



Verona Shade Tree Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes:

date: January 12, 2025

at 5 p.m. in person and Internet Conferencing

Members Present - Quorum Established Yes _____ No _____
Carol Thomas (Chair) <u> x </u> Bob Prout (member) _____ Ira Jacobs (member) <u> x </u> Val Ryan (member) <u> x </u> Diane Conboy (member) _____ Catherine Tamasik (alternate #1) <u> x </u> Kathy Rutherford (alternate #2) <u> x </u> Councilwoman Christine McGrath (Council Representative) <u> x </u>

	Discussion	Action Required
1.	Call to order at <u> 5:05 pm </u> a) Open Public Meetings Act Statement <u> x </u> b) Roll Call performed. <u> x </u>	
2.	Public Comment Period: No public comment	
3.	Correspondence: Ms. Thomas asked if all members receive the tree requests from Public Works. Ms. Rutherford and Ms. Tamasik do not; Ms. Thomas will ensure that they receive these in the future.	
4.	Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of MOTION to Approve: Ira Jacobs Second: Val Ryan APPROVAL: All Members Present <u> x </u> Abstentions: none	Ms. Thomas will email approved minutes to Township Clerk J. Kiernan.
5.	<u>Budget</u> : The members reviewed and discussed the operating and capital budgets for Shade Tree and Public Works/Shade Tree and YTD status. The Shade Tree capital budget	

	<p>is for tree planting. We are awaiting a response to our Natural Climate Solutions Grant request to the state for \$400,000 for new trees; Montclair received \$3 million for 910 trees.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p><u>New and Unfinished Business:</u></p> <p><u>Shade Tree 2026 Goals & Objectives.</u> Ms. Thomas wrote to the Township Manager, Deputy Manager, DPW Manager and the Town Council setting forth the STC's 2026 goals and objectives. The Commission discussed these at length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) set up ArcGis Map Pro so the Commission can access on a current basis the tree inventory and status of all tree work in town; b) prepare the Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP). Grace & Harrigan consultants are preparing statistics and technical info. This is the Master Plan for Verona shade trees; c) because of education credits earned by Commission members and our proposed submission of a CFMP, Verona is accredited with NJDEP. This grants liability protection to the township; d) Ms. Thomas will meet with Mr. Molinaro to review budget balances and discuss upcoming maintenance projects; e) The STC will coordinate a public education program with the Township's public information officer Elise Northrup to emphasize the importance of trees. Ms. Ryan and Mr. Jacobs will gather information (see Glen Ridge materials) and work with Ms. Northrup to develop a program that may include mailings, brochures, web site banners; f) 45-50 trees will be planted by the New Jersey Tree Foundation this spring on Verona's six school campuses. The BOE applied for a \$50,000 grant from the Foundation but has not yet received it. The township will spend the money up front and be repaid. Shade Tree will coordinate an Arbor Day event in conjunction with these plantings; g) working with Strans on the Bloomfield Ave Streetscape project about tree species selection, new green spaces, and storm water management; h) follow-up with Everett Field project to encourage additional plantings. <p><u>MCFP.</u> Ms. Thomas stressed the importance of completing the CFMP, and we hope to submit it in February. Ms. Thomas and Ms. Tamasik will work on the Plan. Ms. Thomas noted that the template is different from the one we used five years ago. Glen Ridge's plan used the new template and has been approved so we can look to that plan for guidance</p> <p><u>21-25 Grove Avenue.</u> An application for a very dense development is before the Board of Adjustment. Many trees will be removed, but these are not township trees, and the Commission has no authority to review the removals or replanting plans.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Motion to Adjourn: Ms. Tamasik Second: Ms. Ryan Adjournment: 6:30 pm Next Meeting: February 9, 2026</p>	