

# Ferguson Township Tree Commission (FTTC)

Date September 16, 2019

## Meeting Agenda

Time 5:30pm

### Call to Order

### Citizen's Input For Items Not On The Agenda

Any citizens in attendance are welcome to address the FTTC at this time.

### August 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes

The FTTC shall review and approve the minutes from the August meeting.

### Election of FTTC Vice Chair

As the previous Vice Chair of the FTTC is no longer a member of the commission, the FTTC shall elect a new Vice Chair to fill this role.

### Ridge Overlay Discussion

The Chairman has requested a discussion on the ridge overlay section of the township zoning ordinance including its requirements, and relationship to zoning districts.

### Outreach and Education

The Chairman has requested a discussion regarding outreach and education to residents by the FTTC. Topics include tree education, benefits of trees, and their role in the ecosystem. A draft mission statement produced by Mr. Pflumm and Dr. Muth is attached to the agenda.

### Tree Preservation Ordinance

The Chairman shall provide an update on the progress made drafting the tree preservation ordinance.

### Oak Disease Mitigation Proposal

At the August FTTC meeting members discussed drafting a plan to mitigate oak health issues on private property in addition to the oak wilt policy currently in place. This item should be discussed further to determine if it is feasible and warranted before any documents are drafted for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

### 2019 C-15 Street Tree Pruning Contract

The Arborist will provide the FTTC with information pertaining to this upcoming project and receive input as necessary.

### Arborist report:

The Arborist will review work activities and plan reviews since the last meeting.

### Communications to Commission Members

This is an opportunity for FTTC members to report on any contact by residents regarding FTTC matters.

### Future agenda items

Tree Preservation Ordinance, Outreach and Education, Planting Opportunities

### Other

Next meeting date and time is October 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30pm

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, August 19, 2019  
5:30 PM**

**I. ATTENDANCE**

The Tree Commission held its public meeting on Monday, August 19, 2019 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

**COMMISSION:**

Howard Fescemyer, Chairperson  
Marc McDill  
Mike Jacobson  
Scott Pflumm  
Allyson Muth

**STAFF:**

Lance King, Arborist  
David Modricker, Public Works Director

Others in attendance were: Summer Krape, recording secretary; Wes Glebe, Township Resident; Christine Bailey, Ferguson Township Resident.

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Fescemyer called the Monday, August 19, 2019 Ferguson Township Tree Commission meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

**III. CITIZEN'S INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

**IV. ALLYSON MUTH INTRODUCTION**

Dr. Allyson Muth is a new member. Dr. Muth introduced herself to the Commission. She currently serves as Interim Director, Center for Private Forest Management at Penn State University.

**V. JULY 15<sup>TH</sup> MEETING MINUTES**

**Dr. Fescemyer moved to approve the July 15, 2019 minutes with no corrections. Dr. McDill motioned to approve, Mr. Pflumm seconded and the motion and was passed unanimously.**

**VI. TREE REPLACEMENT MAPS**

Mr. King stated that using the tree removal maps, he prepared tree replacement maps. Mr. King went through each replacement tree and told the Commission what species would be placed at each location. He stated that he tried to capture most species the Commission talked about during the tour, however, some property owners requested certain species other than what he recommended. Dr. Jacobson suggested doing soil testing at the tree locations on Old Gatesburg Road given all the mortality in that area. Forty three total trees will need to be replaced and Mr. King is using eleven different species. The Commission discussed the possibility of using a tree inventory software program to track such items as areas of high mortality, and the source of the trees.

**VII. RIDGE OVERLAY DISCUSSION**

The Commission moved to table this agenda item for the September meeting.

**VIII. OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

Mr. King explained to the Commission the types of outreach the Township has done in the past. He stated that a majority of it has been webpage based and newsletters. Mr. King also stated that he receives a lot of calls from residents for both private and public tree related issues. Mr. King stated that he has also participated in the seedlings for schools program. Mr. Pflumm asked what would need to be done to get funding for some outreach programs. Mr. Modricker stated that if he has some ideas, let staff know, so staff can request funding in the budget. Mr. Modricker explained that mailing separate newsletters could be costly and that each Township wide Spring and Fall newsletter typically contains an article on trees. Dr. Fecsemyer suggested making a subcommittee of two people to come up with ideas for outreach. It was decided that Mr. Pflumm and Dr. Muth will be the outreach/education subcommittee.

Dr. Fecsemyer stated that this topic should go under "Communications" but due to time constraints he would like to talk about it now. Board of Supervisor's member Mrs. Dinnini asked for some information regarding the Whitehall Road Regional Park variance requests. Centre Region Parks and Recreation wants to plant smaller DBH trees (1½ inch trees instead of 2 inch trees), lessen some of the buffer plantings, and lessen the number of trees in the parking area. Mr. King stated they have requested a number of variances, and CRPR went to the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. King stated they were granted the size variances, and the buffer variance was denied. Mrs. Dinnini wanted some information regarding the size at planting and survival rate. Dr. Fecsemyer found literature indicating an optimum size, but much of it pertained to bigger trees. Dr. Fecsemyer asked about the possibility of CRPR utilizing Tree Vitalize funding.

**IX. TREE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

No progress to report.

**X. ARBORIST REPORT**

Mr. King stated that there was a confirmed case of Oak Wilt on a red oak located on Deepwood Drive. Mr. King is moving forward with the normal process of oak wilt abatement. Mr. King is working with Columbia Gas, installing a gas main in Greenbriar so they drill past the trees rather than open cut. Mr. King attended the ISA conference, which included discussion of tree preservation. Mr. King is working on trimming tree branches that block signs such as stop signs and speed limit signs. He also noted that a property owner on North Hills Place was cited for trimming a pin oak. Mr. King is still working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife on the pollinator area in Haymarket Park, native landscaping at Fairbrook Park and converting 3 more basins at Tudek Park to a pollinator mix.

**XI. COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Dr. Jacobson stated that there are a lot of trees dying in Patton Township. Mr. King did call Mr. Ken Soder with Patton Township. Mr. King stated that most of these trees are on private land. Mr. King stated that he doesn't think it is oak wilt but maybe anthracnose or two-lined chestnut borer. The Commission discussed if there are tests that can be done on these trees to find out what exactly is affecting them. Mr. King stated that there are tests but someone will need to pay for the tests. Dr. McDill asked what Ferguson Township residents can do to protect the trees in our Township so the issue in Patton Township doesn't spread. Dr. Jacobson suggested that Ferguson pay for the test if you have an oak tree and it's dying. Dr. McDill stated that he thinks we should meet with Patton Township. Mr. King stated that he feels the problem in Patton Township is too far gone at this point. Dr. McDill stated that our Township could set a good example. He would like to see what we can do to address the problem. The Commission discussed putting this in front of the BOS. **Dr. Fecsemyer made a motion to draft an oak pathogen remediation plan for consideration by the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Jacobson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Education and outreach
- Discussion of the Ridge Overlay District

**XIII. OTHER**

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The August 19, 2019 Tree Commission meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

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David Modricker, Director of Public Works  
For the Tree Commission

Ferguson township tree commission: Education and outreach subcommittee  
RE: Request for input on FTTC education and outreach mission and strategy statements

From: Allyson Muth, Scott Pflumm  
To: FTTC members  
Date: 8 September 2019

***Please reply by Monday September 15, 2019 with suggestions for revising only the mission and outreach statements below.***

**CONTEXT:**

Below is a draft mission statement and strategy on which we propose basing education and outreach events down the road. A notional goal statement, notional Measures of Effectiveness (MoE) and Measures of Performance (MoP) are also introduced in the supplement section on page 2 in order to preview next months discussion. These will not be addressed until after finalizing the mission and strategy statements.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose for this letter is narrowed to ask specifically for your recommendations to the mission and strategy statement respectively. We propose postponing the discussion of the specific education programs until after we've finalized the mission and strategy.

**RATIONALE:**

If we establish this overarching mission and strategy statement, we will then have a foundation on which to evaluate and prioritize the sequencing of individual events. These events will likely include specific programs regarding the importance of trees and natural areas to the township, ordinances and violations, threats to natural areas, reporting disease, among others. These individual education events and budget considerations will be identified and scheduled at future separate meeting(s).

**REQUEST:** *Please review the following mission and strategy statements and provide feedback.*

**FTTC educational and outreach mission statement:**

Serve current and future Ferguson township residents by cultivating connection to both the trees and ecosystems in which they are rooted and to which we as residents are members, beneficiaries and stewards.

**FTTC education strategy statement:** Design and implement a two-pronged approach to achieve the mission. The guidance of this approach will start with where people are in their foundational understanding, help them understand why they should care about these areas, and then motivate them to act.

**Outreach programs** will be defined as making initial contact and engaging residents to convey foundational knowledge regarding the importance of trees and natural areas within the context of human and ecological communities.

**Education programs** will be defined as events to incrementally elevate residents' understanding of human-and ecological communities, enhance their connection to these communities and highlight their potential role and impact on these networks, directing residents' awareness to peer reviewed research-based and municipal-level resources.

**SUPPLEMENTAL:**

The following is intended as a conceptual placeholder and initial draft of the next discussion topic after we finalize the mission statement and strategy. The next topic will be: “How do we intend evaluate our education and outreach goals?”.

We include it here to for the sole purpose of providing context of our next discussion.

Right now it is secondary to the mission and strategy statement discussion we are seeking input on in this letter.

Future FTTC correspondence and discussions will focus on this topic specifically. Please hold your comments on these points below until then.

**FTTC education and outreach goal:** To increase citizen engagement in caring for these natural systems as part of their community.

**FTTC education and outreach Measures of Effectiveness (MoE):**

(Are we creating the conditions we intend)

1. What is the year-to-year tree coverage estimate in the township as measured by GIS?
2. What is the year to year estimate of the number and size of native plant landscape installations in the township? Indicator: Regional landscape industry data – publicly accessible?
3. What is the year to year estimate of the number and size of low mow/no- mow lawn installation increasing in the township?
4. What are the resident demographic estimates of participants in township / Penn State hosted tree identification workshops?
5. If ‘small education size’ native plant seed packs are donated to the township by Ernst or similar company, what is the year to year change in residents requesting them?
6. If the township offers podcasts on tree care and habitat conservation best practices, bird/bat house building tutorials on its website, what is the number of unique site visitors and duration of their viewing session?
7. What is the year-to-year number of google searches originating from the township for the word ‘habitat’, ‘native plant’ etc.

**FTTC education and outreach Measures of Performance (MoP):**

(Are we accomplishing tasks to standard)

First we need assistance to define these standards

**FTTC education and outreach Indicators:**

(An item of information that provides insight into and MoE or MoP)

In addition to the indicators referred to in the Measures of Effectiveness, education and outreach events will plan to integrate pre-and post-event questionnaires for participants in order to evaluate program effectiveness and performance. New alternate indicators will be evaluated yearly for incorporation.

Ferguson township tree commission: Education and outreach subcommittee  
RE: Request for input on FTTC education and outreach mission and strategy statements