

**Franklin Township Shade Tree Commission (STC)
Meeting Minutes – January 24, 2008**

STC Attendees:

Jeff Baumley
Mark Evans
Al Galdi
Berit Marshall
Frank McLaughlin
Larry Miller
Mike Orsini
Arnold Schmidt

Missing STC Member:

John Brewer

Public attendees:

Mark Fortin, Franklin Twp. Trails Advisory Committee (TAC)
Bob Hudak (28 Stratford Drive)

Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Orsini called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and handed out agendas to STC.

Mr. Orsini introduced the proposed STC meeting dates for 2008. Mr. Galdi motioned to approve the STC meeting dates for 2008 (MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY)

Mr. Orsini opened up the floor for discussion and volunteers for the election of executive positions in the STC for 2008. After discussion and voting (full consensus), Mr. Orsini was re-elected as the Chairman of the STC and Mr. Galdi was re-elected as the Vice-Chairman. Mr. McLaughlin was elected as Secretary (replacing Mr. Brewer). Also, Mr. Schmidt requires reappointment to STC as Environmental Commission liaison.

Mr. Orsini introduced Mr. McLaughlin and Mr. Fortin, members of the Franklin Twp. Trails Advisory Committee (TAC), to give the STC an overview of Franklin Twp's proposed Pathways and Trails Plan (PTP). The Franklin Twp Trails Advisory Committee was established in 2005 (via Township Ordinance) to advise township Departments, Mayor, Council and Manager on issues related to acquisition, design, use and maintenance of trails for recreation and travel in the township. It is anticipated that the proposed Pathways and Trails Plan will be adopted by the township and incorporated in the Master Plan following input from the public, township committees and elected officials. After presentations and questions, the Trails Advisory Committee and STC agreed to partner on future projects relating to vegetative buffering on township open space where proposed trails are located near residential areas. The TAC members will approach the STC with a specific project to work on in the near future.

Mr. Orsini opened up discussion for old business. STC's Tree City USA requirements were met thanks to Mr. Schmidt's attendance. STC has not received an invoice from Mr. Gary Lovallo (estimated \$3500) for preparing the Franklin Twp second 5-year Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP). Mr. Orsini asked if there were any additional comments to the CFMP in addition to Mr. Schmidt's recent recommendations. Mr. Evans provided a list of parks for the CFMP. No additional comments provided on the CFMP; Mr. Schmidt's marked-up CFMP document will be used to make changes. Mr. Orsini indicated that Franklin Twp Clerk Ann McCarthy wanted a STC member to assist on the planning of the Dunn & Gunther homestead properties along South Middlebush Road (near Butler Road). Mr. Orsini believed that this planning committee would work on the future uses of the properties, which is anticipated to include farming, an agricultural learning center & museum, community gardens and possibly other amenities. No STC member agreed to commit to be on the Dunn & Gunther planning committee, but Mr. Baumley and Ms. Marshall agreed to attend future meetings.

Mr. Orsini opened up discussion for new business. Mr. Orsini stated that the Amwell Road and South Middlebush interchange construction would begin this spring. Mr. Orsini indicated that the Somerset County proposes to replant trees in Spring 2009. After discussion and agreement, Mr. Orsini will request the county to replant trees in late fall or early winter 2008. Mr. Orsini mentioned that the STC received another 8-10 orders for trees for the Tree Sale. Mr. Baumley indicated that the trees will arrive between March 5-15. STC agreed to conduct the Tree Sale on Saturday March 29. Mr. Galdi excused himself from the meeting. STC discussed Arbor Day planting, with a tentative date of Saturday April 5 and possible locations, Inman Park or Cedar Grove detention basin. No final planting location was determined, but most STC members believed that a park would be preferable. Mr. Orsini introduced the possibility for Continuing Education Units (CEU) training by STC members. Mr. Baumley will write a course description for basic dendrology. Mr. McLaughlin will write a course description for basic geology. Mr. Orsini discussed the STC financial status and indicated that the STC received \$3000 from the settlement for the Brenner Court tree cutting. Mr. Orsini and Mr. Baumley agree to coordinate with Mr. Tom Zelinek to train township inspectors for tree plantings. Mr. Orsini indicated that the STC may get training on the township's Global Positioning System (GPS) unit(s) by township consultant Mr. John Loos and create a map of significant trees in the township. STC members expressed interest in the training and mapping effort (Mr. Orsini will inform Mr. Loos of STC interest). Mr. Orsini indicated that the Franklin Twp Open Space Committee met with the NJ Natural Resource Conservation Service regarding reforesting the Bunker Hill Road parking lot and possible partnering with STC on this project. Mr. Orsini indicated that the funds for this project would come from the monies (annual \$5000) Open Space Committee provides to STC.

At 9:15, Mr. Orsini opened the meeting to the public. Mr. Bob Hudak (28 Stratford Drive, adjacent to Quailbrook Golf Course) indicated that 10-15 large trees were recently removed from the county-owned golf course. Mr. Orsini stated that he would reach out to Township Administrator Mr. Ken Daly to discuss how to proceed on this issue.

At 9:30, the STC meeting was adjourned.