

Highland Park Shade Tree Advisory Committee
Borough Hall, 221 S Fifth, Highland Park, NJ 08904



Shade Tree Advisory Committee (STAC) Annual Report 2004

- **Street Tree Plantings.** In November, 104 street trees were planted throughout the borough. These trees were funded through an Urban Forestry grant and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Residents with trees at their property will water them for the first year (in weeks without substantial rain), and STAC will continue observing them, trimming low branches, and after a year removing ties to stakes, as it is currently doing for plantings of recent years.
- **Path to Donaldson.** This universal-access path and nature trail was completed in Spring 2004. It is the first completed part of the broader environmental centers/greenway project led by the Environmental Education Centers Working Group (representatives from both STAC and the Environmental Commission). Native trees and shrubs were planted alongside, with informative labels so as to create an educational nature trail as well as an improved access route to Donaldson Park for residents of the southeast portion of the borough.
- **Environmental Center.** The Eugene Young Environmental Center building at the Native Plant Reserve will soon be a reality. The current year saw the receipt of what appears to be sufficient funding for this glass-walled exhibition and activities building and its associated shade structure. Bid documents are in preparation as of November and construction is likely during 2005. For this project, STAC members participated in the Environmental Centers Working Group alongside Environmental Commission members.
- **Sculpture Garden.** Toward the end of 2004, Grant funding from the Green Communities program was promised for a sculpture garden and associated path, also at the Environmental Center/Native Plant Reserve on River Road. When the grant is fully executed, sculptors will be invited to provide outdoor sculptures. In keeping with the Reserve's purpose of involving visitors in nature, some of the sculptures selected for either permanent or temporary exhibit may refer to the natural environment, use natural materials, or be in some way interactive for visitors.
- **Scent-ennial Garden.** STAC members contributed landscaping designs for this proposed fragrance and sensory garden to be created by the Borough and volunteers during our centennial year of 2005. The selected site is the open area between the Senior/Youth Center and Borough Hall, where many citizens pass each day. Plants will be selected for attractive odors and leaf textures as well as visual beauty. A raised bed will be easily reachable for wheelchair users.
- **Community Outreach.** STAC advised residents on several instances of tree plantings, including an improved landscaping design for 55 Raritan Avenue (former Berman's Hardware). Information was provided to the public on such topics as the recent advance of the Asian long-horned beetle into New Jersey. This information was provided by flyers at the library, the continued expansion of the pamphlet collection in the "Environmental Information" drawer managed by STAC and the Environmental Commission at the library Reference Department, and public tables at the annual Street Fair and (for 2004) Volunteer Night.