

Notes From STC meeting of Dec 2024

10 Dec 2024

Attendees: Commissioners Patricia Gallagher, John Kennedy, Joe Ascenzi, Robin Eisman, Anna Nicholaides; Assoc. Members Andrew Christy, Tanya Borman-Voit, Kristin Gaenssle; Travis D'Onofrio; Township representative: Nathan Vasserm2an, Information Technology Officer; Consulting Arborist John Hosbach.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm; adjourned 9:10 pm.

Note: agenda order was modified; notes from each item appear in order discussed.

Agenda items:

(1) Minutes from the Oct 2024 meeting were approved.

(2) Bare-Root Tree Planting in Ethel Joran Park: JohnK

Total of 15 trees were planted (with proper mulching & staking) in Ethel Jordan Park, Nov. 15-16, with help from Kathy Hemsley and other volunteers.

(6) Street Tree Program (Proposed): Anna Nicholaides

Anna N proposed a program of evaluating best places to plant additional street trees in Township, on property owned or managed by the Township; would like to put it into 2026 budget; Ashley McIlvane has contacted Public Works for input.

Discussion/Comments:

- John H: PennDOT limits what trees can be planted and where; applicable to state roads, eg, Old York Rd.
- John H: Overhead utility lines need to be taken into account, as well as the right-of-way setback, which can vary by street, though property owners can grant permission to plant on private property.
- Andrew C: Tree Authority suggested \$500/tree would cover planting and maintenance.
- John H / Joe A: If tree pits need, cost can be \$700-750 to \$1500-2000 per tree.
- Nathan V has a GIS layer of street trees, done by Davey Tree Co in ~2017, if useful.
- Trish G: Planning should align w/recommendations in the Township's open-space plan.
- Andrew C / Travis D'O: where appropriate (eg, Fairway), consider replacing grass in street medians with more ecologically friendly species, eg, meadow mix.

(7) Updates on Recent Activity, If Any: All

7a. SEPTA Rail Line Slope Stabilization: No updates

7b. Memorial Trees at Highland Elementary: Anna N: Abington School District (ASD) concerned about mowing around tree(s); planning to have John H. speak w/ASD about mowing.

7c. Edgehill Woods: Robin E: Had ~6 kids from Crefeld School help twice on Weds. aft (planting trees, removing invasive grasses). Unplanted saplings to be overwintered.

7d. Glenside-Weldon Trees: Anna: Need to replace several newly-planted trees, next to playground, that were vandalized. Discussion on whether Greater Glenside Civic Assoc. could share the cost.

7f. Parks & Rec Programming: See (5), Ask-the-Arborist event.

7g. Tree Ordinance Revision: Trish G: Township Code Enforcement & Engineering dept's provided comments on draft to Ashley Maci, who is collating comments and will pass on to STC; quick response anticipated.

(5) Ask-the-Arborist Event: All

Agreed after discussion that John H and Travis D'O would be the experts, with a Q&A format. STC will propose a 1.5-hr program. Date(s) TBD.

(3) End-of-2024-Budget-Year Spending: All

Is significant funding left over. Discuss money set aside for Township arborist, which can't be used, due to classification issues. Some funds to be used for purchasing equipment needed for tree giveaways (eg, wire cages), some for educational materials. Will still be funds left over from 2024. Trish G, Tanya B-V, Travis D'O, & Nicole Tomlinson to work on educational materials.

(8) LD-24-04: 221 Moredon Rd: Prelim. Plans for Major Subdiv./Land Development

- John H asks to be notified sooner for land devel. Plans needing comment; requests copy so he can review and comment.
- Robin E will contact Pennypack Trust as to whether they're aware of this and if any of their holdings/easements affected.

(9) Other Business: STC Appointment: Trish G

STC working w/Township on process, hope to have candidate for Jan or Feb STC meeting.

(4) 2025 Budget and Planning: All

4a. Invasive plant removal & management plan: Andrew C will draft an RFP for inventory and control plan for invasives (Township-wide) over next few weeks; hope to hire consultant by spring 2025. Is joint project with EAC.

4b. Ongoing care for recently planted trees: Robin E went on site visit w/owner of All Seasons Landscaping Co. in mid-Nov. to enable estimate for watering new trees at several parks. This quote and others to be followed up by Robin E, John H.

Other:

- Working group for spring tree giveaway: Andrew C, Nicole T, Travis D'O. Travis D'O has list of climate-resilient (ie, relatively mor heat-tolerant) tree species, will share.
- Trish G contact Jessica Tholey to see if Parks & Rec can take over Tree City applications.
- Trish G: need to set up 2025 steering committee to implement MTAP.