

ATHENS SHADE TREE COMMISSION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9th, 2025 AT 6:00 PM
MINUTES

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

- **Establish Quorum**
 - Joanna Sokol, Tristan Kinnison, Michael Wood

- **Disposition of Minutes**
 - September 11th, 2025
 - Motion: Joanna, Gene 2nd, Approved

- **Title 33: Tree Permit, Right of Way Issues, Public Land**
 - 5 Sunnyside Ave
 - Tree removed by the city, permit to replant
 - Motion: Gene, Joanna 2nd, approved
 - City requires applicant to pay for stump grinding and site prep, discussion on lack of infrastructure, city has in the past footed the bill
 - Concerns from 2 citizens over lack of clarity in process
 - Proposal to add into proposed code changes an SOP that includes removing stumps after tree removal
 - 37 Elmwood Pl
 - Advised to apply for permit to replant
 - Discussion on lack of point person to bring these issues to
 - Voinovich Planting behind Walmart
 - Motion: Joanna, Gene 2nd, approved
 - Planting occurring 11/1 at 10am

- **Title 37: Landscape Ordinance Issues**

None

- **Maintenance of the Tree Canopy**
 - 4 Cook Dr Silver Maple
 - City advised was likely not in ROW, given clearance to remove if it was as it was dead

- **New Business**
 - Voinovich planting occurring 11/1 at 10am behind Walmart
 - Westside Planting with OU Student TBD

- **Old Business**
 - STC Planting behind firehouse 11/8, Arbor Day celebration and mayor proclamation

- Discussed current status of proposed changes that will come forward impacting STC approval power and other misc. changes.
 - STC feels the loss of approval will mean being left out of the process
 - Current back and forth with the city admin, no drop in planting reqs, changes to landscaping barriers, addition of STC into title 41
 - Residents voiced concerns of current state of new developments, concerns over non-native plants in landscaping, compliance with Arbor Day Tree City
 - Potential to not have commissioners reappointed by the mayor
 - Resident voiced support for the urban canopy and a strong STC to oversee regulations that ensure it is conserved
 - Resident echoed sentiments and the importance of the urban canopy in our emissions goals and current sequestration, GHG inventory in 2026
 - Clarified timeline of proposed changes, when meetings it would be discussed would occur
 - Resident voiced support for the STC as a meaningful tool for citizens and Arbor Day Committee to coordinate plantings and give advice
 - Member of Sustainability Commission discussed possibility of partnering with Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) to get a urban forestry plan and tree inventory
 - Jo thanked citizens for showing up and supporting
 - Gene echoed, voiced concerns about the code changes that would push us to the side, lead to lower transparency, lose expertise for the city, emphasized no issues from developers with the current process, noted this would be a centralization of power in the city, reiterated support for developing a permanent urban forestry program
 - Councilmember Wood thanked folks for attending, noted that this is one of the issues he has had the most outreach from citizens over
 - Will disperse new code change language to interested attendees
 - Discussed the manufacturing exemption in the code changes

8. Announcements & Other Business

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Gene, Joanna 2nd, approved, adjourned

• Next meeting: December 11th, 2025

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