



West Chester

Tree Commission

I

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting of Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Attendance:

Tree Commission (TC) Members: Chip Horne, Chris Pugliese, Jeff Beitel, Jamie Paxson, Anna Sechrist, Dale Frens

Consulting Borough Arborist (Borough Arborist): Not present

Borough tree program manager: Not present

Chip Horne, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Room 232, Borough Hall.

A. Minutes of the November 5, 2025 meeting were approved. The motion was made by Chip Horne, seconded by Jeff Beitel, and approved unanimously (hereinafter, "Motion: Horne/Beitel").

B. Additional Items Requested by Members and Guests

None

C. Tree Condemnations

1. The following trees were reviewed for condemnation:

- a. 507 N. High Street: 2 red oak trees reported by the property owner, Mike Marcus, that contain hazardous limbs. Background: The property owner retained an unnamed arborist to assess the two trees. The comments of the arborist were that one of the trees contains hazardous limbs that the Borough should look at. The owner is not requesting condemnation, but requests that the Borough inspect the two trees for condition. The Tree Commission (TC) unanimously approved tabling the request until our new Borough Arborist, John Hosbach, is on board in January 2026 (Horne/Sechrist).
- b. 115 S. Darlington: Tree lilac in severe decline. The TC unanimously approved condemnation of the tree and replacement with a suitable understory tree (Beitel/Horne).

- c. 501 S. High Street: Cherry in severe decline. The TC unanimously approved condemnation of the tree and replacement with a suitable canopy tree (Beitel/Horne).
- d. 624 N. Walnut Street: Red oak that has been severely topped by PECO. The TC unanimously approved tabling the application until John Hosbach is on board in January 2026 (Beitel/Frens).

2. Condemned Tree Report

- a. Four trees were condemned in November, and four trees were removed during the month, for a net total of 22 condemned trees not removed.

D. 2025 Tree Planting

- 1. Fall Tree Planting was successfully completed during the month. A total of 96 trees were planted out of a total of 130 trees on our list of identified fall plantings. This 73% rate is the result of various factors, including unwillingness of property owners to receive a tree, utility conflicts, stumps not removed, and unsuitable tree wells.
- 2. Spring Tree Planting: Our planting goal for Spring 2026 is 100 trees, at locations mostly to be determined.
 - a. New Tree Wells: As part of the 100-tree target, we are proposing 10 new tree wells in the Town Center. At an estimated \$260 each, the 10 tree wells will cost \$2,600.
 - b. Melton Center: There are 16 planting locations available at the Melton Center for spring planting. The low survival rate for new trees at this site was discussed, with no resolution.
 - c. 700 Block of South High Street (WCU): Inclusion of missing trees in this block was also discussed, also without resolution.

E. Status of Soliciting Bids for 2026 Tree Contracts.

- 1. The tree maintenance contract was put out to bid via PennBID on November 13.
- 2. The tree planting bid will be placed on PennBID in early January 2026.

F. 2025 Tree Program Budget

- 1. The 2025 Tree Program expenditures are close to the budgeted \$235,000 amount.

G. Status of Tree Maintenance Work

1. Horgan has completed tree pruning in Hoopes Park and other street tree pruning, utilizing the available 2025 budget.

H. Thank you to Jen Harris: The Tree Commission expresses its appreciation to Jen Harris for completing the term of a member who resigned in 2025 due to personal commitments.

I. Next Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, Room 232, Borough Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Minutes prepared by Dale H. Frens, Secretary