

Minutes
City of Geneva Shade Tree Committee
Thursday December 18th, 2025 Noon
Finger Lakes Welcome Center Conference Room

Present: John Brennan, Jeremy Busch, Jim Norwalk, Daisy Hoyt, Jay Freer, James Charlie Rouse, Tom Burrall, Jim Engel

Excused: Joe Venuti, James Anderson, James McCorkle

Guests: Mike Karweck

Approval: Minutes for the November 20th, 2025 meeting approved

Old Business:

- Membership updates:

The committee membership and term ending date as follows:

Charles Rouse December 31, 2028
Jeremy Busch December 31, 2028
James Norwalk (Chair) December 31, 2025
Tom Burrall December 31, 2028
James McCorkle December 31, 2026
Daisy Hoyt December 31, 2026
Jay Freer December 31, 2027
James Anderson December 31, 2027
James Engel December 31, 2027

Staff Liaison – Joe Venuti, Director of Public Works

Council Liaison – John Brennan

Charlie Rouse and Jeremy Busch have taken their oath at City Hall and Tom Burrall has not yet.

John Brennan will continue as City Council liaison.

- Problem trees and other updates:

232 High St. Norway Maple (#5250). DPW removed it after a lateral branch fell and damaged the utility service lines at this address.

Tom Burrall checked on several newly planted trees at 90 Jay St. which were reported to be in poor condition. They will likely need replacement due to inadequate watering by the homeowner.

273 Washington St. Silver Maple (6161). The homeowner calls repeatedly with concerns about a compromised large branch which overhangs the front of his home.

Jeremy Busch is concerned that a serviceberry at 17 Copeland Ave. will need to be pruned away from overhead utilities.

- Scheduled pruning updates:

None reported

- Discuss requirement for a 3-year Shade Tree Report

Jeremy Busch will compile a summary of each year between 2020 and 2025. James McCorkle will help after Fall semester ends. Jim Engel asks that we submit an annual report going forward and that we dedicate one entire meeting annually to produce it as a team. John Brennan wants to present a dramatic summary of committee accomplishments to promote awareness of our mission success.

- DEC Community Reforestation Grant 2026:

<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/urban-and-community-forestry/urban-and-community-forestry-grants>

Daisy Hoyt reports that the 2026 grant hasn't been announced yet. She told us that the grant is reimbursement based so the city budget must have allocations for the project once it is designed and proposed. The grant stipulates a request of a minimum of \$150k and a maximum of \$3 million and must include a commitment for 5 years of project administration. The potential project scope could be for multiple sites, invasive species control, planting, etc. but NOT street tree planting or trail construction. The proposal must include a 10-year maintenance plan. Daisy and John Brennan met with Assistant City Manager Taylor Youngs and grant manager Jennifer Sutton and they showed interest in working toward a proposal with the Shade Tree Committee. Some preliminary project ideas are Castle Creek watershed or railroad pathway habitat restoration.

- Planning Arbor Day Tree Giveaway 2026:

We have confirmed the following species will be available from White Oak Nursery for the giveaway.

Shrubs: Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*), American Hazlenut (*Corylus americana*), Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)

Small trees: Downy Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*)

Large trees: Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*), Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), White Oak (*Quercus alba*), Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*), Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), White Spruce (*Picea glauca*), White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)

New Business:

- The committee honored the memory of former STC member Jerry Bond who passed away in early December. After stepping down, Jerry was the contract arborist the DPW hired to do occasional tree care and health assessments. The committee suggests that Drew Rojek, head of grounds at HWS Colleges may recommend Jerry's replacement.
- Annual Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA application.

The due date was December 2nd. No report on this status.

- The committee recommend that the DPW dig out the root balls of the trees accidentally planted without removing the fabric bag (see November 2025 Agenda for specific details). The deadline for this should be April 2026 so that the work is done while trees remain dormant.

Next Meeting: NOON January 15th, 2025 at the Finger Lakes Welcome Center Conference Room