

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



## Minutes of STAC Meeting, March 14, 2007

Call to order 8:10 p.m. Attending: Belinda Beetham, Ruth Bowers, Fern Goodhart, Arnold Henderson, Barbara Lewis, Karen Swaine. Guest Ethan Glickman

### SPECIAL BUSINESS (GUEST)

Mr. Glickman, owner of the building at 515 Raritan, and a member of the Main Street board, inquired about replacing an existing street tree by a smaller one. Mr. Glickman would contribute to replace it with a younger, smaller tree (with species advice from STAC) and to provide a tree grate suiting Main Street redesign standards. Ruth will visit.

### OLD BUSINESS

List of notable tree species: Karen will deliver her suggestions to Ruth, as will any member who has them. Arnold's old list is now outdated, but some entries may hold. Ruth will compile a list. We hope to print Street Fair handout for May 20.

Meadows Cleanup by Water Watch: Assisted by Rutgers fraternities and the Friends of the Rutgers Ecological Preserve, Water Watch did extensive cleanup along the Meadows trail. Rosemary Topar of Livingston Water Watch led about 50 persons. Their next cleanup will be Johnson Brook (foot of Crowells Road) and the hill left of that trail entrance. This is outside the former landfill but has acquired litter over the years, competing with stands of spring beauty.

### NEW BUSINESS

Rutgers Design Projects. Prof. Seiko Goto's two landscape architecture classes are creating sets of design concepts for 1) Native Plant Reserve/Environmental Education Center on River Road and 2) International Garden along Donaldson Street from South Seventh to Crowells Road. There are three design alternatives for each. They will not design for the Lower Meadows, but may consider the relationship of the upper to lower, more wooded, areas. For that area, the Edison Wetlands Association is cooperating with Highland Park through the Environmental Centers Working Group. Arnold met the classes on March 7, and Ruth will meet with them March 21. Both will return March 28 to review designs. Ray Nolan, who has run the Community Garden in Donaldson Park gave advice on that aspect via email.

Cool Cities Tree Planting. Cool Cities needs 62 tree locations by March 21, matched to their list of available tree species. Karen, Ruth, and Carol have been preparing the list. These must be residential sites.

Environmental Education Center/Native Plant Reserve. The needs for soil remediation are not yet known. Much of the site may receive about a 6-inch coating of topsoil, as has already been done adjacent to the center itself. If soil will cover our planted beds, we may need to dig existing plants we wish to save, then replant. As this is a Green Acres site, we await their guidance. There is no word yet on sign designs by Edison Wetlands and Joan Ehrenfeld of HPEC.

Tree Replacement Ordinance. There is still time for STAC's comment on the proposed ordinance drafted by the Borough attorney. Some comments have already been emailed. Issues to discuss next time include references to commission powers instead of STAC's merely advisory role; clarifying routing of tree permit applications; strengthening the existing ordinance on tree removal; and whether the ordinance is framed for Highland Park's conditions. We have small lots and mostly complete buildout, but the draft seems modeled on ordinances for communities with larger developable spaces. Does this suit our smaller sites? Are tree clearances not associated with house construction (e.g., Midland Ross site cleanup) covered? Does there need to be a passage stating that nothing in this ordinance supersedes the restrictions on vegetation removal in the Stream Corridor Protection Ordinance?

Memorial Trees and Plaques for Donors. We need to find ways of designating memorial trees and honoring donations to the environmental education center. Individual plaques by each tree? A collective plaque? Carol has researched commercial designs (such as a metal "tree" with each "leaf" inscribed with a donor). Another concept was to work with a metals artist to design something unique to our site, combining artistic and nature concepts.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Garden Club. There will be a March 22 meeting: at the Senior/Youth Center of townspeople interested in gardening. Fern Goodhart is the organizer.

Environmental Summit (5 March) was successful, with reports on the Meadows trail and restoration, the draft Green Plan for measuring Highland Park's environmental progress, and other environmental activities now going on in town.

Next meeting 11 April, 2007, Borough Hall, 8 p.m.