



# *Borough of Atlantic Highlands*

## *Shade Tree Commission*

100 First Avenue • Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey 07716  
Tel: (732) 291-1444 • Fax: (732) 291-9725



### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC) Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall April 19, 2025, 7pm**

1. The monthly began at 7:05 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Ben Schmoll; Bill Thorne (virtual); Vito Colasurdo (council liaison)
  - b. Absent: Emily Hackett, Uma Parasar; Eileen Cusack (council liaison)
2. Minutes – AC motions to approve March meeting minutes; BS seconds; all in favor
3. Correspondence – none, AC will reach out to the office because this feels unusual
  - a. Update on questionable permit applications from last month: Sheri says there needs to be photos and site plans; she also noted chestnut oaks are having problems right now
  - b. She wants to know where all of this is being tracked: It can't just be RC's binder, it needs to be digitized
  - c. We will need to bring this to RC after giving him a minute to digest after CORE training
4. Treasurer's Report –
  - a. \$16,334.40 is opening balance
  - b. Expenses: \$30.00 for 1 CORE trainings EH
  - c. \$16,304.40 is closing balance
  - d. FG motions to approve; JG seconds; all in favor
  - e. VC says new budget will be approved in May/June, and we should receive funds shortly after approval and he presumes it is the same amount (\$15K), we will inquire again in May/June (to be on top of payments to Davey)
5. Old Business –
  - a. CORE training is complete, awaiting certifications
  - b. Tree Guide: FG received feedback from AC; FG will work on research/layout and cap it around 30 trees
  - c. CFMP: FG and AC will meet before next meeting; AC has logged some volunteer hours
    - i. Davey is out there this week taking stock of public trees
    - ii. The borough has not been very responsive on questions about public land; the school is a question, though it's not public space, it belongs to the board of education; some questions around the circular parcel at the top of the hill and some other questions
      1. The parks are included (not Fireman's Field), the marina area, along the trail, and street trees on main streets (with two levels of priority); plus a sweep for hazard trees



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2. This covers only a couple of hundred trees while the inventory covers 1,500, so leftover budget will cover portions along main trails of AH's sections of Lenape Woods (larger trees will be tagged and a rough species tally will be made; before they start in there they will check in)
- d. Tribute Trees: This remains a place holder but AC did reach out to regarding Valerie Freitas' tree, no response
- e. Earth Month:
  - i. Newsletter: Reviewed layouts and final text edits/additions (edited Sidewalk section for space to re-add Giveaway, etc.) at meeting
    1. Adding \$95 for recycled paper with note on recycled paper
    2. Adding mailer tree graphics to address label side
    3. To printer on 4/17 for arrival by/around 4/21
  - ii. Sapling Giveaway: 4/26, 10am-12pm
    1. BS will provide folding table, has sign
    2. AC will put Bartlett in touch with BS for sapling drop off/hand off
    3. Can DEP hang Tree City flag?
    4. FG to send VC PDF of flyer to print 25-30 copies; he will pass to JG, JG/EH to distribute along First Ave.
  - iii. Poster Contest: JG/EH are working on this, EH did a write-up for the school newsletter and is promoting it at the school
    1. AC makes motion to approve \$250 for prizes, BS seconds, all in favor
    2. Open to grades 1-6, six first prizes (\$15 gift card to Nicholas Creamery), six second prizes (\$10), and go from there with the rest of budget; \$50 restaurant giftcard for the teacher, it can be Nicholas Creamery giftcards
    3. Will need a sub-committee meeting to judge on Thursday 5/1
    4. Deadline is 4/28
  - iv. First Avenue Upgrade: CORE training Q&A suggested hedge maple and Japanese lilac for size and hardiness
    1. These trees will be high maintenance (fertilizing, consistent pruning)
      - a. Need a budget for this
        - i. Perhaps we plant less trees and offer a discounted resident tree program instead (the supplier we worked with in 2024 offers this), savings can support maintenance
        - ii. Also consider an adopt-a-sapling program (see IG)
    2. Tree guards needed to avoid compacting
    3. Look at Rochelle Park, NJ for reference
    4. We need to start/design a plan
6. New Business - none
7. Public Comment - none



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8. Adjournment: AC motions to adjourn the meeting; BS seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:51pm; the next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 7pm



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- b. Tree City Accreditation: 44 years; once our submitted application is approved we will automatically receive our new sticker, EH is in contact and BT noted our status on the website is updated
- c. Tree List: Frank has created a spreadsheet with BT's and Monmouth Counties lists and will cross reference with Fairhaven's and add notes; after which he will share the document (people need to share feedback on what is included); he can build the PDF after that; AC does not want to include understory trees/shrubs as they should not be replacement trees
- d. CFMP: Contract signed, Davey is ready for kickoff meeting
  - i. Some odds and ends are outstanding on our end (including municipal properties and boundaries/ownership of Lenape Woods)
  - ii. TBD how we are supposed to support the beginning of the inventory
  - iii. The bigger lift is getting the grant and the post inventory plan
  - iv. Inventory will cover parks, municipal property, Lenape Woods (hopefully) and inventory street trees as well as identify hazard trees
  - v. AC, FG, EH, BT will join a launch meeting next week TBD, AC will email to coordinate
- e. Tribute Trees: Emails are ready to go out regarding planned tributes (Valerie, Walter); once inventory is set we can map tributes, name trees, proceed, this is a reminder
- f. Earth Month –
  - i. We can piggyback onto Arts Council's Earth Day events drive attendance
  - ii. Sapling Giveaway:
    - 1. Saplings will once again be donated by Bartlett, 210 trees (white oak, red maple, redbud, dawn redwood, river birch, bald cypress), we will acknowledge Bartlett as the starred/recommended tree service on our approved list and on the flyer/at the giveaway table
    - 2. We decided NOT to do the giveaway on Sustainability Day (Sunday 4/13), when Arts Council sets up a fair for sustainability groups to talk about their programs
    - 3. We should still sit at Borough Hall as there will be more traffic
    - 4. We will go with Saturday 4/26 as our giveaway day (Saturdays are better for everyone)
    - 5. AC, EC, FG, EH, UP, BS are all open to helping, we will all check our calendars and determine shifts at the April meeting
    - 6. QR codes at table for newsletters/more information
    - 7. FG will update last year's flyer
  - iii. Newsletter:
    - 1. Banners/QR codes for website (ordinance, tree service list, tree list, etc.)
    - 2. Review last year's articles (can republish article on Bartlett)
    - 3. Please complete articles (~3-4 sentences) you signed up by 4/1



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- 4. Goal is to get newsletter in mail by 4/21
  - iv. Arbor Day: EC will check with mayor regarding proclamation
  - v. Poster Contest: JG and EH are discussing
- 14. New Business – Paper shredding at the harbor on Saturday, 4/22, 9-1pm
- 15. Public comment (none)
- 16. Adjournment: AC motions to adjourn the meeting; BS seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:08pm (virtual participants were cut out shortly after the hour); the next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 7pm



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### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC) Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall February 20, 2025, 7pm**

17. The monthly began at 7:07 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Emily Hackett, Uma Parasar, Ben Schmoll; Eileen Cusack (council liaison)
  - b. Absent: Bill Thorne; Vito Colasurdo (council liaison)
  - c. Guests: Rich Colangelo (code enforcement, tree inspector)
18. Minutes – BTS motions to approve January meeting minutes; JG seconds; all in favor
19. Treasurer's Report –
  - a. \$16,651.99 is opening balance
  - b. Expenses of \$0
  - c. \$16,651.99 is closing balance
  - d. JG motions to approve; FG seconds; all in favor
20. Correspondence – municipal membership renewal for \$150 (Tree City), dated January 2025, given to BS; save the date for NJSTC conference, 100 year anniversary, Harrah's/AC, October 2025
21. Guest: RC talks about implementation of ordinance and tree inspections over its first three months –
  - a. Overall permits are down, could be cost/economy, season)
  - b. This is his process:
    - i. 80% of trees to be taken down are "dangerous," threatening people/property, when that is the case it doesn't need to go through arborist; only questionable trees go to arborist (who has 20 days to respond)
    - ii. All applications go to designated folder, RC says anyone who wants to view all permits must have approval (this is not actually true)
    - iii. Permits go to Beth, there is a \$75 fee
    - iv. RC goes to property and takes pictures
    - v. Majority want to replace trees
      1. This refers to non-dangerous trees: They are doing work/spending money to remove healthy trees
      2. RC measures those trees and that will dictate how many new trees need to be planted (within one year), or they pay into tree fund
        - a. AC will get a proper tree measuring tape for RC
      3. They have one year to take down, one year to plant, and two years of tree inspections after that (to make sure tree is alive)





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- a. Trees will be checked in spring (did they survive winter) and in high summer (how are they surviving the heat)
  - b. Replacement trees need to be selected from recommended trees list
- 4. Only one person has paid into tree fund so far (they were illegally cutting down trees and got tickets), that was \$1,400
  - a. It is not RC's job to notify when money is in account
- vi. Historically there is a lot of "topping," the ordinance says it's no longer legal
  - 1. A lot of people are angry about this bc they think it used to be legal; but many did not ever have permits
- vii. You can trim up to 15% of tree, and must trim conically (for the health of the tree and for aesthetic purposes)
- viii. Steep slope zone tree removals require steep slope review
  - 1. There's a fee for this, plus compounded costs of tree work
- ix. Per arborist, if a tree maintenance company has a CTE license then we have to accept their diagnosis and a tree they deem unhealthy can be removed without fees
- x. All of this is how ordinance reads and is for liability/to avoid danger
- c. RC says that leaning/sloping trees must come down, AC wants him to refer those to the arborist and RC said we have to go through borough administrator for that
- d. RC's areas of concern:
  - i. Bayside/Pompomora Point – this area is under multiple auspices (private/town/county) so it is complicated, there have been mudslides, the arborist is supposed to physically visit, costs will be high with steep slope reviews
  - ii. East Highland from Grand to Ocean (there is a borough property here), arborist was asked to look at this
  - iii. Third near Wesley, East Garfield to First – old sycamores shedding branches daily, damaging sidewalks/roads
    - 1. In this case owners are advised to paint sidewalks orange and replace
    - 2. Replacing sidewalks may kill old or new trees anyway
      - a. We can suggest but not force people to bump out or slope sidewalks to protect trees
  - iv. Someone is going to sue borough (dangerous sidewalks, not being able to remove trees, a tree we say is safe comes down)
- e. Notes –
  - i. Should we pay for RC to register for CORE training and for his time to pursue it so he can do a better job of diagnosing trees? Eight or so hours of his time, AC will reach out
  - ii. We need to re-examine/discuss the iss RC discussed



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- iii. Permits need to say that a tree we deem safe is only for a set period of time, and there needs to be a note that trees can come down/cause damage even when they're healthy

### 22. Old Business –

- a. Tree City USA Accreditation – EH added missing info provided by DEP/PW/AC, etc.; we got an extension but it was done in time and submitted, these materials will go to HH in the interim
- b. Tree list – FG will continue now that county list is out
- c. CFMP Grant – FG/AC reviewed grant requirements; we should have kickoff meeting in soon; all our hours need to be documented because as the hourly value of these hours will be a part of AH's matching funds, please keep track of all hours
  - i. AC will provide verbiage to EC/VC/RC regarding reimbursement and upfront costs
- d. Tribute trees – AC will pass materials to EH

### 23. New Business –

- a. Earth Month/April (Earth Day is 4/22, Arbor Day is 4/24)
  - i. Plant a tree for arbor day
  - ii. Saplings giveaway, AC will check with Bartlett about sapling donations
  - iii. Newsletter – AC will reach out to BT but we can pull together article ideas (ordinance, tree list, tree care, sidewalk options to save trees (BS will forward a link about bump out/bump in options), featured species and special trees, ivy on trees)
    - 1. AC or FG will layout
    - 2. AC will start an email chain for article ideas
    - 3. Include reminder that street trees/easement trees are residents' responsibilities
  - iv. Elementary school involvement: poster contest
    - 1. JG will text Caroline and EH will also reach out (they will partner)
    - 2. Could this be part of garden time so we get more entries
  - v. Arts Council usually has an event so we can usually join/add to their event or do something on the same day to take advantage of their pull), they may be doing something on the 4/26, if so that can be the day of the sapling distribution
- b. Regional shade tree commission meeting, AC attended last year but no-one attended the recent one, the next is Monday 3/31, 7pm, Point Pleasant Beach Library, with a lecture on trees in landscape from a Rutgers expert, AC will forward information
- c. CORE training signup deadline was 2/21, 6 individual activities and two required zoom meetings on 3/19 and 4/2, all registries will be reimbursed
  - i. Next opportunity is in person in the fall
  - ii. AC will forward





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- d. First Avenue redesign – a RC for aerial and centerline from CME for Autocad, EC had a conversation about this, it is worth the investment regarding redesign
- 24. Public comment (nothing in addition to RC)
- 25. Adjournment: FG motions to adjourn the meeting; BS seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm; the next meeting is scheduled for March 19, 7pm



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**January 16, 2025, 7pm**

1. The monthly began at 7:03 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Emily Hackett (new member), Uma Parasar (new member), Ben Schmoll, (tardy) Bill Thorne (virtual, tardy); Eileen Cusack (council liaison)
  - b. Guests: none
  - c. All members introductions themselves for new members and EH/UP each took oath of office
2. Reorganization of Committee – BT motions to keep AC as co-chair; BS seconds, all in favor; AC motions to keep BT as co-chair, JG seconds, all in favor; AC motions to keep FG as secretary, BT seconds, all in favor; AC motions to keep BS as treasurer, JG seconds, all in favor
3. Minutes – BT motions to approve December meeting minutes; AC seconds; all in favor with new members abstaining
4. Correspondence –
  - a. Monmouth County Parks bulletin
  - b. No tree removal permits: Maybe they are no longer coming to us, EC will check on this because we should still be notified and will need information for the year in review report (BT is currently working this, information likely came from Jimmy Phillips last year) and want to see applications
5. Treasurer's Report –
  - a. \$17,851.99 is opening balance
  - b. Expenses of \$1,200.00 (for 2024 stipend payments for secretaries to FG, JG, MT)
  - c. \$16,651.99 is closing balance
  - d. AC motions to approve; BT seconds; all in favor
6. Old Business –
  - e. Tree List: FG presented draft of two pages based on BT's research/list and confirmed that this would be a public list, available on the website: he will share his PDF, BT's list, and appropriate links so everyone can review and we can add species
  - f. CFMP: AC reached out to Davey to modify scope of work to better match budget and also discuss Lenape Woods (even if only cataloging trees of interest) plus a drive-by risk assessment for hazard trees (so AHSTC can help/guide homeowners)
    - i. Narrowed down scope includes an inventory of up to 1200 trees for \$20k and another \$5k for the actual plan (which the grant covers)
    - ii. We are assuming we will get the full grant; FG and AC will be working on the grant application needs



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- iii. Once we sign, Davey they will have a kick-off meeting that all are welcome to join; once the inventory is done we will have to pay (the borough will need to help before grant reimbursement comes in)
- iv. EC will see if borough needs to see the scope and/or contract
- v. AC makes motion to select Davey; BT seconds; all in favor
- g. Tribute trees: Mayor prioritized trees for Walter Curry and Valerie Freitas
  - i. Are Fred Kallace/Ken Grasso interested in continuing to own this process?
  - ii. AC has the Google map of trees planted in last few years; there is another map on website which includes only ~5 trees that have plaques/bios; those bios should also be on the website (not just the QR codes); FK/KG's list may not be complete and is not mapped; BT will ask Jim ?/Kate ? for their lists, they may have everything we are missing
  - iii. EH offered to help on this
  - iv. Should we re-look at who can be eligible for tribute trees (it's interpretive but there must be a contribution to the town, anyone can make a recommendation)
  - v. Trees for Tomorrow is another fund for regular donors to donate to a general fund where you don't get a tree named after anyone; but we should consider being able to donate a specific tree in someone's name for public property); also doesn't necessarily need to be only for deceased people
    - 1. This is still on the site, and there used to be envelopes at the funeral homes;
    - 2. BT will push this on Facebook
- h. FG will send contact information for everyone via email

### 7. New Business – 2025 Goals

- i. February meeting: Begin planning our Arbor Day events, potentially a newsletter (with news on saplings, tree list, ordinance, etc.), calls for community engagement, completed CFMP, completed tree list, hype sapling giveaway; JG is coordinating with Rich Colangelo who may the Feb meeting to discuss ordinance, permits, day to day maintenance
- j. Additional CORE trainings: Open to everyone; a virtual learning seminar on trees/urban forestry will be officially announced soon but is slated for March 1-April 4 (lessons are there on demand plus two one-hour Zoom sessions, anyone who does not have this certification should consider it; AC will share details
- k. First Ave. plan/upgrade update; trees for Hennessy Blvd. between Bay and Center
- l. March reminder to new tree owners on how to care for your new trees (VC is in contact with DEP regarding watering as well)

### 8. Public comment (none)



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9. Adjournment: AC motions to adjourn the meeting; BS seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm; the next meeting is scheduled for February 19, 7pm



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**December 11, 2024, 7pm**

1. The monthly began at 7:05 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Bill Thorne (virtual); Vito Colasurdo, James Murphy (tardy) (council liaisons)
  - b. Guests: Shari Spero, AH tree expert/consultant (virtual)
  - c. Laura Redman declined the position
2. Minutes – FG motions to approve November meeting minutes; JG seconds; all in favor
3. Correspondence –
  - a. Two removal requests (for two trees (using the old form), and for four trees)
4. Treasurer's Report –
  - a. \$19,798.99 is opening balance
  - b. Expense of \$2,332.00 (for mulch and public tree planting)
  - c. Deposit of \$385.00 for a resident tree planting request through Fernbrook
  - d. \$17,851.99 is closing balance
  - e. JG motions to approve; BT seconds; all in favor
5. Old Business –
  - a. Shari Spero (SS) introduces herself, she is our liaison tree expert working with AH, worked on updating and revising tree ordinance
    - i. She will advise on future tree removal requests that need additional insight (she has reviewed two thus far (confirming dead tree status and another that was more about reviewing/auditing the process)
    - ii. It isn't feasible for her to come out and invoice AH every time a permit needs review
  - b. Community Forestry Plan:
    - a. We asked SS about the Green Communities Grant
      - i. It is available to and handled by STCs via SAGE (The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) SAGE system for submitting grants for the New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry Program (NJUCF)
      - ii. Maximum grant is \$20K and town must match 25% of the grant, if AH receives a grant of \$20K the borough will pay \$5K out of STC budget
      - iii. Deadlines are rolling and the state hopes to fund everyone that applies
      - iv. The borough must pay the full amount upfront and the grant reimburses



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- v. SS doesn't believe that you need to have a finalized contract ready to apply
      - vi. FG will look into grant applications and work with AC
    - b. We have three proposals for the CFP, SS infers that Bill Brash will not be as good as Paul Cowhie) but is more positive about the other two companies; SS recommends using a company who can both complete the inventory and create the CFP
      - i. Richview did original inventory and is president of NJSTC
      - ii. AC is circling back to Davey: Adjust scope/pricing to inventorying public land only as well as hazard trees (should lower estimate)
      - iii. AC is following up with Bartlett about their available services
      - iv. We will need to explain to the borough why we will want to go with a more expensive provider
    - c. Most of mapping you can get from websites
    - d. History section has changed: The state wants more on the history of STCs (volunteers, annual accomplishment reports)
    - e. Previous CFPs were a bit more esoteric, required goals and objectives without budgets being factored in; the new requirements are about real inventory, real costs, real data (not wishlists)
    - f. Focus on areas the borough manages and the trees in those spaces
  - c. Species List and First Avenue upgrades:
    - a. BT is working on the list and shared a draft; FG will create a draft of a finished version for the next meeting
    - b. AC looking at other regional lists and reached out to county commissioner (Sue Kiley) for any new county lists
      - i. There have been no meetings since 2020
      - ii. Heard back from Elias at the county's tree division and had a conversation about First Avenue tree replacement and soil volume; he was receptive and wants to see a plan and meet
      - iii. He said they will work on a plan and approval with us
      - iv. A new county list is awaiting final signatures and should be available soon
  - d. Summer Tree Watering: VC talked to Rob and we are waiting for an update/confirmation as Rob is concerned that Jim Phillips/Public works is over extended
6. New Business –
- a. Year in Review!
    - i. 1,900 newsletters distributed
    - ii. 25.5 CEUs attained (only are are required)
    - iii. 3 CORE trained members (AC, BT, JG)





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- iv. 200 saplings distributed
  - v. 22 trees planted
  - vi. 1 ordinance passed
  - vii. We need more core trained members, AC/BT are checking for seminars and will keep FG and BS posted
    - 1. FG, as paid secretary, could be the required borough employee w/ CORE training,
    - 2. Should Rich Colangelo get CORE training? He plans to join our meeting in January or February to discuss the process and experience with tree requests and the new ordinance
  - b. 2025: CFP is a heavy lift and will need a lot of volunteer effort, all hands on deck, delegation
    - i. We need to improve our community outreach/involvement (should we partner with the elementary school)
    - ii. Talk to Blake about the development of the ERI (Environmental Resources Index) for the Environmental Commission about their process
    - iii. The new master plan is coming in two years so the ERI and the CFP being up to date is essential
    - iv. Laura Redman decided not to join the STC and we should have more members: Does anyone know anyone? Should we put out a post on Facebook inviting residents to check us out (the borough repost and we can individually share)
  - c. Monthly Meeting Date Change: Council meetings may be moving to second and fourth Wednesdays, VC will confirm soon; either way we will move our meetings to every third Wednesday (next meeting 01/15/2025), all present voted in favor of this change )we need to let BS know)
6. Public comment (none)
7. Adjournment: JG motions to adjourn the meeting; AC seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:01pm; the next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 7pm

**Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC)**  
**Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall**  
**November 13, 2024, 7pm**



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- I. The November meeting 2024 was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7:00PM in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
- II. In attendance: Ashley Cruz, Bill Thorne, Janet Grote, Ben Schmoll, Vito Colasurdo, James Murphy.  
Absent: Frank Gargione, Edward Kenney.
- III. Micki Rast attended this meeting
- IV. Last month's meeting minutes were approved by all.
- V. Correspondence: STC received one tree planting request on Asbury Ave. Ashley will reach out to the homeowners. 5 removal tree permits received. We received a pamphlet from Monmouth County Parks Commission.
- VI. Treasurer's Report: September 2024. The approved balance: is \$11,973.99. We began and ended with the same.
- VII. OLD BUSINESS:
  - a. Tree Ordinance Update: Ashley: The amended tree ordinance which has a remove and replace stipulation has been approved. We approved the replacement chart for pricing to be shown on our Borough webpage..

Approve Replacement Costs: all in favor.
  - B. Tree Planting—Species List: Janet, Bill. Bill made the list. The selection and availability are for what's appropriate to our area. STC's town Planting tree program is still going forward.

22 trees have been received—they are being planted over the next few days. The mark out for the new trees has been completed. Friday the public trees will be planted. The Atlantic Highlands jughandle will get our Arbor Day 2024 tree, an American linden. Recipients of the new trees need watering instructions—via email. Ashley will send out how to care for your new tree. Our expense for the tree planting will be as budgeted around \$10,000. Planting should be finished by Friday November 15<sup>th</sup>

Do we know the approximate prices to plant these trees?
  - c. Community Forestry Management Plan (Bill, Ashley) Our plan expires at the end of this year. There is a grant and the requirements have changed—inventory mapping, data management, now the deadline has been extended to December 2025, because some changes have been made. 895 trees are included in our town inventory. Street trees are trees with sidewalks for purposes of that number. We need to re-inventory—we would like to submit an application for the \$20,000 grant to



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re-inventory and write the plan. We have received quotes for our updated Forestry management plan. We are hoping to have an arborist come and speak next month (Bill Brasch) on the CFMP and its new inclusions. We have a grant writer in town who may be able to help.

Names of consultants we have received proposals from: **Richview Consulting (for CFMP only, not for a tree inventory), Bill Brash, Davey Resource Group**

### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **a. Tribute Trees Update**

Tribute trees: We recommend a tribute tree for Kate Wiggington who served on STC for many years. STC needs bio information for a QR code and plaque. We can plant the tree now. A Valley Forge Elm in the South Avenue park can be dedicated to Kate. Family can decide to take it further.

b. Inventory Mapping: discussed in CFMP, and how it will be important for Borough to include us on tree removals, so inventory is kept up to date.

c. Watering System for new trees: can we have a more formal arrangement for watering “desperate” public trees in the summer? Can we have help in July and August? Vito will speak with the DPW in the next couple of days.

John McGoldrick from the Planning Board was asked to share with STC any tree removal plans. He will forward proposals that involve tree removal. STC will be in the loop.

### **IX. Public Comment**

- X.** Public comment: Micki Rast representing the local Lions Club and Ladies Auxiliary want to plant a blue spruce tree and plaque in Valerie Freitas in recognition to her contributions to the town. She has many years of community service. Planting locations are being discussed, with perhaps a Spring planting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30PM.



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### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC)**

#### **Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall**

**October 9, 2024, 7pm**

4. The monthly began at 7:06 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ben Schmoll, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote (late arrival), Bill Thorne; Vito Colasurdo, (council liaisons)
  - b. Not present: Ashley Cruz, Laura Redman; James Murphy (council liaison)
  - c. Ed Kenney is removed
2. Minutes – no quorum so not discussed/voted on
3. Correspondence –
  - a. One planting request
  - b. Several removal requests
  - c. Public recreation information pamphlet (not relevant, discarded)
4. Treasurer's Report – no activity, unchanged
  - a. \$11,973.99 is both the opening and closing balance
  - b. Awaiting check for new year's budget
  - c. Fernbrook Farms bill received by AC (and shared with BS) for all planned tree plantings, it's around \$10k
5. Old Business –
  - a. Regarding planting requests, we maxed out our budget
    - i. One resident canceled their planting resulting in an extra London plane tree which we may add to South Avenue Park
  - b. Species list -- BT is working on it
  - c. Ordinance, it is introduced tomorrow, VC anticipates it will be voted through in two weeks (with some already made changes we made based on Alyson Forbes' (council member) suggestions
  - d. Community Forestry Plan -- BT is waiting on a sample management plan for another town from Richview Consulting; they submitted estimate and they did the AH plan for the 2015-2020; they are currently managing the conference in AC so may be a bit delayed
    - i. Hopefully this can be ready around the same time as the new master plan



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- e. Library screening of the American chestnut film -- three people from Red Bank STC along with BT (and his mother) and AC, an embarrassing turnout
- 6. New Business –
  - a. Watering plans for the new trees
    - i. VC will check with Jimmy Phillips/DPW about a watering schedule using the repurposed truck
      - 1. BS thinks JP was told he couldn't do this by the borough, VC will investigate the roadblock
    - ii. Can also ask boy/girl scout troops to step in; Ken Grasso may help, Mary Trank may help (she reached out to girl scouts directly last time); Ed Kenney should be willing to help as the head of a boy/cub scout troop, maybe he can organize something
    - iii. Trees will need to be watered from planting to frost and next spring/summer
- 6. Public comment (none)
- 7. Adjournment: The meeting at 7:21pm; the next meeting is scheduled for October 9, 7pm

*Items not always taken in order*



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### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC) Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall September 11, 2024, 7pm**

1. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7:03pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Ben Schmoll, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Bill Thorne; Vito, Colasurdo, James Murphy (late arrival) (council liaisons)
  - b. Not present: Ed Kenney, Laura Redman
  - c. LR will be announced as a commission member at the 09/12 city council meeting; JG invited another potential member meeting to an upcoming meeting
2. Minutes – BS motions to approve July and August meeting minutes; JG seconds; all in favor
  - a. FG will resend corrected July/August minutes for BT to upload
3. Correspondence –
  - a. Legal letter about potential lawsuit regarding a fall on the Henry Hudson trail, copied to other borough/county/state entities as well, it does not pertain to us
  - b. Pamphlet for the 99th annual conference for NJSTC, happening in Atlantic City, October 17-18, core accreditation trainings will happen there but should happen online again in the future, AHSTC pays fees for anyone who takes these trainings
  - c. Removals requests: 2 with no reasons; multiple diseased/damaged/dead trees, including a great example with a site plan/photos
4. Treasurer's Report – no activity, have not received new fiscal year funding yet, VC will check on this
  - a. \$11,973.99 is both the opening and closing balance
  - b. BT motions to approve; JG seconds; all in favor
5. Old Business –
  - a. Regarding planting requests, 15 have come in in total, we will potentially honor additional requests that come in and will confirm a cut off date, AC has remade the request form on letterhead with a space for resident to sketch layout/plan; we have a budget of about \$20K
    - i. Fernbrook Nursery (as suggested by the borough arborist, Sherry) offers a list of selected trees that they grow onsite, the price include tree and installation for \$385, which is a significant reduction over previous year's costs
      1. Fairhaven, Manasquan, and Point Pleasant Beach use this service
      2. Species are limited and several are not native but the nursery grows and cares for these trees from bare root and they are dug out in real time; are





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there different species available for spring installation but hot weather is a concern

3. Trees are guaranteed for one year
4. Some of the trees on their list are native to the Southeast; we might need to look into trees that are zoned for below us/native to southern areas so these trees can survive hotter temperatures (Princeton University is now selecting new trees from the Virginia/Maryland area); note that our newer native dogwoods in town that don't seem to be doing well
- ii. We need to select narrower/smaller trees/shrubs for First Avenue (the snow goose cherry and the dogwood on the list might be a good fit here) that can work under wires; there are 7-8 spots plus replacing the shrub by the Thai restaurant
  1. These spots will need fresh soil/amending; consider little fences/gates for each tree; select trees that can handle dogs (planters are not our committee)
  2. Some spots are currently tripping hazards
  3. AC spoke with Lori about First Avenue and creating an overarching planting/amending a plan
    - a. Maybe we can get a grant? Replace sickly trees, new soil, expand tree plots by removing some bricks
    - b. This work would be hired out, it can be called the "First Avenue Capital Improvement/Beautification/Greening Plan"
- iii. We will try Fernbrook this year (and not necessarily use them again the next year)
- iv. AC will email people on the planting list to start checking sites, etc.
- v. Ask your neighbors if they want a tree, BS will talk to neighbors including owners of the owl tree that came down
- b. Veteran's Park oak trees on the side streets (the trees on First Avenue will probably have to come out next year): It will be difficult to access upper/affected branches on those trees to be sent to Rutgers for testing, AC is asking Lori about having DPW get up there to get a cuttings, JM will also speak to DPW
  - i. We need to budget to treat these trees and/or removing them in a few years
  - ii. Should we plan to redo the park entirely or replace haphazardly, as needed
- c. Ordinance, there will be a public workshop (four minutes with AC and Sarah Fitzpatrick, borough attorney) speaking/answering questions about the ordinance from the public on 09/13
  - i. AC talked to Brian Doherty about timelines – this pushes the introduction back two weeks (to 09/27) but will hopefully help avoid additional delays around public comments and the council not approving the ordinance, changes can be made in real time between the public workshop and the meeting in two weeks



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- ii. The public workshop is on the agenda
  - iii. It is rare that the public gets too wound up, VC is unconcerned
  - iv. No-one paying attention should be surprised by the ordinance, similar ordinances are in the news, and every city in NJ is doing this because they legally have to, VC has other “more draconian” ordinances printed out for reference
  - v. We need to remember that this is a living document that will be adapted over time, it can be edited/adjusted
  - vi. Potential approval at the 10/10 meeting
- d. 09/28 Film Screening of Clear Day Thunder (about the American chestnut tree)
- i. The library has all the correct information and will put together a flyer
  - ii. Otherwise, we can promote with screenshots from organization's site
  - iii. Are we serving refreshments? We could serve chestnuts!
- e. Community Forestry Plan -- BT got a Richview Consulting estimate, they did it for the 2015-2020 plan
6. Public comment
7. Adjournment: BS motions to adjourn the meeting; AC seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm; the next meeting is scheduled for October 9, 7pm

*Items not always taken in order*



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### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC) Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall August 14, 2024, 7pm**

1. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7:03pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Ben Schmoll, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Bill Thorne; Vito Colasurdo (council liaison); in addition, Laura Redmond (potential member, application has been submitted)
  - b. Not present: Ed Kenney; James Murphy (council liaison)
2. Minutes – three months to approve (no-one saw May in real time, no quorum last month for both May and June approval)
  - a. May and June notes - BT motions to approve, JG seconds, all in favor
  - b. Table July notes until next meeting
3. Correspondence –
  - a. Removals: solar panel installation, storm damage, unsafe/dead/dying trees, house painting, pruning, excavation for addition
  - b. One request
  - c. Monmouth County Parks mailer
4. Treasurer's Report –
  - a. \$250 sent to Arts Council (see handout)
  - b. Opening balance: \$12,223.00 / closing balance: \$11,973.99
  - c. July and August budget - BT motions to approve, AC seconds, all in favor
  - d. VC talked to Rob about incoming annual budget, it's \$15K for the fiscal year and it is available
    - i. Will they issue a check for deposit? VC will notify Rob Ferragina that we need a check to deposit
    - ii. The amount is good for projected planting budget
    - iii. For previous fiscal year, how did DPW come up with the \$5K fee/deduction? For future reference: is this policy? Was it to cover storm damage? VC remembers it happening, not the details but he is almost certain it went to DPW
      - Jimmy Phillips had at one time requested a \$6K donation to trim Veterans Park trees but RF said that wasn't our budget (per BT)
      - Check with RF to check with new CFO (Rick Yanis) to confirm full amount and how/why DPW money is pulled from STC budget, what is policy? BS will ask as Treasurer via email to/via RF and RY
5. Old Business –



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- a. Fall tree planting: 16 total, AC has put all private requests in spreadsheet, in addition there are the two for South Avenue Park and two for the jug handle, AC will add new correspondence and email requests, next steps –
  - i. Determining locations/cross streets for all requests: AC and LR will contact people and take a look at sites between August and September
  - ii. For those that didn't select a species, we can select based on location
  - iii. Formalize the tree list by October to get pricing and get plantings scheduled for November/December
    - We liked the installation company we used last year
    - The nursery/supplier was fine but we should check others for pricing (\*LP Statile was mentioned, unsure if this was who we used last year or a suggestion for new estimates this year\*)
  - iv. AC will share the Google sheet with everyone
  - v. In addition: Adding a buffer layer/row of plantings of trees along remediation site closer to the street (there are already some trees setback from the curb) along West Highland/Hennessy; replacing the large elm that was lost near the gym during the recent storm (it is private property from Mount to West Highland even though the borough mows)
    - Need an exact wetland mitigation border (AC will look online), and to review the South Avenue Park plans
- b. Species List: BT started working on one and shared a printout to review, we will need to add to it (note thriving trees within the borough), FG will make it into a PDF w/ links when finalized
- c. Ordinance update –
  - i. This was about to be rolled out to council on Thursday 08/06 after AC, BT, and JG spent more time on it, but that was halted because there were concerns that borough administrator didn't have time to review and comment
  - ii. VC may have more comments coming but most are in, once we address those comments and re-send to council and introduce it, the council will have two weeks to make changes, and after that there will be a public hearing and vote
  - iii. We will reintroduce it in September (09/12 or 09/26) to go to public hearing at the following meeting
  - iv. General feedback is: Do we have the right to go into people's yards to tell them what they can and can't do? Sticker shock at the prices of replacement trees, which can add up especially when considering the high prices of tree removal
    - VC paraphrasing other readers/commentators: We have to be cognizant of costs and consider the plan the best for the town; in theory this does make sense, but is the cost too much (council members are also concerned about electability)



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- VC suggested reading this [NYTimes article](#) about a tree removal ordinance and litigation in Westchester; we need to limit the borough's exposure to litigation
  - VC will pressure Sarah Fitzpatrick to make sure she is clear on what backyard access means: Access for diseased trees is a Department of Agriculture demand in terms of pests, invasives; we can look into some negotiating basis/sliding scale pricing that can relate to market rate nursery stock; reminder that you don't have to replace a mature tree with an equally sized, mature tree; reminder that if you take a tree down and don't want to plant a new one in the same place, you can plant the tree elsewhere on the property or pay into a town fund to plant trees elsewhere, it can be a combination of planting and fees, you can buy and plant your own trees – it needs to be a bit interpretive
  - The key is to support a net zero loss of trees
  - Who will be inspecting/confirming plantings? Who is measuring the tree that is being removed?
  - There will be an updated tree removal application
  - There was a call scheduled for Friday (08/16) to address comments
- d. Community Forestry Plan: BT corresponded with Rich W who did second to last plan but never heard back when he provided timelines; Paul Cowie didn't get back to BT, time to count him out even though he did a good job at the last one and it would be easy to update
6. New Business –
- a. Clear Day Thunder, Rescuing the American Chestnut, film screening at the library
    - i. They can show it on a Saturday, possibly 09/28
    - ii. Who is anyone is interested to attend/be available?
    - iii. This would likely be a digital download, \$10 purchase from the American Chestnut Society
    - iv. BT motions to move forward with screening, BS seconds, all in favor
  - b. 14 East Garfield, Masonic Temple property: It has been purchased, possibly by Kalian (developer) who wants to divide it into five lots
    - i. There are many large plane trees on this lot so we need ordinance approved so the developers will pay for removed trees
  - c. First Avenue street trees: BS will send AC photos/locations of trees that went down in storm and others that were already missing (including near Atlantic House, Copper Canyon, the bagel store, the dermatologist, and otherwise, 4+ trees)
    - i. All will keep eyes out for additional spots

### 7. Public comment



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8. Adjournment: BS made a motion to adjourn the meeting; AC seconded the motion; all voted in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm; the next meeting is scheduled for September 11, 7pm

*Items not always taken in order*





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### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC) Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall July 10, 2024, 7pm**

9. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7:03pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Bill Thorne; Vito Colasurdo (council liaison); in addition, Laura Redmond (public/potential member)
  - b. Not present: Ben Schmoll, Ed Kenney; James Murphy (council liaison)
  - c. VC will look into the EK/absentee issue
  - d. There were not enough members in attendance to constitute a quorum, so nothing can be voted on
10. Minutes: May and June minutes need to be approved (no-one saw them in time for the May meeting, unable to vote in June meeting); minutes were sent/re-sent via email; tabled
11. Correspondence:
  - a. 1 tree request
  - b. Multiple trims/removals requests/permissions (some are unnecessary as they are small jobs)
  - c. List of NJ licensed tree services providers updated and approved for AH as of 06/21/24: Is this on the borough website? Should it be? We need to make sure only approved companies are doing work in town, everyone reviewed the document quickly
12. Treasurer's Report:
  - a. BS did share a report via email but we were unable to vote; tabled
  - b. JG received check for poster contest expenses (\$269.38)
  - c. Did art council donation happen?
  - d. Opening balance \$12,493.37; closing balance \$12,223.99
  - e. We have 18 trees to plant (requests, jug handle, South Park), estimate based on 2023 plantings is \$9,518
    - i. New fiscal budget approval in July
    - ii. VC will find out when that money will come through
    - iii. Last year we were supposed to receive \$15K but only received \$10K, a portion may have gone to DPW for work completed
13. Old Business:
  - a. Ordinance: After not hearing back we had some movement as AC/JM attended council meeting
    - i. The next week the borough provided revisions/a formal document which was quite different (order, layout, missing sections)



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- ii. On 07/09/24, in a call with Sarah Fitzpatrick (one of the borough attorneys), it was noted that the ordinance would be introduced at the 07/11/24 meeting, with potential to become law at the August meeting
- iii. But, we are pushing back a month to address these revisions, and our committee needs to reconvene/rereview
- iv. VC asked if we can do a document comparison and will try to manipulate the PDF to do so, JG thinks we should be able to review and know what's missing; that committee (AC/BT/JG/VC) will meet separately to address these issues
- b. Arbor Day tree planting: On hold until fall for cooler weather as planning took too long
- c. South Avenue Park (new playground): A good spot for new municipal trees
  - i. There are no trees planned, trees were proposed but there is no budget
  - ii. AC shared a plan
- d. Species List: BT/JG have not had a chance to discuss and JG doesn't see anything happening until september
  - i. AC reshared files, recent plantings map/information, and asked that we keep our eyes out for viable inclusions for the list
- e. Watering/Maintenance: AC will send a checklist for watering and inspections
  - i. JG noted four at the Seatreak lot near the hot dog stand do not look good — may not just be a watering issue, are they planted too deep? Poisoned?
    - These were donated trees and planted by Coast Nursery, they do not do a great job, should we try a soil sample? Definitely do a soil test before new trees are put in
- f. Community Forestry Management Plan: Paul Cowie did not get back to BT, Rick Wolawitz said he will provide an estimate but wants a timeline
  - i. Early 2025
  - ii. BT reach out to Riley ? at Bartlett as well

#### 14. New Business

- a. The remaining Veterans Park trees that are in better condition will be tested for leaf scorch and treatability once it is seasonally appropriate
- b. Film One Festival: We are welcome to go early (before the movies begin) and set up a table (which will be provided) with brochures along with vendors and municipal groups
  - i. Saturday 06/20/24 in the evening; volunteers are invited to watch the movies once they start
  - ii. No-one was readily available (JG is able to stop by but can't man the table)
  - iii. Ken ?/Fred ? did it last year along with, maybe, the Environmental Commission and/or Green Team
  - iv. AC will reach out to those commissions to see if they will be present
  - v. If present, we can hand out Tree City brochure and newsletter



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- c. Recent storm: an elm at West Highland and Hennessey came down, whoever works on the forestry plan can help with issues like this in terms of tree canopy/coverage percentages
    - i. Only 4 survey responses were received after the storm (including AC/FG); other 2 respondents took down the trees in question
  - d. American chestnut film (BT shared): Consider showing this at the library or arts council as a group event
    - i. Let's approach the library first, AC will reach out to Gloria ? (head of our library association), and will loop FG in for help
  - e. 3 trees damaged were damaged during the Fireman's Fair: 2 tribute trees, 1 was very recently planted
    - i. Jimmy Phillips brought this to AC's attention
    - ii. Unsure if trees will survive
    - iii. We should ask them to replace these trees
      - What power do we have as commission to say we need these trees to be replaced, to approach the DPW/FD
      - The party that damaged the trees should pay, JP knows who did the damage
      - Asking for reparations is a timely issue
  - f. Damaged tree in Veterans Park: Rob ? (borough administrator) said he will not ask the tree service to pay for that
    - i. Suggested that we ask how much we spent on tree trimming/removal with the tree service in comparison to the \$200-300 we invested in the tree in question
    - ii. AC will circle back with him, possibly in person
15. Public Comment: LR is interested in joining the commission and will fill out form
16. Adjournment: All made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm; the next meeting is scheduled for August 14, 7pm



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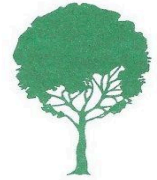
### **Atlantic Highlands Shade Tree Commission (STC) Meeting at Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall June 12, 2024, 7pm**

17. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7:07pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Ben Schmoll, Bill Thorne; James Murphy (council liaison)
  - b. Not present: Ed Kenney; Vito Colasurdo (council liaison)
18. Minutes: no-one saw them as FG had sent them earlier than usual, FG resent
19. Correspondence: 2 tree requests, multiple trims/removals requests/permissions
20. Treasurer's Report:
  - a. Settled balance for printing/sorting for newsletter - \$803
  - b. \$95 to renew membership for NJ Shade Tree Federation
  - c. JG needs to submit/resubmit receipts to BS for poster contest giftcards/packaging and will write check to reimburse JG
  - d. AC proposed approving treasurer's report, BT seconded, all in favor
21. Old business:
  - a. Ordinance: everything went to rob/council liaisons but AC needs to send/forward to commission members, her package included letter of explanation, draft of removal permit, and letting them know we talked to NJDEP case manager
    - i. Lori, in person, said she saw it, asked that the email to be forwarded to her
    - ii. After two weeks, AC asked for an update from Rob, he said waiting to hear from the attorney on 5/20
    - iii. Reached out again on 6/7, still no update and no one has written back in any form
    - iv. Can we do anything or just wait? The council meeting is Thursday 6/13, someone could mention the ordinance in public comment and give the attorney a head's up
    - v. We are past deadline but NJDEP knows we are in progress, it is fine
  - b. Arbor Day tree planting:
    - i. AC tagged a redbud and american linden to be placed in First Ave. jug handle
    - ii. NJDOT/NJDEP is on board
    - iii. Jimmy Phillips is calling for markouts, then planting can happen,
    - iv. JM will report this in council meeting and DPW will provide date
  - c. Veterans Park:
    - i. Removed two most hazardous trees (suffering from bacterial leaf scorch)
    - ii. Broken sweet gum will be reported to Rob as well, to discuss options



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- Boylan's Tree Service did this tree work and damaged the sweet gum further — will they pay for replacement/removal/etc.
- d. Tree planting — where do we want to put new trees this fall?
- e. Species List: we will compile a recommended species list for the town, something a bit more “enticing” (a PDF with images, almost a catalog with hyperlinks to profiles at Arbor Day site or similar)
  - i. Links to a nice booklet that Fair Haven has put together, as well as the AH/Monmouth County list are in May's minutes, please reference; Princeton has a species list in progress as well
  - ii. The current AH/MC list is from 2013
  - iii. AC also has a working list of approved/recommended species list
  - iv. BT and JG will work on list expanding that list and FG will work on the actual document
  - v. Talk more at next meeting
- f. Watering schedule: there are 3-4 trees at the harbor (BT will try to monitor), 1 at Many Minds Avenue Park (AC), 3 at Veterans Park (FG/BS), 2 will be at the jug handle soon
  - i. Mary Trank offered to help on a watering schedule
  - ii. AC has put together a google map of all 2022-2024 planting locations
  - iii. Jimmy was working on getting the brining truck cleaned up for watering, AC will check in with him
  - iv. We need to do maintenance inspections and have to form a schedule for people to go check on trees (see4 assignments above)
    - Other options: everyone adopts a tree for the season; getting the public involved (volunteer opportunities for kids); consider making an AHSTC meeting and watering event with short actual meeting/votes and then do tree checks — should we do this for July/August meetings? Should there be a checklist for when we check on our trees?
  - v. AC will share map
  - vi. JM will find out at council meeting if any trees will be added to South Ave. Park now that the new playground is almost done
- g. South Ave. Park mitigation: someone should circle back with Ken — are there any updates regarding dead plants? Any workarounds in terms of that mitigation signage and accessing or improving the area despite the 100 year mitigation constraints?
- h. Community Forestry Management Plan: BT needs to reach out to Paul again, with Rich as a possible backup consultant for the project

### 22. New business:

- a. Should AHSTC send something to the family of the Anne-Luise Petereit who donated and cared for plants in public places around town for many years
  - i. She just passed away, can we apply for a “quiet” tribute tree without all the approvals or even signage?





# *Borough of Atlantic Highlands*

## *Shade Tree Commission*

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- ii. JM suggested flowers
- iii. She did a lot for beautification, a gesture would be nice
- iv. Are tribute tree applications a part of normal correspondence?
- v. Did Fred complete plaque replacement with new plaques featuring QR codes?  
AC will reach out to Fred for an update
- vi. Public comment
- vii. Adjournment: BS made a motion to adjourn the meeting; JG seconded the motion; all voted in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm; the next meeting is scheduled for July 10, 7pm

*Items not always taken in order*





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**May 8, 2024, 7pm**

23. The monthly meeting was called to order by Ashley Cruz at 7pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Janet Grote, Ben Schmoll, Bill Thorne; Vito Colasurdo (council liaison)
  - b. Not present: Ed Kenney; James Murphy (council liaison)
  - c. Ben Schmoll made a motion to elect Frank Gargione secretary as Mary Trank is stepping down; Janet Grote seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
  - d. Bill Thorne made a motion to elect Janet Grote a backup/substitute secretary if Frank Gargione is unable to attend; Ashley Cruz seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
24. Bill Thorne made a motion to accept the April 2024 minutes; Ashley Cruz seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
25. Correspondence: Ashley Cruz noted the Monmouth County Parks mailer; several copies of tree removal permits were received; several five requests to plant a tree were received (two were on handouts from the sapling giveaway and require followup paperwork); copies of many tree removal permits were received
26. Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was presented by Ben Schmoll; Bill Thorne made a motion to accept the treasurer's report; Bill Thorne seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
  - a. Opening balance: \$13,691.37 (April 10, 2024)
  - b. Expenses: \$300.00 (Speaking fee for Mary Charlotte for 04/27 event)
  - c. Deposits: \$0.00
  - d. Closing balance \$13,391.37 (May 8, 2024)
  - e. Pending: \$250.00 to renew AH Arts Council membership
    - i. Membership in lieu of event hosting fee for 04/27 event
    - ii. Previous membership fee was in April-May 2023
    - iii. Bill Thorne made a motion to approve this expense; Ashley Cruz seconded the motion; all others voted in favor
  - f. Question of newsletter expense still pending or not? (Note: Bill Thorne sent an email explaining what was and was not paid for on 05/09)
27. Old Business
  - a. Shade Tree Ordinance update: Ashley Cruz submitted the ordinance to the Mayor and Council along with revised tree removal permit form and notes on criteria used in surveying trees for removal; the mayor has reviewed the documents and they are being reviewed against state and borough guidelines and will be reviewed by the borough attorney; it has not gone to council yet and it is not yet on the agenda; after that it will be open to public comment; to be continued at the next meeting
  - b. Earth Month event recap:



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- i. Very good turnout for sapling giveaway, perhaps thanks to social media posts; “consumers” were well informed and came up knowing which trees they wanted and Frank Gargione and Ben Schmoll gave away ~200 of ~250 trees; remaining trees were set up outside Jaspan’s or brought to the AH Arts Council for the speaker event; Jaspan’s is happy to have us set up outside the store next year; saplings were healthier, larger, and better packaged this year so Bartlett Tree Experts should be reached out to again next year
- ii. Bill Thorne reported that the lecture was not well attended (~10-15 people); perhaps a later afternoon slot (with wine?) will be better attended next year; also, going forward other Shade Tree Commissions should be invited
- c. Poster Contest: Janet Grote managed the entries and has all winner information; far fewer entries than usual as this is now optional and no longer a part of the curriculum; full commission voted on winners; all entrants will receive giftcards to Nicholas Creamery — \$20 for first place, \$15 for second place, \$10 for honorable mentions (all others) (Note: This took place after New Business as Janet Grote was setting up the artwork)

### 28. New Business

- a. Watering schedule: All new plantings from 2023 and 2024 on borough property should be watered
  - i. Gator bags and troughs should be with Jim (don’t have last name); Vito Colasurdo will check in with him and see if he still has materials and is willing to take on watering with brining truck
  - ii. Alternately, Mary Trank has a volunteer schedule template that Ashley Cruz will reach out to her about — if Jim cannot manage watering the Commission will need to set up a system
  - iii. A Google map plotting tree locations should be created
  - iv. Related: Ken and Fred (don’t have last names) have added a plaque to one of the new Serviceberries at Center Avenue Park, these trees look good, a third with another plaque looks less healthy — should the plaque be moved? Will any of these trees survive the park renovation?
- b. Tree planting
  - i. DOT approved planting in the jug handle and included a list of approved, mostly smaller trees and other requirements like setbacks for visibility, etc.; the Commission needs to review the site for placement and consider planting more than one tree; DPW will handle installation as they are the only division who may work on the plot; street closures will need to be arranged; Ashley Cruz will share the email regarding this and we can vote/finalize choices/timelines over email so the tree(s) can be installed before too late in the season
  - ii. Other locations to consider: Jimmy Phillips suggested along Hennessey Blvd.; South Avenue Park along Many Minds Creek; along Many Minds creek near SeaStreak parking; trees along the creek can fill in gaps and remediate the



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ecosystem — is there a grant for this work? Someone mentioned talking to Blake (don't have last name)

- iii. Species List: An effort should be made to winnow down the [Monmouth County list](#) of recommended trees into an AH-specific list something like the one shared by [Fair Haven](#); think about trees that are healthy and beneficial in our area; conversation to be continued
- c. Big Tree Hunt: Bill Thorne added this to the Facebook page; the Commission should consider local trees for inclusion; as an aside — should we encourage residents to share photos/stories of their favorite trees or updates on trees procured at past AH sapling giveaways to share on Facebook or in newsletters?
- d. Community Forestry Master Plan: Needs review, Bill will reach out to Paul Cowhie who wrote the previous plan
- e. Trees in Veteran's Park: At least one oak tree needs to be removed and some need trimming, especially as farmer's market is slated to begin soon and it could be dangerous; the sickest oaks will not be treated but some on the east side may be worth treating; in addition, a new sweet gum with a broken leader can be replaced; the \$750 budget could also be used to replace this sweet gum. Ben Schmoll made a motion to do so; Bill Thorne seconded the motion; all others voted in favor — could the sweet gum with the broken leader be moved to the jug handle?

29. Public comment

30. Adjournment: Ashley Cruz made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ben Schmoll seconded the motion; all voted in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm; the next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 7pm

*Items not always taken in order*