

Borough of Red Bank
Shade Tree Committee
June 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by Remedios Quiroz.

Members Present: Bill Brooks, Boris Kofman, Remedios Quiroz

Absent: Samantha Flores-Castillo, Debbie Marks, Brigid McCarthy, Joanna Rovito

Guest:

Topics Discussed (updates in *italics*)

1. *May 16 meeting minutes approved.*
2. *Training. Boris attended 2 webinars.*
3. *Tree Inventory Update – Brigid and Boris did Gold St, Monmouth St, White St (including the parking lot), the Borough Hall parking lot, Water St.*
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. *Updated the BA about the status.*
 - b. *Several trees are looking bad. DPU needs to water the trees ASAP.*
 - c. *A letter to residents is ready.*
 - d. *The tree at 3 Berry St. was dug up, not clear by whom or why. DPU put it back in the ground.*
 - e. *Bill will ask DPU to keep track of the trees they water on every round.*
5. *Broad St. project.* Several trees north of White St. may not survive. Another treatment will be done in the fall. *Dead branches over the Broadwalk – Bill.*
6. *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.*
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. *Boris shared the updated list. Remedios requested to have it updated on the website.*
 - b. Consider planting small species, like [Dwarf Chestnut Oak](#) and Myrtle Oak. We should try finding them and planting one or two.
8. 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.*
9. *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. *The dead/dying trees have been replaced with Greenspire Lindens (wrong species to have under wires) - 1 on E. Front St. and 4 on Globe Ct. They are struggling.*
10. *STC FAQ on the website has a broken link. Remedios will follow up.*
11. *Sprint St. Project.* The four trees (3 Serviceberries, 1 Honeylocust) have been planted, mulched and staked by the contractor. Remedios asked BA McConnell who's responsible for watering them.
12. *The Rail Project.* The [two southernmost London Planetrees](#) on Bridge Ave are not looking good. *Remedios will follow up with Shawna.*

Maintenance/planting requests

1. 59 South St. Bill inspected the tree and recommends monitoring it. *Remedios followed up with the homeowner.*
 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 fixed the trip hazard outside the tree pit.*
 3. Dublin House. Bricks are lifted by the roots. Bill recommends widening the ring around the tree. **Bill** will discuss it with DPU. *Tree fence is an option.*
 4. 163 Hudson Ave. Boris observed the Zelkova has serious dieback. *Is the grass around the base preventing water from getting to the roots? **Bill** will take a look.*
 5. 20 Irving Place. Residents want to replace the curb, but while doing this, they want to remove one tree, ball another tree, and then replace the tree they want to remove. Remedios requested additional details from them.
 6. 25 Oakland St. Resident wants to know when the Pear will be pruned.
 7. English Plaza. No action has been taken since we made the recommendations 2 years ago. Of the 8 Serviceberries planted there in 2019, only one is in decent shape. 3 have been removed, 3 are dead, and one is dying.
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/P7tdJ8NxG81gct93A>
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/pahFpg1UUPyunmT59>
- Remedios** will send a follow up email and copy Bob Zuckerman.
8. One of the 9/11 memorial trees in Riverside Gardens died and has been removed. Need to plan replacement? Decide in the fall.
 9. 92 River St. Resident would like to know the procedure for having a tree planted in the ROW.
 10. 270 River Rd. DPU received notification of a tort claim about a trip hazard and is looking for advice. Can't comment since it's in litigation.
 11. 229 Mechanic St. DPU received a trip and fall complaint. Noted.
 12. A resident would like to donate a memorial tree. **Remedios** will follow up.
 13. 130 Bridge Ave on Herbert St. Half of the Red Maple is dead, the sidewalk is lifted. Add it to removal list. - **Boris**
 14. 23 Tower Hill Ave. Boris observed that the Norway Maple has a large dead limb over the front yard. Put it on the maintenance list. **Boris**
 15. Dead tree at BOE building on Tower Hill Ave. **Remedios** will inform Code Enforcement.

Public Comments

Planning/Zoning Board Applications

1. 273 Shrewsbury Ave. Recommendations:
 - a. The 2 Sunburst Common Honeylocusts should be 3-3.5" caliper.
 - b. The 1 Hawthorn should be 3-3.5" caliper.

No Updates

1. 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.
2. 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.
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. 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. 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.
 - 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**
 15. 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 serpentine the sidewalk is not an option. Recommend smoothing out the sidewalk – **Remedios** will email Terrance.

Next meeting: Tuesday, July 18 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 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