

AGENDA

ATHENS SHADE TREE COMMISSION

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14th, 2025 AT 6:00 PM

Streaming is available at www.ci.athens.oh.us/video

1. Establish Quorum

- Joanna Sokol, Tristan Kinnison, Gene Duebler, Michael Lincoln

2. Disposition of Minutes

- July 10th, 2025

Motion: Gene Duebler, 2nd Joanna Sokol, Approved

3. Motion to change the agenda, moving Hugh White group first

- Motion: Michael Lincoln, 2nd Gene Duebler. Approved

- Architect & Civil Engineer spoke. After feedback from City, they will not plant around the retention pond.
- Tree survey just received earlier today. There are 205 trees of 6" diameter or more that will not be touched by the development. Some of the trees 28" diameter and more.
- Title 37-1-9 requires 8' landscaping bed between road and development. Trees in that area?
Hugh White does not want to plant there so that cars (their product) are as visible as possible from Columbus Road. And there are electric utility lines in that area which should be avoided.
- Tristan pointed out that it was likely the city's call to waive that requirement, since this code will be rewritten soon.
- Suggest some native trees in replacements for the selections, which Hugh White team will consider.
- In sum, while retaining 205 existing trees, the plan is short 100 trees according to code.
- Tristan asked for a motion to approve the plan, pending tree swaps. Motion: Gene Duebler, 2nd: Joanna Sokol.

4. Title 33: Tree Permit, Right of Way Issues, Public Land

- 100 Coventry planting
Replanting after removing Callery Pear. Good spot for Yoshino cherry. Concern about water. Maybe river birch better. STC is OK with either.
 - Spacing of 15' between trees.
 - Tristan will send planting packet.

- 32 Lorene Sweetgum
 - Came to the STC through an email to Alan Swank. The tree is growing into the berm, close to the road. Homeowner said that it's growing into the pipes.
 - Tree is not in bad health. Really large – 25+” diameter.
 - STC will ask the city to prune the large limbs.

- Lincoln St. Pines (again)
 - Asking to remove whole row of pines. There is one that is dead that the STC will recommend the city remove, but not the whole row. (They were planted too tightly.)
 - Tristan called the owner and left voicemail but didn't hear anything back.

- 179 ½ N Lancaster Removal
- 5 Sunnyside Removal
 - Email from David Riggs noting both dead trees. STC agreed to remove both. Replacements?

- Central Ave Sycamore
 - Branch fell on resident's car a while ago.
 - Removal request came April 2, 2024. 25+” diameter, huge tree. City should have done a sanitation pruning when this was reported.
 - Sycamore have anthracnose, makes branches weak, but this tree is basically healthy.
 - Because of the size of this tree, STC does not want to remove it, but request a maintenance pruning.
 - Discussion of STC communication with City. Could it be improved to avoid this kind of dropping the ball and causing residents to villainize trees?

7. Old Business

- **Arbor Day Celebration and planting for Nov. 8th**
 - Tristan will provide replacements for the trees that Menard's tree bank can't provide.
 - There are Beautifying American hand tools available.
 - 20 volunteers expected.
 - Park staff would do site prep, using augur on the 7th.
 - STC meet with them and flag holes before that.
 - Have trees transported onto the bike path before the 8th.
 - There will also be mulch to apply after planting.
 - STC Arbor Day committee need to advertise to get people there. Mary Reed of Arbor Day committee has list of volunteers. We'll make a Facebook event.
 - Rain day is the following Saturday.

- **ODNR Grant Finals**

- Grant is looking good. Gene met with Mary Reed today. 13 letters of support and STC needs to write a letter, even though we are submitting the grant proposal.
- Total budget just under \$100,000 limit. Due Aug. 27.
- Motion for STC to write letter: Gene Duebler, 2nd Michael Lincoln. Approved.

- **STC Code change**

- There has been no further development in the discussion of code changes and it's still in process, but the city's goal is still to have the change done by October before any council members change.
- If the city's proposal is adopted, the Chair or vice chair would attend the planning committee meetings which would be all online. They currently meet Wed. at noon but that time could possibly change.
- Ann Bonner and Tristan will meet soon to discuss.
- Gene deeply opposed to the code changes related to removing our approval.
 - We don't cost any money. 1 hour a month.
 - STC supports the goals of sustainability.... and removing our approval doesn't support those goals.
 - We are in the middle of the hottest year on record, and we need all the shade trees we can get. The proposed code change is a drastic reduction of shade trees per square foot.
 - Also against removing 8' planting in front of building requirement.

8. Announcements & Other Business

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Gene. Second - Joanna. Adjourned.

- **Next meeting: September 11th, 2025**

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