Officer during the course of ordinary enforcement duties.

SECTION VI. Violations and Penalties:

Any person(s) who is found to be in violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject to a Warning Notice and potential fine of \$50.

SECTION VII. Severability:

Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this Ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this Ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this Ordinance.

RESOLUTION 24:64
AUTHORIZING CANCELLATION OF PROPERTY TAXES DUE
TO TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN TAX EXEMPT STATUS

WHEREAS, an application has been received from Opal Diane Ramirez, owner and resident of 14 Cooper Ave., Block 6 Lot 12, for an exemption from the payment of property taxes; and

WHEREAS, Opal Diane Ramirez has suffered from a service-connected disability and has been declared 100% permanently and totally disabled by the U.S. Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor has determined that Opal Diane Ramirez has submitted the required documentation and is entitled to an exemption from property taxes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stratford, that Opal Diane Ramirez's property shall be placed on the Exempt Property List effective April 3, 2024.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Borough Tax Collector is authorized to cancel property taxes billed for the 2nd Quarter 2024 in the amount of \$1,484.95 and refund said amount to the property owner's mortgage company, Corelogic, if received as payment of the 2nd Quarter.

CERTIFICATION

I, John D. Keenan, Jr., Deputy Borough Clerk, do hereby certify the foregoing Resolution to be a true and complete copy of a Resolution duly adopted at a public meeting of the Governing Body of the Borough of Stratford held on April 9, 2024.

John D. Keenan, Jr. RMC
Deputy Borough Clerk

RESOLUTION 24-65

AUTHORIZE APPLICATION FOR THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FY 2023-FY 2024 CONSOLIDATED RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. "GRADE CROSSING AND TRESPASS PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM FOR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT" IN THE AMOUNT OF \$156,00.00

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stratford Police Department has applied for the FY 2023-FY-2024 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Program for Grade Crossing, Trespassing Prevention and Enforcement funding, for law enforcement matters related to railways within the borough of Stratford to include, crimes, traffic enforcement, trespassing, and law enforcement matters related to the railways and beyond.

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stratford Police Department has applied for a 12-month funding grant in the amount of \$156,000.00 for salary, wages, fringe costs related to the grant program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stratford to authorize and support the Stratford Police Department's Application for Grade Crossing and Trespassing Prevention and Enforcement for Local Law Enforcement to increase police protection and enhance public safety.

CERTIFICATION

I, John Keenan Jr do hereby certify the foregoing Resolution to be a true and complete copy of a Resolution duly adopted at a public meeting of the Governing Body of the Borough of Stratford held on April 9, 2024.

John D. Keenan, Jr. RMC
Borough Administrator
Borough Deputy Clerk

RESOLUTION 24:66
AUTHORIZE SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH STRATFORD COMMONS
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

WHEREAS, the Stratford Commons Homeowners Association, Inc. is in need of trash and recycling collection services; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stratford is able to provide this service to the Stratford Commons Homeowners Association, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the terms of the agreement shall be from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by Mayor and Council to authorize the execution of the Shared Service Agreement between the Borough of Stratford and the Stratford Commons Homeowners Association, Inc. for the service of trash and recycling collection for the term of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

CERTIFICATION

I, John D. Keenan, Jr., Deputy Borough Clerk, do hereby certify the foregoing Resolution to be a true and complete copy of a Resolution duly adopted at a public meeting of the Governing Body of the Borough of Stratford held on April 9, 2024.

John D. Keenan, Jr., RMC
Borough Administrator
Borough Deputy Clerk

RESOLUTION 24-67

**SUPPORTING CAMDEN COUNTY OPEN SPACE GRANT APPLICATION FOR
STRATFORD ATHLETIC ORGANIZATION**

WHEREAS, the Stratford Park Commission is submitting a grant application for a Camden County Open Space Grant; and

WHEREAS, this application will continue to preserve and improve ballfields of which the Stratford Athletic Organization (SAO) is the custodian; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by Mayor and Council to support the Stratford Athletic Organization (SAO) in their grant application for a Camden County Open Space Grant.

CERTIFICATION

I, John Keenan Jr, Borough Clerk, do hereby certify the foregoing Resolution to be a true and complete copy of a Resolution duly adopted at a public meeting of the Governing Body of the Borough of Stratford at a meeting held on April 9, 2024.

John D. Keenan, Jr, RMC
Borough Administrator
Borough Deputy Clerk