

**Borough of Chatham
Annual Report
2013
Shade Tree Commission**

Summary

Below are highlights from the year:

- Planted a total of 46 trees in the Borough
- Added 1 new member and 2 alternate members to the commission
- Restructured roles within the commission
- Improved public outreach and awareness

Mission

Chatham Borough has had a Shade Tree Commission since 1909. The Shade Tree Commission's responsibilities include planting and maintaining trees along Borough streets, public rights-of ways, and municipal open spaces. The goal of the Shade Tree Commission is to create and maintain optimum tree cover and species diversity while keeping up a pruning and removal program that will keep our streets and parks safe.

Members

The Shade Tree Commission consists of 6 Volunteers. The commission Chair is vacant and the Commission Secretary is Patrick Carroll. Volunteers spend time on special projects such as: community outreach, identifying planting locations for new trees, education, and reviewing residents' tree concerns. The Commission members take time out of their busy schedules to be stewards of the health and safety of the Borough's "green infrastructure".

Tree Removals and Maintenance

The Department of Public Works (DPW) does an excellent job throughout the year assisting with assessments, pruning, and removals. Trees are removed when they are a safety risk, damaged, or are damaging the surrounding infrastructure. 2013 saw fewer major weather events than the preceding years (Hurricanes Sandy and Irene, October snow storms). However DPW continued to deal with damage from Sandy. DPW removed 57 trees and JCP&L removed another 18 for a total loss of 75 Trees.

	2011	2012	2013	Change From Previous Year
Pruned In House	143	246	36	-85%
Removed In House	53	95	57	-40%
Trees Contracted Pruning	16	39	12	-69%
Trees Contracted for Removal	18	20	15	-25%
Trees Removed by JCP&L	7	12	18	50%
Trees Pruned By JCP&L	0	0	0	0%
Stumps Ground	66	76	78	3%

Tree Plantings

Tree plantings are a time intensive activity for the commission. Identifying locations in the Borough, coordinating with homeowners, contractors, and nurseries all contribute to significant time and labor. Trees are selected based on characteristics and planting location. Trees are selected to be visually appealing, have limited sensitivity to insects and diseases, tolerant of harsh urban conditions, and limit interaction with overhead utility service.

Due to significant budget constraints the borough did not plant any new trees in 2011 and saw significant loss of trees in 2011 and 2012. We are now well behind our goal of zero net loss and will need to continue to be aggressive to get back on track in the coming years.

Thanks in large part to a renewed grant from the Chatham Jaycees, we were able to plant 46 new trees in the fall of 2013. The Commission identified plants and solicited bids from nurseries statewide. Separately, the Commission requested quotes from local contractors to install the trees.

Budget

Our Budget for 2013 increased slightly to \$22,500.00 (thanks to a grant from the Chatham Jaycees). This is still down 38% from \$36,500 in 2009.

Description	\$ Amount
Professional Services	\$ 1000.00
Misc	\$ 2,500.00
Tree Planting	\$ 5,000.00
Tree Pruning (DPW)	\$ 4,000.00
Tree Removal (DPW)	\$ 10,000.00
Total	\$ 22,500.00

Tree City USA Certification

In 2013 Chatham Borough was once again recognized as a “Tree City USA”. To qualify as a Tree City USA, we are required to maintain a management plan, a budget, celebrate Arbor Day, and have an established a Shade Tree commission.

State Recognition

The Shade Tree Commission completed several activities in order to complete state certification. Several members of the commission completed online training and education courses in order to maintain ongoing education requirements.

Regular Meetings

The Commission held five regular meeting during 2013. Meetings were moved to the third Tuesday every other month, starting in January. Meetings are held in Borough Hall, and published for the public to attend. The 2014 meeting schedule is as follows:

1/21/14; 3/18/14; 5/20/14; 7/15/14; 9/16/14; 11/18/14

2014 Goals

- Identify a permanent Chairman of the Commission in January
- Undertake 2 plantings (one spring, one fall)
- Continue to define membership and roles
- Maintain Tree City USA Status
- Have 2 events published in a local newspaper
- Plant 75 trees for Borough residents
- Improve processes