

MEETING MINUTES
Shade Tree Committee
City Hall – 280 Grove Street, Jersey City NJ 07302
Councilmember Mira Prinz-Arey, Chair

Meeting: Jersey City Shade Tree Committee Meeting

Date / Location: 21 June 2021 – 6:30 p.m.
BA Conference Room, City Hall, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Attendees: **Voting Committee Members**
Mira Prinz-Arey, Chair
David Hurtle
Reni Stoll
Matthew Trump
Theodore G. Tasoulas, Vice-Chair
Marc Wesson

Non-Voting Committee Members/City Representatives
Cameron Black, Sr. Planner, Jersey City Division of Planning
John McKinney, Jersey City Department of Law
Edward O'Malley, Jersey City Forester
Adam Cohen, designee for Chair Prinz-Arey

Prepared By: Hana Katz

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Meeting notice was sent to the City Clerk's Office, the Jersey Journal, the Hudson Reporter, and el Especialito on June 17, 2021. The agenda was also posted on the website for the Office of Sustainability, <https://jcmakeitgreen.org>.

ROLL CALL

The Committee meeting commenced at 6:38 PM. All six voting committee members were present at the beginning of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes from the May 24 Shade Tree Committee Meeting were approved unanimously.

*Reni Stoll joins the Shade Tree Committee as the new representative of Sustainable Jersey City

OLD BUSINESS

Species List

- Committee spent majority of the meeting collaborating to review the species list.
- Hardiness:
 - The committee recognized the importance of avoiding planting trees susceptible to disease, such as Beech trees, which are failing in NJ.
 - The committee agreed on the promotion of native species throughout the greenification process as much as possible
 - ex. honey locust, red maple, redbuds
 - Swamp White Oak is the only Oak tree option that thrives in urban setting.
 - Question raised regarding the lack of Evergreens on the list.
 - Edward O'Malley, Jersey City Forester, responded that Evergreens, which are gymnosperms, are more likely to fail in Jersey City. When compared to deciduous trees, they are not the best option for street.
- Edits to list:
 - Sweet Bay Magnolias changed to *good for park, not for street*.
 - Bald and Pond Cypress are listed as *good for park, not for street* due to its likeness to water and moist soil.
 - English Oak noted to be *slender, good with powerlines*.
 - Sargent Cherry "recommended" column contents removed, noted to have *no pink flare, dies in two years*.

Post-List Initiatives

- Separate List:
 - The group would like to work towards creating a separate list to identify the best trees for planting in parks vs. streets – for planning reference.
- Education:
 - Committee expressed interest in developing an educational campaign to discuss the ecological benefit of certain tree species, tree maintenance, and the value of greenification with the public and developers.
 - This initiative would promote environmental health in Jersey City through community outreach and education by providing resources for the public to make informed decisions when choosing their species.

- Adding more columns:
 - Question raised regarding adding more columns for an overall expansion of data on the traits of the species, including tree color, fragrance, hardiness, and its potential for carbon sequestration.
 - It was concluded that it would be best to include such information in a separate list later, once resources for these traits are identified (especially for carbon sequestration).

Forestry Standards

- Benefits of a Forestry Department:
 - There would be significant benefit to hiring someone responsible for forestry permits and enforcement of standards, especially with developers, to oversee compliance and tree health. However, staffing and budget are major obstacles for this initiative.
- Reni Stoll, Sustainable Jersey City representative, suggested the utilization of SJC's volunteer base and Open Tree Map application for street tree assessments.
 - Doing so would require a city forester to confirm all data, along with the mobilization of volunteers to perform the data collection.
- Maintenance Section:
 - The group revisited the Maintenance Section for finalization.
 - The group reiterates that the Maintenance Section of the Standards addresses the responsibilities of the developers who receive trees.
 - Questions raised regarding the enforcement of tree care by developers.
 - To enforce compliance, the city performs an initial inspection after planting. However, further inspection process is unclear.
 - The planning board obligates the property owner to care for their tree, after it is planted, through a legally binding agreement.
- Old business wrapped up with the desire to conclude the maintenance piece of the standards document before the next meeting.
 - The Standards will receive a final review by committee members to ensure that the language holding contractors to their maintenance obligation is sufficient.

NEW BUSINESS

- Forestry standards need to be cleaned up as soon as possible. The group estimates this to be completed before Friday July 9th.
 - The group will attempt to organize a private meeting via Zoom to discuss final changes before submission.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting of the Jersey City Shade Tree Committee is scheduled for Monday, July 19 at 6:30 p.m. This meeting will be held in person in the lower-level conference room of City Hall.