



# *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 August 20, 2025, 7pm**

1. The monthly began at 7:04pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act
  - a. Present: Ashley Cruz, Frank Gargione, Ben Schmoll, Virtual: Emily Hackett, Uma Parsar, Bill Thorne; Vito Colasardo, Eileen Cusack (council liaisons)
  - b. Absent: Janet Grote
2. Minutes: BS makes motion to approve July minutes, BT seconds, all in favor
  - a. Note: Frank will add action items to emails going forward as with July
3. Correspondence –
  - a. 6 removal permits, no additional discussion but must act on the situation
  - b. Pamphlet from Monmouth County Parks
    - i. Can tree-related information from within be shared to Facebook, etc.?
  - c. EH says a tree request form is forthcoming
4. Treasurer's Report – \$14,770.27 is the opening balance, \$14,170.27 is closing balance
  - a. \$600 expense for secretarial fees
  - b. Annual budget check for \$15,000 arrived
  - c. AC motions to approve; BT seconds; all in favor
5. Old Business –
  - a. Tree list: FG shared print and PDF update with emoji key, aims to be ready to edit and post next month
    - i. Look into printing some color copies that people can view at events, borough hall desk, etc.
  - b. CMFP: Trying to have an update for next month
  - c. Tribute tree: Placeholder but can bubble up with fall planting
    - i. Reminder to check on Kate Wigginton's request
  - d. Permit issue: AC/BT meet with RC and Rich
    - i. AC made some updates to the form to confirm that people will provide necessary information but RC asked for an additional update



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1. He wants to remove DBH from form so he can measure and fill out himself and they want to keep a loaner tape at borough hall, he can add that information to an "Office Use Only" section
2. Should we get a couple of these tapes to keep at borough hall/the library so people can try to accurately measure trees on their own
3. RC wonders if we actually have the power to dictate what residents do to their trees? He showed AC/BT the ordinance that says we do not in a state code/rule book; he also said he can't suggest pruning because he and the town will be liable if something happens (though he shouldn't be worried about individual liability) and if a tree removal company puts their license on the line saying to take a tree down we should adhere to that (that said, tree removers are incentivised to remove whole trees and not branches)
  - a. Is there someone else that can do this?
  - b. Who does this work in other towns? Fairhaven pays Sherri to do this. AC will ask Sherri how much this would cost once or twice a month estimating the number of permits? It feels worth spending less on tree planting or other expenditures
4. Did not to talk about tracking (Beth was unavailable) but in Fairhaven the STC secretary does the tracking
  - a. AC believes the borough should own at least some of this
  - b. An online PDF or Jotform would automatically track this information
5. Rob said we can attach something to the permit or add a second page with information from Rutgers on how to save your tree/avoid taking it down
  - a. We can each do some research on this: Rutgers, University of Oregon, Arbor Day, etc. – resources on how to save your trees, removal versus anything else, questions you can ask your arborist/tree service
6. New Business –
  - a. First Avenue: no update



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- b. Fall plantings: 4 or so requests so far, can decide if some people can get more than one, etc.
    - i. There is no number or goal at the moment (let's circle back on this next month after we make progress on CMFP and the grant)
    - ii. Can BT post again on Facebook; BT will let us know if/when he posts so we can share
    - iii. Can we put up a flyer with QR code about applying for free trees? FG can adapt flyer and share with BT, etc., to post and share
  - c. UP shared a table with Wild About Atlantic Highlands at the film festival, a handful of people told UP that Atlantic Highlands has too many trees
    - i. WAAH was very popular, they have a very nice brochure, etc.
    - ii. Should we promote bushes? They also have benefits
      - 1. This is more under the auspices of WAAH, Green Team, etc.
  - d. The QR code plaques are really beaten up by the marina and the playground (from mowers, etc.); AC will reach out to Jimmy Phillips
  - e. Tree at marina by playground, second one in, doesn't look like it's doing well, EH will take a photo
  - f. 2 dead maple trees in East Avenue Park, AC will reach out to JP
  - g. Also looking troubled: Maple on the corner of First and East Mount; oak on First and West Mount; this is the time of year to look out for these issues
  - h. RC asked to look at London plane trees at Asbury and Third, he says limbs keep falling and they're a hazard; these likely just need some maintenance, BS will take a photo
7. Public Comment — none
8. Adjournment: FG motions to adjourn the meeting; BS seconds; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm; the next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 7pm