

Borough of Red Bank
Shade Tree Committee
October 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Bill Brooks
Adequate notice of the meeting has been provided.

Members Present: Bill Brooks, Michele Brody, Boris Kofman, Debbie Marks (left at 7:35), Brigid McCarthy, Carolyn Robertshaw
Absent: Remedios Quiroz
Ex-officio member: Councilmember Nancy Facey-Blackwood
Guests: Vicky Nelson

Topics Discussed (updates in *italics*)

1. *August and September minutes - approved.*
2. Training. None
3. Tree Canopy Expansion Program.
 - a. *A Yellowwood was given to the Farley family, along with a gator bag. The family planted and watered it, with guidance from STC. The cost was \$100, from Colonial Nursery. Nancy shared a picture with Adriana.*
 - b. *We need to decide on the maximum budget per tree.*
 - c. *We need to come up with a list of suitable species.*
 - d. *Bill suggested considering deer protection going forward. Carolyn suggested windchimes.*
 - e. *Other nurseries to consider, besides Colonial.*
 - i. *Boris visited Previtera's, the owner was busy, promised to get back, but hasn't.*
 - ii. *The Chair of the Monmouth Beach STC told Boris that they've been using Conrad Smith Nursery in Tinton Falls to get the trees for homeowners (in their case, homeowners pay for them, but at a discount).*
 - iii. *Bill's suggestion - LP Stateel in Lincroft, wholesale.*
 - f. *Send offer to other residents on Drummond St. Need to send letters to property owners. Michele will work with Nancy on it.*
 - g. *To improve survivability, Bill suggested considering hiring a contractor to plant these trees and plant larger trees. Carolyn and Debbie agree.*
 - h. *Nancy requested that we give copies of the agreements to the Building Dept. Boris will make a copy of the Agreement signed by Mr. Farley and give it to the Building Dept.*
4. White St Parking Lot. STC will pay for approximately four trees. STC will be under the amount for going out for bid. Planning on planting 4.5" caliper Magnolias (Southern, Star). Debbie suggested using a fence to keep the snow out. Maybe plant 2 trees this year and 2 next.
Maria shared the following questions from the contractors:
 - a. *What height are you looking for? Response: We normally just provide requirements for the tree caliper size. As long as the caliper size is met, the height doesn't matter.*
 - b. *Can you provide dimensions of the planting area? Response: Bill, Michele and Debbie measured the dimensions. Michele sent the photos she took to Bill. Bill will work with DPU on the requested information. Bill sent drawings to DPU.*
 - c. *Where in the parking lot should these trees be planted? Response: Bill will work with DPU to define.*
 - d. *Is there a need to remove any dead trees or debris? Response: If DPU can remove the existing plantings, they don't have to be included in the contract.*
5. CFMP. Updates ongoing.
6. Fall Planting. *We have requests from several residents for trees in the ROW. Should we plant them this fall? Bill said there are slim pickings in the nurseries.*
7. *Brigid suggested maybe we should create a list of Great Trees of Red Bank, trees that are not only big but have a story. Any suggestions? Carolyn contacted Tower Hill Presbyterian Church regarding trees planted by the Elkus White family; they didn't have any info.*
8. *Remedios shared a New York Times article on the Benefits of Tiny Forest.*

- a. *Brigid suggested the former Exxon lot by the bridge as a good site for a Tiny Forest. Per Nancy: the borough does not own the property; it's being temporarily used for Colony House parking; perhaps the owner of the property may have an interest in case the borough is unable to buy the property outright.
Remedios' question: Do we have access to the owner of the property?*
- b. *If we can plant, we can apply for the [Natural Climate Solutions Grant](#) being offered by the NJ DEP.*
- c. *Keren Orr of Environmental Consulting, NYC, offered to help us apply for the grant. Her email alerted us to this grant.*

Maintenance/planting requests

1. *Acelero Learning at 144 Drs. James Parker Blvd. called DPU to report that the roots of the shade tree in front of their building have uplifted the sidewalk, creating a trip hazard. This location is a learning center for children, and there is concern that someone might trip and get injured. Per Boris' inspection: There are 2 trees in front of the property. The sidewalk around one of them was replaced very recently. The other one has a very slight lift, which could be easily smoothed out. Recommendation: Smooth out the lift with cement. Remedios conveyed the STC recommendation to DPU. *Jim Informed the resident that the tree will not be removed and that they are responsible for the sidewalk.**
2. *114 Maple Ave - Remedios reported mushrooms are growing on the trunk and one long dead branch sticking out over the road. [Bill](#) will contact Steve Becker.*
3. *Tree Planting at Count Basie Field - request to plant one or two trees near the track to provide shade to the Daycare Centre playground. Per our past recommendation, it is doable if the existing plantings in the area are removed. Ms. Ford has reiterated her request. We still have to know if Parks and Rec is OK with trees planted close to the tracks. [Nancy](#) expressed concerns over the impact on the users of the track.*

Some questions to consider if we are going to plant there.

- a. *Who will clear the existing plantings?*
- b. *What species should be planted there?*
- c. *When will the tree(s) be planted?*
- d. *Who will take care of the tree(s)?*
- e. *Boris' concerns: I hope they realize the implications - leaves in the fall, possible lifting of the surface, bird poop. We don't want them coming back in 5 years and asking to have the trees removed.*
4. *146 Chestnut St - Dead Redbud was added to the removals list in July. Boris requested to hold off on removing because he saw an offshoot sprung up next to the dead trunk. Monitor.*
5. *14 Locust Ave - request to trim the borough tree. The branches are touching the house. Referred to DPU.*
6. *22 Fisher Pl - request to elevate the crown of two Borough trees and prune the branches touching the trees in the front yard. Referred to DPU*
7. *54 East Bergen Pl - request to elevate the crown of the Borough tree. Referred to DPU*
8. *37 Locust Ave - Boris observed fruiting bodies at the base of the crabapple. Remove. [Boris](#) will notify Terrence.*
9. *Monmouth St - Boris asked [Nancy](#) if trees will be planted in the tree pits on Monmouth Street as part of the Streetscape Project. Jim sent a response, which Nancy will forward to us.*
10. *120 Monmouth St – new trees are not looking good. Boris asked Terrence if DPU was watering them. DPU watered them. Per Terrence: the contractor is responsible for these trees as per the maintenance bond. He alerted the engineer to the issue.*
11. *30 Washington St - The Sugar Maple has core rot and dieback. Half of the trunk has no bark. Added to the removals list.*
12. *11 East Sunset Ave - The resident reported a sidewalk lift. Per Boris' inspection: The tree (Red Maple, 19" DBH) is in good condition. It has a small cavity in a pruning wound, and a girdling root. It has outgrown the planting strip width. The sidewalk can be repaired without damaging the tree roots. We should monitor the tree.*
13. *Dead tree in the new Marine Park Parking lot - The tree was removed. Boris asked Jim if the tree would be replaced. No response so far. [Nancy](#) will follow up.*
14. *Trees by Globe Court Garage - One of the Lindens on the W. Front St side has been removed. The*

- other three are not looking good. **Debbie** will reach out to the hispital.
15. 152 Shrewsbury Ave - The Callery Pear has several fungi around the base. It's a County tree. Added to the removals list.

Planning/Zoning Board Applications

None.

Public Comments

Ms. Nelson expressed concern over a tree at 106 Leighton Ave located on private property, which may be removed. We explained that STC has no jurisdiction over private trees, but the Planning and Zoning Department has a process to deal with private tree removals.

No Updates

1. Linden PI Road Program - Per Boris: "Jim Gant said the design is going to DOT soon. I asked him when we get a chance to comment on it. He said he'll talk to the engineer. He suggested creating an ad-hoc committee of STC and EC representatives to review these plans going forward." **Nancy** will follow up.
2. 33 Elm Pl. Bill reports that the Pin Oak has rot. **Bill** will follow up.
3. County trees. **Bill** is working with the County Div. of Shade Tree on getting hazardous trees removed. DPU will try to remove the ones they can. The County is ok with that. We'll let the county know when we remove one of their trees.
4. Broad St. Project. Long term plan – enlarge the tree pits and put in better soil; root pruning and planting smaller trees. Debbie contacted River Center about the replanting. River Center can't do it until fall.
5. Website. More updates are needed. **Remedios** will follow up.
 - a. Procedure for requesting permission to plant their own tree in the Right of Way (FAQ #3). The request form is just a PDF. How is it going to get submitted? And the links for selecting a species and uploading a picture are not active.
 - b. Add link to the new tree ordinance.
 - c. Remove outdated info.
 - d. Membership table
 - e. Add the 2024 Accomplishments Report
9. Letters to residents.
 - a. Michele suggested providing care instructions to help save trees. **Bill** volunteered to help write the letter. Debbie suggested that the letter be posted on the STC website.
 - b. Brigid requested a new policy to mail letters from the STC to residents from Borough Hall rather than deliver by hand. Firstly, the letters have to be left in precarious places that allow them to be lost or ignored. Secondly, a mailed letter would convey legitimacy and the importance of the committee and would be well worth the cost. This would apply to future communications.
 - c. Should the letter explain tree care?
 - d. How to get it to all residents and also using bulk mailing. **Debbie** said she would send Remedios a list of rentals and landlords. Remedios said this letter should go out soon.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 18 at 7:00 PM.
Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Boris Kofman, Secretary

