

Borough of Red Bank
Shade Tree Committee
May 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

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

Members Present: Bill Brooks, Boris Kofman, Brigid McCarthy, Debbie Marks, Remedios Quiroz, Joanna Rovito

Absent: Samantha Flores-Castillo

Guest:

Topics Discussed (updates in *italics*)

1. *April 25 meeting minutes approved.*
2. Training. *None*
3. Tree Inventory Update – *Brigid and Boris did Chestnut, Oakland, West and Pearl streets.*
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. Red Bank can request its 90% reimbursement after the replacements are planted. *Remedios asked NJTF when they can schedule the work. NJTF recommends to replace in the fall because there is nothing available in the nurseries now.*
 - b. *DPU need to water the trees ASAP as they are all drooping. Terrance confirmed that it will be done.*
 - c. *Brigid drafted a letter to residents where a Borough tree is planted near their property. STC to comment on the draft.*
 - d. *The tree at 3 Berry St. was dug up, not clear by whom or why. The current resident does not want the tree there. To be transplanted to 58 Locust Ave by DPU. Bill will ask Terrance for the status.*
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. *Remedios* will follow up with *Shawna*.
6. Broad St. project. Several trees north of White St. may not survive. *Another treatment will be done in the fall.*
7. White St Parking Lot.
 - a. *STC will pay to have approximately 6 trees planted. Remedios shared a draft plan. Plan for planting next spring; reserve the trees in early fall.*
 - b. *When using the Shade Tree Trust Fund, up to \$44,000 can be awarded to a contractor without a bid, according to the Borough Administrator (via Councilmember Mirandi).*
8. 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. *Remedios* will follow up.
9. 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. *Boris* will 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. *We should try finding them and planting one or two.*
10. 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. *The committee consensus is not to*

proceed with it at this time.

11. Caitlin Gorry is interested in joining STC. Remedios responded that we would keep her in mind when a position becomes available.
12. Arbor Day Proclamation. Signed and posted on the Borough Facebook page.
13. For what purpose can the Shade Tree Trust Fund be used besides planting trees? For example, equipment used to maintain trees? Remedios will ask Councilmember Mirandi to ask the Borough Attorney.

Maintenance/planting requests

1. 59 South St. Bill inspected the tree and recommends monitoring it.
2. 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. DPU will do the work.
3. Dublin House. Bricks are lifted by the roots. Bill recommends widening the ring around the tree. Bill will discuss it with DPU.
4. 86 Madison Ave. Homeowner is requesting a status update about the tree lifting the sidewalk. It was referred to DPU last October. The root flare has outgrown the planting strip. Bill talked to the homeowner, who said he didn't want the sidewalk to go on his property, so serpentineing the sidewalk is not an option. Recommend smoothing out the sidewalk – Remedios will email Terrance.
5. 56 W Westside Ave. Two trees removed last year. The homeowner would like to have the stumps ground. Bill reported that it wouldn't be possible because they're surrounded by a stone wall. DPU to talk to the homeowner. Terrance
6. 85 Shrewsbury Ave. The resident is concerned about the condition of the Pear. Half of the branches are dead, so it should be removed by the County. Added to the removals list.

Public Comments

Planning/Zoning Board Applications

No Updates

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. Trees around Globe Ct Garage. The 4 trees in front of the garage on E. Front St have been replaced with 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.
 - a. The trees will be replaced with Red Spire Lindens this spring. (Which trees? Do they mean Greenspire?)
 - b. Synthetic mulch is appropriate for water passage in the walkway area. (Based on what information?).
3. Oak at Wawa on W. Front St. There's a big basal cavity, and dieback. The County will remove it. Bill will follow up.
4. 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.
5. Hazardous trees survey. On hold.
6. 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.
7. Mechanic-Wallace parking lot project. Most of the trees have been removed. Bill will ask Shawna for the landscape plan.
8. 44 Linden Pl. - tree leaning. DPU tried to stake it but couldn't move the tree. Bill will take a look.
9. Terrence to update the maintenance list.

10. 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.**
11. Eastside Park - Arborvitae planted by contractor has been removed. Need replacement. **Terrence**
12. 20 Locust Ave – homeowner nailed [aluminum sheets](#) around the tree, which violates the tree protection ordinance. **Remedios** will refer to Code Enforcement.
13. 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. **Bill** 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.
14. 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, June 20 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Boris Kofman, 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