

Borough of Red Bank
Shade Tree Committee
April 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Remedios Quiroz.

Members Present: Bill Brooks, Brigid McCarthy, Debbie Marks, Remedios Quiroz

Absent: Samantha Flores-Castillo, Boris Kofman, Joanna Rovito

Guest: Mr. Jenik, 59 South St., Red Bank

Topics Discussed (updates in *italics*)

1. *March 21 meeting minutes approved.*
2. Training. *Boris attended a webinar.*
3. Tree Inventory Update – *Brigid and Boris did Maple Ave, Irving Pl, Arthor Pl, E. Bergen Pl, Wickoff Pl.*
4. NJUCF Stewardship Grant.
 - a. *NJUCF conducted the first inspection. Three trees need to be replaced: 98 Catherine St (broken), 18 Marlin Pl. (topped), 22 Bank St. (appears dead – check again in a couple of weeks). Red Bank can request its 90% reimbursement after the replacements are planted.*
 - b. *DPU has watered the trees. **Bill** will call DPU to make sure they have the locations for all the gator bags. They missed a few.*
 - c. *Brigid brought up composing a letter to residents where a Borough tree is planted near their property, explaining that there is a fine and replacement fee for damaging the tree. The letter should also encourage the property owner's cooperation and sense of community for the project. Remedios said it should be mailed from the Borough and asked **Brigid** to write it.*
5. Broad St. project. *Some of the London Planetrees are in decline. Most of the trees (except the one considered beyond saving) got treated with a chemical solution (fertilizer, root growth hormone). Several trees north of White St may not survive. **Bill** will discuss another treatment with the contractor. The tree at 42 Broad was removed.*
6. White St Parking Lot.
 - a. *Need to find out if there's a threshold for how much money can be awarded to a contractor without a bid when using the Shade Tree Trust Fund – Councilmember **Mirandi**.*
 - b. *STC will pay to have approximately 6 trees planted. **Bill** asked for a draft plan projected for the fall to:*
 - i. *Move existing plants to Bellhaven Park - by DPU*
 - ii. *Replace soil*
 - iii. *Plant new trees*
7. Recommended Species List.
 - a. *'Valley Forge' American Elm is on the list. At the webinar on tree diseases that Boris attended this cultivar was described as "poor form and prone to failure". 'New Harmony' was recommended instead, among a few others. NJTF has seen them in NJ nurseries. **Should we update the list?***
 - b. *American Yellowwood. Added to the list. Need to have the updated list posted on the website. **Remedios**.*
 - c. *Consider planting small species, like Dwarf Chestnut Oak and Myrtle Oak. **Bill** will look into it.*
8. *Arbor Day. STC had a table at the Green Fair on April 20. Remedios, Debbie, Bill, Boris, Jim Crawford (for Brigid), Lou DiMento attended.*
9. South St. Road Project. *Bill walked it with Borough officials and T&M. 8 to 10 trees near E. Bergen are to be taken out as per contract. **Bill** requested T&M to share the plans with STC. **Bill** suggested Japanese Tree Lilacs instead of Crabapples and talked about diverse species and staggered planting.*
10. *HPC is considering including significant trees in the ordinance. HPC decided to drop the landscaping requirement after reading the draft DEP tree ordinance (see below).*
11. *DEP published the draft Model Tree Ordinance. Once finalized, all municipalities would be required to adopt it. It covers private trees and Trees of Significance in addition to public trees.*
12. Flyers *have been stapled to some downtown trees.*
13. *TD Tree Days 2023 is accepting grant applications.*
14. *Bill discussed the issue of using money in the Shade Tree Trust Fund before it is considered in*

excess by the State.

Maintenance/planting requests

1. County trees. **Bill** is working with the County Div. of Shade Tree on getting hazardous trees removed. The County will next prioritize the removal of the 2 Willow Oaks on Harding west of Clay. *The other Willow Oaks may need to be removed too.*
2. 51 E. Westside Ave. - two mature Pin Oaks were removed. According to Cliff, the property owner did it because they were lifting the sidewalk. The property owner promised to plant a tree on the lawn near the sidewalk. If only one is planted, STC would like \$500 deposited into the Shade Tree Fund. *Code Enforcement requires written documentation of the promise from the homeowner.*
3. Trees around Globe Ct Garage. The 4 trees in front of the garage on E. Front St have been replaced with Lindens (2 Littleleaf and 2 Silver Lindens). In addition, the pits have been covered by rubber mulch "rings" (actually, squares). These "rings" also now cover 2 existing trees on Globe Ct. Issues with this: 1. The species are wrong for planting under wires. 2. The rubber mulch rings may not be good for trees - <https://blog.davey.com/2018/06/are-rubber-mulch-rings-good-or-bad-for-trees/> This is the third batch of trees in that location in the last 5 years or so. We had recommended to the hospital in 2019 to have the soil tested, but we never heard back from them. Joanna spoke to her contact at Riverview Hospital. They said the hospital had planted trees as per STC guidelines. There doesn't seem to be any evidence of that occurring.

Response from the facilities manager.

1. *The trees will be replaced with Red Spire Lindens this spring. (Which trees? Do they mean Greenspire?)*
2. *Synthetic mulch is appropriate for water passage in the walkway area. (Based on what information?). **Bill** will investigate where NYC uses synthetic mulch.*
4. Oak at Wawa on W. Front St. There's a big basal cavity, and dieback. *The County will remove it. **Bill** will follow up.*
5. Boris noticed that many Zelkovas have crossing branches. Here's [one example](#) at 88 Linden Pl. Should we see if DPU can handle it? **Bill** will follow up with DPU.
6. Warwick Gardens on Pinckney Rd. Inquiring if there's a program regarding the purchase and planting of a shade tree. *Remedios referred them to the Tree Species Recommendation list.*
7. 32 N. Bridge Ave. One of the newly planted trees has low branches over the street. *Boris pruned them.*
8. 59 South St.
 - a. *A resident contacted STC to express a concern that trees on South St, including this one, would be removed, and would not like to see that happen.*
 - b. *The resident at 59 South St, Mr Jenik attended the meeting. See Public Comments below for details.*
9. 17 John St. *The mayor inquired about the sidewalk lift. STC recommendation is for DPU to ask the resident to serpentine the sidewalk around the roots of the tree.*
 - a. *Per Bill shaving the roots is not a good idea because the main roots are just about 24 inches in the ground. He is investigating fixing the sidewalk by smoothing out the edges over the roots.*
 - b. *There is also a branch growing towards the house that the resident reported; it is on the maintenance list.*
10. 25 Oakland St. *The homeowner would like to have the Callery Pear removed because it is shadowing the lawn and has branches near service wires. She has been pruning it herself over the years. The tree appears healthy, but can use some pruning. Remedios exchanged emails and Bill talked to the homeowner in person. Added to the maintenance list.*
11. 135 Harding Rd. *Homeowner requests one or two trees to be planted on Spring St. Added to the list.*
12. 64 Monmouth St (Teak). *Bob Zuckerman (RiverCenter Director) is concerned about pedestrians tripping on the bricks lifted by the roots. Bill suggested lifting the bricks, enlarging the diameter, cutting the roots and mulching. There is a similar problem in front of the Dublin House. **Bill** will investigate further.*

Public Comments

*Mr. Jenik stated that the Red Maple in front of his house at 59 South St. has had black spots for 4 years that are getting larger. He has lived there for 22 years and has done a lot of work on his house. He is concerned that the tree is diseased and will fall on the house. **Bill** said he will inspect the tree and ascertain whether it needs to be pruned or taken down and replaced. Mr. Jenik said he approved of any option as long as it was safe. Bill said the South St. road work had to be taken into account.*

Planning/Zoning Board Applications

1. *40 Harding Rd (Azalea Gardens). Updated plans.*
 - *Per ordinance, a total of 8 trees are required, 3 on Harding Rd and 5 on Hudson Ave. No street trees are proposed.*
 - *They are proposing nine 2.5" caliper Red Oaks just inside the sidewalk - 3 on Harding and 6 on Hudson.*

Recommendations -

- *Increase the size of the proposed 9 trees to 3.-3.5' caliper. If they do, then it can be considered as meeting the 8 trees requirement. If they don't, they should deposit \$4,000 (\$500 per tree required) to the Shade Tree Fund as required by ordinance.*
2. *156 W. Front St.*
 - *Per ordinance, 1 tree is required on W Front St. No tree is proposed.*
 - *Boxwood Hedges are proposed along the fence on the West side of the property and some on the East side and in front of the building*

Recommendations -

- *They should provide for a tree pit on the sidewalk on W Front St. and plant a tree as required by the ordinance. The tree should be 3-3.5" caliper at the time of planting.*
 - *If they don't plant a tree, they have to donate \$500 to the Shade Tree Trust fund.*
 - *They should replace the Boxwood Hedges with Emerald Arborvitae or some other trees used for screening.*
3. *78 Bridge Ave.*
 - *Oakland frontage 60' - trees required 2, no trees proposed.*
 - *Bridge frontage 66' - trees required 2, 1 Zelkova proposed.*
 - *Total trees required per ordinance – 4.*
 - *Trees deficiency - 3.*

Recommendations -

- *They should plant 2 trees on Oakland and an additional tree on Bridge. The trees should be 3-3.5" caliper at the time of planting. Per ordinance, they should donate \$500 to the Shade Tree Fund for every tree not planted for a total of \$1,500 for three trees not planted*
- *Replace Zelkova proposed on Bridge with a species appropriate for under or near electric wires. Please refer to the STC Tree Species recommendation list.*

No Updates

1. Hazardous trees survey. On hold.
2. Consider changing the ordinance to increase the cost per tree for developers (currently \$500). Find out what a typical tree costs today. **Bill** may have an idea. **Remedios** will check what Shrewsbury's ordinance says.
3. Consider planting trees on lawns near the sidewalk. Councilwoman Mirandi ran it by the Borough Attorney, who advised that homeowner would need to sign an indemnity form. Bill suggested the option of giving the homeowner a voucher to purchase a tree. Councilmember **Mirandi** to run it by the Borough Attorney.
4. Mechanic-Wallace parking lot project. Most of the trees have been removed. **Bill** will ask Shawna for the landscape plan.
5. River's Edge public access path (end of Bank St.) – The developer planted 15 Red Oaks along the path. Remedios and Boris met onsite with the developer Charles Farkou and HOA President Jeff Loonan. The agreement is to replace 4 dying trees and accept \$1500 into the trust fund for 3 trees that have been removed. Mr. Farkou agreed to plant the 4 trees in the spring (2019). Replacement trees have not been planted. Mr. Farkou has deposited \$1500 into the trust fund, per Ms. Ebanks. Councilwoman Mirani talked with Ms. Ebanks, who was under the impression that there were no outstanding issues. Boris forwarded to Ms. Ebanks and Councilwoman Mirandi the emails referencing the outstanding issues. **Shawna** will look into it.
6. 44 Linden Pl. - tree leaning. DPU tried to stake it but couldn't move the tree. **Bill** will take a look.
7. **Terrence** to update the maintenance list.
8. 13 Worthley – The tree has been removed. Need to ensure that a replacement is planted by the

- homeowner after the new house is in place. **Shawna.**
9. Eastside Park - Arborvitae planted by contractor has been removed. Need replacement. **Terrence**
 10. 20 Locust Ave – homeowner nailed [aluminum sheets](#) around the tree, which violates the tree protection ordinance. **Remedios** will refer to Code Enforcement.
 11. Salt in the tree pit of trees on Broad St (in front of RB Catholic HS and St. James) needs to be removed and gypsum added to the pits to desalinate the soil. **Terrence**

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 16 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brigid McCarthy, Acting Secretary

CC: Shade Tree Committee, Mayor & Council, Business Administrator Darren McConnell, Public Utilities Director Terrence Walton, Borough Engineer Ed Herrman, Director of Community Development Shawna Ebanks, Borough Clerk Laura Reinertsen