

Borough of Phoenixville

## Tree Advisory Meeting

Date: 03/02/2026

### Attendance

Commissioners - Mary Foote, Susan Di Cerchio, Justin Gordon (Chairperson), Jennifer Chandler (Secretary),

Borough Representatives - Brian Watson, Alexis Strunk

Borough Council Liaison - Brian Weiss

Contract Arborist - Vacant

Action items in **BOLD**

### Minutes Review

- Approved minutes of 2/2/26

### Public Comment

- Doug Christnan, Julie Caterson, Ken Schutter (all residing on 4th Avenue). Concern was raised that large, mature trees were removed on the north side of the street. Doug states that at least one of the trees had never touched the power wires, but was cut in a field goal style to allow for power line safety. Doug wanted confirmation that Sky High was the new tree removal contractor. Brian Watson was asked if Sky High pressures the Borough to remove trees based on per-tree incentives. Watson indicated this was not the case, but that the Borough simply provides a list of unhealthy or hazardous trees for Sky High to remove. Watson confirmed that it was Peco, not the Borough, responsible for removing the trees in question, and these trees were removed to avoid encroachment on the power lines. Suitable trees in the area as replacements, potentially in the original sites and/or nearby. The Borough has no influence on Peco tree removals - Peco makes these calls without our say. Watson indicated that the Public Utilities Commission can be contacted regarding Peco's actions. Watson also indicated that the Borough works with Peco to provide a list of trees that pose potential hazards. **Brian Watson will reach out to Peco to find out where they are in their process of removing trees.** Gordon directed residents to the website where they can request native replacement trees to be planted in place of removed trees.
- Ken Schutter (142 Fourth Avenue) put in a request approximately four months ago to have a street tree pruned. He requested an update on the status of the tree. Watson suggests that Ken give the Borough until June to catch up on back-logged work. Ken indicated that he does not want the tree cut down, only trimmed.

- Eileen Hershman (150 Pennsylvania Ave). In December, her wife submitted to have two hazardous trees removed from their property. Hazards include danger to wires, danger to pedestrians *via* tripping hazards caused by upheaved sidewalks, etc. Hazardous trees are tag #'s 1661 and 1663. Mrs. Hershman was told that if the request was submitted in December, it might be too soon for the trees to have been placed on the action list yet. Mrs. Hershman will send a message to the TAC email requesting an update in the coming month(s).

## Committee Update/Discussions

- Chandler discussed the need to have a closed loop communication system where we acknowledge an email or complaint was sent by a resident, and we make sure that a follow-up email closing the loop was sent once the job was completed. Watson indicated that all communications must go through Borough employees, not TAC. Chandler will draft two templates: 1) acknowledging the request and asking for a reasonable amount of time to respond (90 days, if you don't hear back, please reach back out). This first email will also include a link to TAC webpage, which has educational information, the tree removal list, and the tree pruning lists. 2) a template that closes the loop, telling the resident that the action was taken. Helpful links will be included on these templates. Link: <https://phoenixville.org/337/Tree-Advisory-Commission>
- Di Cerchio updated the commission about how other municipalities are working with local arborists. She mentioned that [RockwellUrbanForestry.com](http://RockwellUrbanForestry.com) is being used by a nearby municipality. Gordon reiterated that the TAC needs to petition the Borough for additional funds in the next fiscal year. As of now, the vacant arborist position is not being filled, but consulting is occurring on a *pro bono* basis.
- Foote's service ends this year, and she will not be seeking renewal next term.
- Weiss asked if considerations were taken when planting near intersections in order to prevent obstructing the view of cars. Watson indicated that no street trees are planted within 20-25 feet of intersections.
- Foote reported a resident's request to have tree #149 in Reeves park pruned for safety.

## Current Business

- 2026 Tree Removal List - Removals by Sky High LLC start this week.
- 2026 Spring Plantings - Borough has 80 trees to plant from fall. **Watson will discuss with the superintendent whether the Borough wants to tackle all of these plantings, or if the Borough wants to contract all or part of it out to a vendor.**

- Volunteer Spring planting - Watson suggested we plant out some of the trees that are currently growing in the compost site into park sites. **Watson will also look into bucket trees to plant for park trees.** Will target Cascaden and Morris parks. Planting day is TBD.
- 2026 Fall Plantings - TAC members will be scouting spaces where additional trees can be planted in fall.
- Budget Report - Last year's budget rolled over. No other reports
- Community Outreach - TAC will participate in Green Earth Festival on April 18 in the Borough.
- The Humphrey Marshal fund offered up free saplings (n=50) that the TAC can give away. We will receive them in late April/early May. **Borough will put out a call on social media for residents to indicate their interest.**

## **Bird Town**

- Moved from Green level to Silver level (two level increase) due largely to Alexis' work and TAC activities.

## **New Business**

n/a

## **Adjournment**

- The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Next meeting - 04/06/2026 at 6:00 pm