

Mountain Lakes Shade Tree Commission Meeting

October 8, 2025

In Attendance: Sandy Batty, Dan Amato, Marnie Vyff, Roxanne Tavakkol, Tony Forman, Phyllis Deerling, Briana Ostrosky

June Minutes - Dan Amato was not in attendance. Passed as corrected.

Community Forestry Management Plan – Sandy, Roxanne and Phyllis had a discussion with the arborist about the plan expiring at the end of December 2025. In June, Sandy had submitted an application for funding for the plan. Because the Mountain Lakes STC is not accredited, Mountain Lakes STC might not be eligible for a grant. Sandy contacted the DEP Community Forestry Program who said that though our plan lapses at the end of 2025, STC still has a year to develop a new plan. STC will seek clarification on how to approach next steps with the grant. STC member Roxanne said that she is attending the CEU Core Training course next week (October 2025) and given who will be present, will try to get the answers to the questions here.

Tree Inventory - 2025 Recommendations and Future Deadlines - Tree work from last year's walk has not been completed. Briana and Sandy went to a meeting with Mitchell Stern about why the tree work hadn't been done and future planting. DPW was supposed to be on top of it but it appears as though the vast majority of the work hasn't been completed. Mitchell let Sandy know that the money in the budget for P&R from last year that wasn't spent has been encumbered. Mitchell requested that we get the list sooner in the year. Sandy suggested that we complete our walks earlier than in years past to ensure we get to the tree work done sooner if possible. STC member Roxanne suggested STC members go and review their identified P&R items. STC spoke about how to better flag trees for P&R, including using plastic ribbon tape to mark trees for pruning and painting X's on trees for removal. STC member Briana said it was also discussed that STC could use door knockers to notify residents that P&R work is scheduled to be done in the ROW on property.

Tree Planting - STC member Briana offered to take on the tree planting efforts this year. Notifications have gone out via the Borough Blast, Facebook posts, and the virtual backpack. STC members Tony Forman, Cath Mitchell and Doren Greene had gone to Cerbo's in Newton to start discussing the plantings. Requested that we get the trees in pots, not in burlap. Still not clear on the actual budget of trees, but potentially we can plant up to 40.

Enforcement of Tree Ordinance - Sandy reminded the STC of the Tree Ordinance, governing removal. Sandy noticed that there was a property where several trees had been removed and Mitchell confirmed that a tree permit had not been filed. He will be following up with enforcement. STC will keep an eye out around town to see if work is being done.

Arbor Day Follow Up - STC member Briana spoke with Patrick Higgins, Wildwood Principal, but it didn't seem like there was any room to have more events. In order to remain a Tree City USA, we have to have an Arbor Day event. STC discussed alternate plans to conduct an event in town if having an event at the elementary school isn't the best option going forward. Looking at potentially the Library, Island Beach, or Birchwood. STC members Briana and Phyllis agreed to

meet with the Wildwood principal in December to work through some of the logistics and potential for future events.

Other Business - No other business

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM EST
Minutes taken by Dan Amato