



## Minutes of STAC Meeting, 10 November 2004

**Attending:** Carol Avelsgaard, Arnold Henderson, Gary Minkoff, Rob Roslewicz, Karen Swain.

**Meeting commenced** 7:40 p.m. **Minutes of October** approved with changes in the reference to Twin Cedars.

### OLD BUSINESS

**Officers and Membership.** Carol Avelsgaard agreed to be co-chair with Arnold. Our member/officer list is only quasi-official since the Borough did not officially reissue our 2004 one-year terms. Arnie Galpern inquired who wishes to continue for 2005. Tim Coffey cannot but Aileen Coffey will. Nathan Imm and Regis Methven left earlier. Membership now appears to be: Carol Avelsgaard, Ruth Bowers, Roseann Cala, Aileen Coffey, Army Galpern, Arnold Henderson, Rob Roslewicz, ShayMaria Silvestri, Karen Swaine, George Winnett (10). Arnold will forward list to Gary for Borough confirmation.

**Street-Tree Pruning/Tie Removal by STAC.** Carol will oversee North Side and Rob South Side (plus Dennison), calling others to join them in drives along streets to finish any remaining trees with ties from earlier years' plantings.

**Native Plant Reserve.** Environmental Center planning by MKW has resumed, with a first draft of bid specs expected November. County road crews were unable to spray our Japanese knotweed this fall, but can next spring. To remove the worst weeds from planting beds (especially Japanese knotweed and mugwort, both now with seedheads), Gary will look for Community Service or other outside labor sources. A STAC member will be needed to point out which weeds to remove.

**Scent-ennial Garden.** Ruth and Karen have given design ideas to Council member Fern Goodhart for a sensory garden between Borough Hall and the Senior/Youth Center.

**Fall Street Tree Planting.** Frank Troy of DPW reports that the planting by Barbato Landscaping put in 104 trees in just two days. This is our first use of this firm. The 50 trees expected under the Cool Cities grant are separate and still in planning by the Borough and Main Street, perhaps for planting in 2005 or 2006. We need to clarify procedures for plantings, perhaps with more sites identified early (as a waiting list before funding is found). One way to identify sites in advance is to create a section of the Highland Park Environmental web site ([www.leoraw.com/hpenv](http://www.leoraw.com/hpenv)) explaining procedures for requesting a tree and offering residents a form to use. It would be linked from the main borough web site. Rob will draft something.

**Twin Cedars Replacement Plantings.** Frank Troy says Twin Cedars offered a third (final) replacement of 21 dead trees, and the Borough accepted this in an October 21 letter from Diane Dabulas, with some conditions, such as buying tree stock in Middlesex County. Frank and Diane are awaiting a reply (and possible spring planting).

**Rutgers Tree Proposal.** The proposal filed with Frank Wong of Rutgers University seeking 25 trees at the Native Plant Reserve is still pending. Trees would be part of an offset Rutgers gets from NJ DOT for trees lost to Route 18 extension.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Tree Pruning.** This year's work by contractor Gary Lovallo achieved some reduction of the potential backlog of trees in need, but used a grant that the state will apparently no longer offer. Rob described phased tree pruning plans such as that he has worked with in New York City. These typically have a first stage where hazard trees are identified and removed throughout town (as we did in the mid-1990s). Thereafter a single section of town is surveyed and pruned each year over perhaps a 10-year cycle. This could be expensive work to contract out unless DPW becomes able to do more with their own crews, perhaps by purchasing equipment with a higher reach for tall trees. Gary will try to arrange a meeting for himself, Carol, and Rob with Frank Troy.

**CDBG Grant.** We may still be able to apply. (Past grants have been for about 20 trees.) Arnold will try.

**Budget. We have \$360** left after Shade Tree Federation dues and conference attendance by Carol. At the next meeting we should decide any final purchases on this year's budget. One thought is to get a purchase order now for plants we would put in at the NPR next spring, if this can be done so far in advance.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Cleanup: Valley Place Ravine, Sunday November 14, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.** Sponsored by NJ Community Water Watch (Erin Mannella, Livingston College) and the HP Environmental Commission. Neighbors were invited. Raffle, pizza, donuts.

**Shade Tree Federation Conference.** Carol Avelsgaard attended a portion and received core training (except two sessions, to complete at a future conference). The state says many advisory committees are changing to commission form since the law was revised a few years ago. A commission is limited to seven members plus two alternates and must follow set procedures, but also has more direct responsibility for action, not simply advising the Borough). We might gather more information on court tests and the experience of towns with the commission form and see what we think.

**Asian Long-Horned Beetle.** Arnold put flyers at the library. Frank Troy sent us a 24-minute CD-rom to review. For HPTV?

**Preparation for Winter.** Treegators at the NPR and Path to Donaldson were taken to the pump house for winter storage by Arnold and the Environmental Commission's Mary Ellen Tuccillo. The Water Dept. is disconnecting the pump house water.

**Adjourned:** 9:25 p.m. **Next meeting: 8 December, 7:30 p.m., Borough Hall.**