

Minutes
City of Geneva Shade Tree Committee
Thursday February 20th, 2025 Noon
Finger Lakes Welcome Center Conference Room

Present: James Norwalk, Jay Freer, James Anderson, Jeremy Busch, Daisey Hoyt, Tom Burrall

Excused: John Brennan, James Engel, James McCorkle

Absent: Joe Venuti, Charlie Rouse

Guests: Tahlia Fischer (Finger Lakes Times), Nicole Tillotson (City Clerk), Tim Higgins, Steve Horton, Mike Rowe (Dept. of Public Works)

Approval: Minutes for the December 19th, 2024 meeting approved

Old Business:

- Membership updates:

The committee membership and term ending date is as follows:

Charles Rouse December 31, 2025
Jeremy Busch December 31, 2025
James Norwalk (Chair) December 31, 2025
Tom Burrall December 31, 2025
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

- James Norwalk asked the committee and guests to briefly introduce themselves since we had extra guests at the meeting.
- James Norwalk introduced Tahlia Fischer a Finger Lakes Times reporter who will be doing a series for the paper loosely based on STC history and membership, recent and current projects, problem trees species and management issues, etc.
- Problem trees and other updates:

114 N Main St. tree #3066 Sugar Maple. Jay Freer requests this be added to the 2025 REMOVAL list.

A motor vehicle accident knocked down a small Sugar Maple at 61 N. Main St. in early February. The stump still needs removal. Jim Norwalk edited the database accordingly. Tom Burrall wants Joe Venuti to know that the damage

to city property and the replacement cost of the tree should be recovered from a liability claim against the automobile driver's insurance.

Jeremy Busch reported that a new tree in the beds in front of Family Dollar on Exchange St. has some root sprouts that require pruning.

- Summary of removals for 2024.

Steve Horton reports that all scheduled removals for Fall 2024 have been completed but that the pruning work is still being completed.

- Summary of Fall 2024 tree planting.

Steve Horton reported that all trees we were able to get homeowner requests and agreements for have been planted with several exceptions. There was no remaining space for a second new tree in the right-of-way at 187 Washington because the tree planted last year was installed in the center of the tree lawn. Jim Norwalk will edit the database to remove the available space at that address. Steve Horton also said he was unsure of which tree species was planted at 446 Washington St. due to labeling confusion at the nursery. Jim Norwalk will check on this.

Tim Higgins reported that the 16 or so trees that were allocated to the HWS Colleges grounds crew for planting in campus ROWs have not been delivered. All agreements regarding the transfer and locations have been reached with HWS. Spring 2025 planting is anticipated.

Tim Higgins said that tree planting is only possible around the perimeter of Washington St. Cemetery. This is to avoid disturbing shallow, poorly marked graves throughout the rest of the property. Glenwood Cemetery has more spaces for large trees, but they must have sturdy protection from browsing and buck rub.

Jim Norwalk apologized for the difficulty the DPW had identifying which trees were supposed to be extracted from the WWTP nursery this year. All the sharpie ink had faded from the survey flagging he used to mark each available tree. We will label each tree with permanent plastic nursery ID tags with species information to avoid future problems.

New Business:

- DEC Community Reforestation Grant due Wednesday March 12th, 2025: <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/urban-and-community-forestry/urban-and-community-forestry-grants>

Daisy Hoyt volunteered to review this process to see if we should hurry in an application this year.

- Tree nursery update, future needs for new saplings, trees that need immediate planting.

The date for HWS Colleges Day of Service is April 12th from 11:30 AM until 2:30 PM. Jim Norwalk has reserved a group of 6 to 9 students for help. We plan on filling root control bags to prepare for new saplings arriving in the following weeks. The DPW will need to provide shovels and a front-loader scoop of top soil and of biosolids to be mixed by hand into the bags. There

are approximately 250 14" root control bags stored on the bench in the WWTP greenhouse. There should be enough 5 gallon buckets on site.

Bill Albert, the resident at 154 Maxwell Ave. He has agreed to have one or two of the available American Elms. There were 2 large trees removed from there recently, so we need to make sure the soil is ready for a new tree before planting. We anticipate the space will be ready for Fall 2025 replanting of 2 large trees.

Jim Norwalk presented a list of trees and shrubs that are optional for the upcoming Arbor Day Tree Giveaway and for planting in the nursery. The committee will debate the options and make final decisions over the next several days.

We will need to plant the 60 Wafler crabapples, the 36 White Fringe Trees and 36 Eastern Redbuds from White Oak Nursery, Charlie Rouse's American Elm saplings, and the 3 "heritage oaks" from Canandaigua as soon as possible this Spring.

- Jim Norwalk met with Mike Karweck at the DPW office in early February. They went over tree database functions that will facilitate communications involving tree work and planning between the Shade Tree Committee and the DPW.
- Thank you to Joe Venuti and Kevin read for completing this year's Tree City USA registration.

Next Meeting: Thursday January 16th, 2025 NOON at the Geneva Visitor's Center Conference Room.