

Borough of Red Bank
Shade Tree Committee
December 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by Remedios Quiroz
Adequate notice of the meeting has been provided.

Members Present: Bill Brooks (left at 7:30), Boris Kofman, Brigid McCarthy, Debbie Marks, Remedios Quiroz
Absent: Michele Brody, Carolyn Robertshaw
Ex-officio member: Councilmember Nancy Facey-Blackwood
Guests:

Topics Discussed (updates in *italics*)

1. *November 18 minutes - approved.*
2. *Training. Michele attended a webinar.*
3. Tree Canopy Expansion Program.
 - a. We need to decide on the maximum budget per tree.
 - b. We need to come up with a list of suitable species.
 - c. Other nurseries to consider, besides Colonial.
 - i. *Boris and Lou DiMento visited Holmdel Nursery. They no longer have deciduous trees on-site.*
 - ii. Bill's suggestion - Casola Farms.
 - d. Offer to other property owners on Drummond St.
 - i. Nancy and Michele drafted a letter. *It will be translated into Spanish.*
 - ii. Need to put the request form and blank agreement online. Remedios will follow up.
 - e. *Remedios sent the agreement signed by Mr. Farley to Shawna.*
 - f. Ms. Swett accepted our offer. *Boris visited the site and suggested a planting location to Ms. Swett. Awaiting a response.*
 - g. *Nancy asked the Borough Attorney if the Agreement could omit the language about the sketch of the planting location, to simplify the process.*
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. 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. Marine Park Rennovations.
 - a. Boris noticed that construction equipment was sitting very close to the trees and there were no fences around the trees for protection. *Per Nancy, "Jim sent an email to the engineers. Construction equipment has been removed from the area where the tree is located and they will be more careful." Boris observed that there is no fencing around the trees, so stuff still gets piled up next to them. Nancy asked Jim if he can request the engineers to require the contractors to put protective fencing around the trees.*
 - b. *A Linden and a London Planetree near the new retaining wall have been removed. Mike Reiser provided the explanation:*
 - i. *The remaining 24" Littleleaf Linden- Per the CME Tree Expert "limbs have been previously pruned from the tree and the cuts did not close, leaving the tree vulnerable to infection and decay. In addition to trunk decay, numerous surface roots have been irreparably damaged with visible decay, due to lawn mowing equipment.*

- The high risk of the tree failing with further potential root loss and the existing decay in its root system and trunk make this removal a necessity for public safety."*
- ii. *The 21" London Plane north of the bathroom building "that we have been monitoring throughout construction due to its close proximity to a proposed retaining wall. We were hopeful that this tree could remain but could not make a determination until the area next to the tree was excavated. We directed our contractor to inform us when that was scheduled so that we could be on-site for excavation, ensure that the excavation was done carefully, and review the existing root structure to make a decision. Unfortunately, the contractor excavated next to the tree this morning when I was not on-site and damaged the roots to the point where this tree is now a hazard (see attached report) Based on review of the roots that were cut, this tree would have needed to be removed regardless; however I had a long conversation with the contractor about this issue and am certain that they will not be excavating anywhere near another tree without me or our Tree Expert on-site.*
 - iii. *The landscaping plan is being updated to include proposed replacement for the 2 trees. Mike will share the updated plan for comment when it is completed.*
6. CFMP. Boris, Michele, and Remedios completed their sections. Further updates were made to make sure it address all the items included in the provided sample CFMP. **Debbie** is finishing up her section.
 7. Letters to residents.
 - a. *Michele drafted care instructions to help save trees. Debbie suggested that the letter be posted on the STC website. It will be translated into Spanish.*
 - 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. *How to get it to all residents and also using bulk mailing. **Debbie** said she would send Remedios a list of rentals and landlords.*
 8. Empty Tree Pits. Jim shared with STC a list of empty tree pits and asked for recommendations. Boris commented:
 - a. *Broad St, north of Harding - needs to be coordinated with River Center.*
 - b. *Broad St, south of Harding and Shrewsbury Ave - County Road*
 - c. *Monmouth St - we would like to have trees planted by the Borough. Per Nancy, Jim agreed.*
 9. Linden PI Road Program. *Per Nancy, "Instead of creating an ad-hoc committee of STC & EC representatives to review these plans, the STC was included into the Complete & Green Streets Advisory Committee where the plans when available will be reviewed."*
 10. Tree on Maple Ave (private). *Brigid, Nancy and Boris separately noted that a big private tree was taken down. Per Nancy: A tree removal permit was issued. The Borough tree expert noted the tree was dying.*
 11. Azalea Gardens project. *Boris observed that trees have been planted, in apparent compliance with the landscape plan.*
 12. Shade Tree Trust Fund – almost \$50K.
 13. Great Trees of Red Bank. *Brigid suggested maybe we should create a list of trees that are not only big but have a story. Brigid shared over a dozen potential candidates and is looking for more.*

Maintenance/planting requests

1. Trees by Globe Court Garage - One of the Lindens on the W. Front St side has been removed. The other three do not look good. **Debbie** talked to Sheila from the hospital, who said she'll check on the water source in the garage.
2. 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 Nancy, Parks & Rec is not in favor of planting a tree so close to the track. Tree roots can spread underneath the track surface and cause damage over time. In the fall, leaves and debris would also increase the maintenance workload. Remedios sent an email to Elizabeth Ford.*

3. Dead tree in the new Marine Park parking lot. *Per Nancy, it will be replaced.*
4. 23 Tower Hill Ave. *Bill reported the lead branch fell. This tree has been on our list of trees to be pruned since 2023. Bill said it would be removed.*
5. 60 E Sunset St. *Resident reported to DPU sidewalk lift causing trip hazard. Per Boris' inspection, the tree is healthy. Recommendation: Serpentine the sidewalk around the roots. Remedios responded to DPU.*
6. 326 Shrewsbury Ave. *A car hit two Callery Pears, which were then removed. Will the driver pay for replacements? Debbie observed that the tree hit by a driver at 31 Rector Pl last year has been replaced. How did that happen? Debbie will try to contact the homeowners.*
7. 5 William St. *Sidewalk lift. This is a revisit from earlier in the year. Per our inspection, the sidewalk lift was minimal. Our recommendation was to smooth out the sidewalk with concrete. The resident wants to replace the entire sidewalk but is concerned about cutting the roots. Bill will look into the feasibility of rubberized sidewalks.*
8. 321 River Rd. *The resident contacted DPU to have the dying tree removed. It's a County tree and has been on our removals list for a while.*

Planning/Zoning Board Applications

None.

Public Comments

No Updates

1. Tlny Forest.
 - a. Former Exxon lot by the bridge. Per Nancy: the property is 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. Keren Orr of Environmental Consulting, NYC, offered to help us apply for the grant.
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. Remove outdated info.
 - c. Add the 2024 Accomplishments Report

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 20 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Boris Kofman, Secretary