

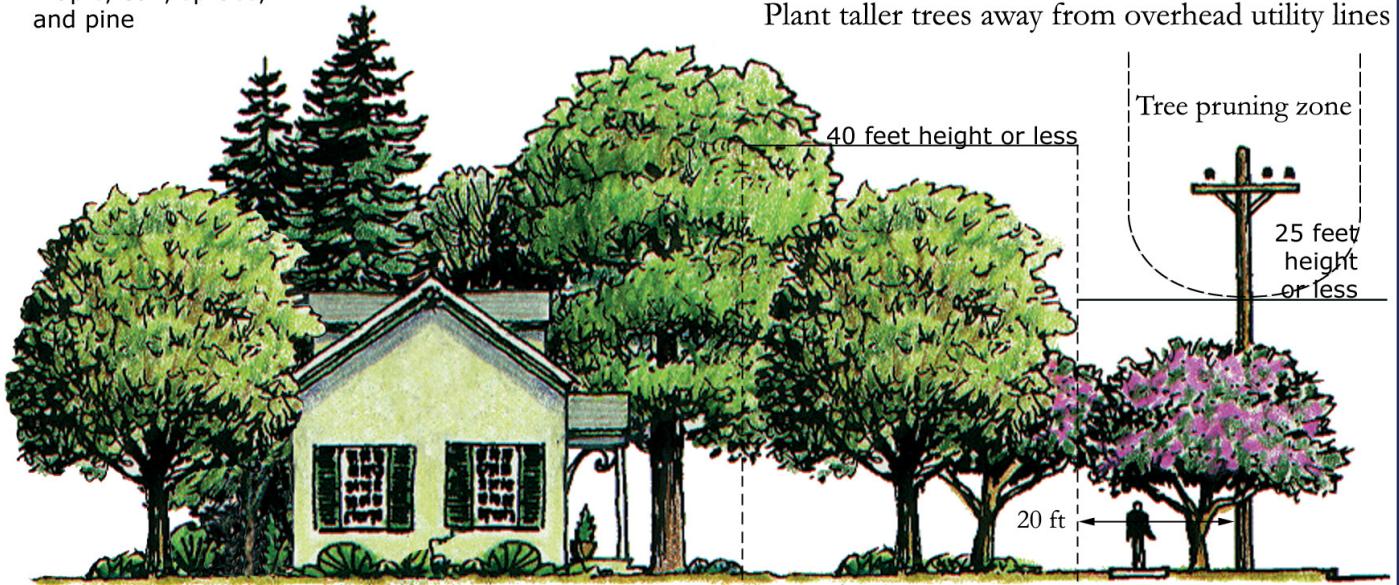


SHADE TREE COMMITTEE REPORT

2009 THROUGH 2012

Presented at the April 3, 2013 Geneva City Council Meeting

Tall trees, such as:
maple, oak, spruce,
and pine



Arbor Day Foundation™
arborday.org

Careful consideration of "the right tree for the right spot" is made in the management of Geneva's urban forest.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Geneva's Shade Tree Committee (hereafter called the Committee) consists of 6-9 volunteer members appointed for 3-year terms by the City Manager. In addition, meetings are attended by the Director of Geneva's Department of Public Works (hereafter DPW) and a liaison officer for City Council (currently Paul Cosentino and Jacqueline Augustine, respectively).

The Committee works within its authority as described in the Shade Tree Ordinance of the City of Geneva. The Committee's charge is to provide advice to the City concerning the selection, maintenance, preservation, and rejuvenation of public trees. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month (except July and August), at 5:00 p.m. in the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center. They are open to the public.



2012 Arbor Day Planting on Sharon St.



Avenue B: Arbor Day 2009 Planting, before and after

BACKGROUND

The best available science has demonstrated over the last two decades that city trees play a significant role in municipal health and prosperity. A well-planned urban forest provides a multitude of benefits that include:

- Removal of air pollutants and reduction of childhood asthma
- Lessening of heating and cooling costs
- Reduction of the urban heat-island effect
- Longer pavement life
- Absorption of noise
- Capturing storm water
- Carbon sequestration
- Increased commercial activity
- Increased property value and rental prices
- Enhancement of ecological, cultural and aesthetic value.

All these benefits depend to a great extent upon tree density, size and health. Therefore, tree management has acquired a much greater importance in city planning process.

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Important results over the Report period of the Committee's work in conjunction with the DPW and the Office of Neighborhood Initiatives include:

- Pursuing rejuvenation of the City's urban forest through removal of risk trees and planting of replacements
- Aiding the DPW and the City Manager in assessing work to be done
- Obtaining multiple grants for replanting
- Educating our citizenry about the aesthetic and environmental benefits of Geneva trees.

The Shade Tree Committee's website (www.genevatrees.org) provides more information.

ACTIVE AREAS OF ENDEAVOR

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Obtained grant funds for tree plantings in the following areas:
 - North Genesee (2007-08)
 - Hildreth Hill Neighborhood (Brook St., Lyceum St., High St., Nursery Ave., Lewis St., and William St.). (2009-10)
 - Eight neighborhood streets (Hallenbeck Ave., Lafayette Ave., Middle St., North St., Oak St., Optical St., Wadsworth St., and West St.). (2011-12)

Table 1: Summary of Grants from NYS DEC, Urban and Community Forestry*

YEAR	GRANT AMOUNT	# OF TREES	STATUS
2007-08	\$20,000	96	Complete
2009-10	\$25,000	100	In Progress
2011-12	\$25,000	100	In Progress
TOTALS:	\$70,000	296	-

* Grants require 50% match of in-kind services or dollars.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Conducted Arbor Day celebration, identifying sites, selecting appropriate species and planting trees on the following streets. Annual celebrations attended by large number of school children from primary grades.
 - Avenue B. (2009)
 - Habitat for Humanity homes on Sweeney Avenue and Hawkings Street (2010)
 - Washington Street Park entrance (2011)
 - Sharon St. (2012)
- Began active engagement with the Office of Neighborhood Initiatives. (2010)
- Developed the Shade Tree Committee website. (2010)
- Hosted the annual New York ReLeaf Conference, including an on-street tour and a planning workshop on trees for malls (2010).
- Worked with VerPlanck St. homeowners, selecting suitable sites and species to rejuvenate the neighborhood. (2011)
- Interacted with the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center and Founders Square Neighborhood Association for a summer "garden walk" on Washington St. (2012)

FOREST REJUVENATION

1. Risk Management

- Advised DPW on 3-year removal plan for trees with a mid-to-high risk rating. (2009)
- Provided DPW with ongoing information and evaluation of risk situations.

2. Planting/Tree Management

- Identified sites, selected appropriate species and planted 31 trees in the DOT North Exchange renovation, with input from Cornell University's Urban Horticulture Institute. (2009)
- Selected new or replacement trees for the following areas:
 - North Main Street islands (2010)
 - Various locations (2010)
 - Castle Street library project (2012)
 - Lakefront Playground (2012)
- Advised the DPW on the integration of the City's tree database into a tree management software program. (2011)
- Cooperated with the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center on the planting of 30 trees in the Hildreth Hill neighborhood. (2012)

Table 2: Summary of Urban Forest Rejuvenation 2009-12

YEAR	TREES REMOVED	TREES PLANTED
2009	72	87
2010	74	64
2011	53	71
2012	59	91
TOTALS:	258	313

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

From 2009 through 2012, the Committee focused on risk management and replacement planting. The aggressive and comprehensive effort to reduce tree hazards was successful and allows the Committee to shift attention to the following three long-term sustainable initiatives: urban forest expansion, tree maintenance, and community involvement. The urban forest expansion goal is to increase our street tree coverage, especially in blocks and streets with less than a twenty-five percent existing tree canopy. The existing tree maintenance goal is to achieve healthy 30-year old trees and in this way to leverage the City's investment. The community involvement goal is to increase residents' willingness to care and invest in the City's urban forest.

A hands-on effort utilizing City stakeholders, including residents, neighborhood associations and educational institutions is critical to the success of improving the urban forest and growing local volunteer capacity over the next few years. The Committee, Department of Public Works and Office of Neighborhood Initiatives are key players in coordinating this effort. Committee, City staff, and volunteer activities and resources needed include:

- Developing opportunities for Committee members, the City's tree workers, and interested citizen volunteers to be better trained in planting and maintenance of new and existing trees. The Committee will consider a citizen volunteer program for tree pruning. Committee, City staff and volunteer time will be needed for this activity. Grant or City funds may be needed for training workshops.
- Identifying and targeting tree planting on blocks and streets where tree canopy is less than a twenty-five percent existing tree canopy. Committee, City staff and volunteer time will be needed for this activity.
- Contributing to the utility of the city's urban tree software by exploring the opportunities to create a complete inventory and facilitate homeowner access. Committee and City staff time is needed for this activity. Grant or City funds may be needed for this activity.
- Assisting in the generation of funding (grants, gifts, etc.) for tree projects. Committee and City staff time is needed for this activity.
- Developing effective means to educate our citizens and surrounding communities about the beauty, value and care of trees. Committee and City staff time is needed for this activity.
- Maintaining Geneva's official status as a "Tree City-U.S.A." Committee and City staff time is needed for this activity.
- Examining trees in the business district for health, with the goal of improving the contribution of the trees to downtown vitality. Committee and City staff time is needed for tree assessments. Funds may be needed for preventative maintenance.



Example of the need to examine and maintain a healthy canopy in the downtown area. All four trees shown in photo planted at the same time.