



*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**  
**Meeting Held October 13, 2021**  
**Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall**

1. The monthly meeting was called to order by Fred Callis at 6:30 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law.

In attendance: Fred Callis, Rich Lerner, Mary Trank, Ellen O’Dwyer. Not present: Ken Grasso, Bill Thorne, Janet Grote, Lori Hohenleitner (council liaison).

2. Approval of Minutes: Fred Callis made a motion to approve the September minutes. Rich Lerner seconded it. All voted in favor.

3. Correspondence: a thank you card was received from Kate Wigginton; a tree request was received from resident Janet Grote.

4. Treasurer's report:

Opening balance:	\$10,170.87
Expenses	0.00
Total deposits	\$10,000.00
Closing balance	\$20,170.87

5. Old Business:

a. DPW has removed the stump on Hennessey Blvd and a replacement Maple tree is expected to be planted by Casola Farms by the first week of November.

b. Regarding the Mary Thompson memorial tree and the replacement tree on 3rd Ave--Molzon Nursery can get Shade Tree any tree it wants, however does not want to sell us one or two trees. Do we want to place an order for a larger number of trees or find another vendor to sell us one or two trees at a time? Fred Callis suggested we tally at the November meeting the number of tree requests we have to place an order with Molzon.

c. Given that some recently planted trees are failing, the group discussed at some length how to educate residents and support them in keeping trees alive that have been planted. We will work on this through the winter in preparation for the Spring.



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d. Hufnagel Tree Service has been pruning trees and removing stumps on First Ave, Hennessey Blvd., and on the trail, from First Ave to the playground. This work will continue.

e. Fred Callis talked about the new tree markers for memorial trees including QR codes that would direct to the town website, where one could learn more about the person for whom the tree is dedicated. The details of this still need to be worked out.

f. Regarding the 256 E. Highland Ave. pruning request, the members reviewed the information presented at the September meeting and received afterwards from the residents and their attorney. Ellen O'Dwyer said she and other had attended a webinar on October 6, 2021--"Tree Biomechanics: A Continuing Discussion"-- taught by Karl Niklas, Ph.D, of Cornell University, who is opposed to tree topping due to the increased risk to a tree of mechanical failure during the time the tree regrows its canopy. With feedback Fred Callis gathered in advance from members not present, the commission voted to not recommend this project to the Mayor and Council. [Note: information about the webinar follows below at the conclusion of these minutes.]

### 6. New Business

- a. A decision was made to participate in Atlantic Highlands Touch a Truck on October 23rd.
- b. A online CEU opportunity was presented: Friday, October 15, 10:00 – 11:30 am, Native Trees: How to Select, Plant and Transplant
- c. Fred Callis talked about resuming stakeholders meetings in 2022 and suggested bringing Paul Cowie in to talk about the trees of the 911 Memorial and Museum.

### 7. Public Comment

- a. Resident Richard Colangelo attended the meeting to ask about the process of having a memorial tree planted. He is going to send us the name of a resident whose husband died who would like to know more information and Mary Trank will follow up.
- B. Resident Sarah Colasurdo said that she would be in favor of the Shade Tree Commission resuming some opportunity for "virtual" meeting attendance and encouraged us to advocate for this with the Mayor and Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. with the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.



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UMASS Amherst

“Urban Forestry Today” Webcast; <http://www.urbanforestrytoday.org/webcast-archives.html>

Rick Harper, Extension Associate Professor of Urban and Community Forestry  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
160 Holdsworth Way  
Amherst, MA 01003  
rharper@eco.umass.edu

**October 6, 2021**

**“Tree Biomechanics: A Continuing Discussion”**

**Speaker/Presenter: Karl J. Niklas, PhD, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University**

Time stamp on the below recording 53:50

**Question:** From an engineering standpoint, can you talk about the effects of tree topping, inappropriate pruning, that sort of thing?

**Answer:**

I am against it. I am against it because you are changing the equilibrium condition of the tree, and the tree will respond. It will regrow or try to regrow missing branches and missing parts of the canopy, and that takes time. Until it reaches its equilibrium condition again, it's susceptible to mechanical failure, especially under windy conditions. Now I know it sounds counterintuitive, “well I take the top of the canopy off, how could windy conditions result in a more dangerous situation”? Well it CAN because of oscillations. Remember the wind isn't coming from one direction, it's coming from multiple directions and it has multiple magnitudes. It can be a little gust of wind, or it can be a massive surge. And that's resulting in torsion, and in bending, and in what is called harmonic oscillations.



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And by changing the dynamics of the canopy, you are changing how those bending moments are being transmitted to the base of the tree trunk, and that in turn means that the root system is responding to mechanical forces that it never experienced before.