
CITY OF HYATTSVILLE SHADE TREE BOARD

MINUTES | SEPTEMBER 3, 2025

Present: Zachary Dorner, Kathryn Kutzner, Randy Fletcher, John Healy, Dawn Bohls, Kyla Gallagher, Deb Taylor, Taylor Johnson

Absent: Gloria Felix-Thompson

Staff: Dawn Taft

Visitor(s): Councilmember Emily Strab, Councilmember Greg Barnes

Meeting called to order at 7:34 pm

1) Approval of the previous August 2025 minutes

August 2025 minutes approved.

2) Brief report on approved permits, denials, illegal removals - Dawn Taft

Seven approved permits:

- TP25-035, 037, 042, 043, 046, 047, and 051.
- Additional three permits were not an applicable size
 - TP25-041, 048, and 050 were not applicable under the current ordinance.

Three permits outstanding:

- TP25-044, 045, 052.

Two illegal removals:

- IL 25-003 was a large approx. 90" tree more than 50' from ROW.
 - The maximum fine of \$1,000 per the ordinance was passed by members.
- IL 25-004 was a large approx. 70" tree less than 50' from ROW.
 - The maximum fine of \$1,000 per the ordinance was passed by members.

Previous illegal removals:

- IL25-001 was reduced in court to \$200.
- IL25-002 is waiting in court.

Discussion of email from Hyattsville constituent to the Tree Board about hazardous, low-clearing branch at the Mall at Prince George's.

- Dawn said that the tree is not on City property. She requested that the email be shared with her and Dawn will help to get that person in touch with the correct people.
- Dawn suggested that future reports of incidents like this be forwarded to her so that she can help to address them with the property authorities.

3) Old Business

a. Comms updates

The City communications staff member associated with this will return on September 15th. John Healy will get in touch with that person when they return.

b. Discuss getting revised tree ordinance to a vote at City Council

Councilmember Strab mentioned that this was presented on in January. It still needs to be voted on. Councilmember Strab will contact the City Clerk to figure out next steps.

4) New Business

a. Green Festival application & planning

Will be held on October 11th at Driskell Park in Hyattsville from 11am-4pm.

Zachary will submit the application for the Shade Tree Board to have a table, same as last year.

Members discussed potential activities, giveaways, and educational activities during the event.

b. Ask Council for money to send out physical mailers about tree permits

Recommended to do this once the new ordinance is passed.

Dawn noted that the average cost to do a city-wide mailing is about \$5,000.

Councilmember Strab noted that we should reach out to the communications staff to see if there is a Council budget for this. She recommended that this may be an expensive ask for the Council to approve given tight budgets.

Dawn also suggested that we explore if the DPW could cover some costs for communication. Dawn said that she will confirm the cost with the communications team.

Other options proposed by Councilmember Strab include putting the tree ordinance notice on the City's digital signs. Can also pursue including funding for communications into the new ordinance/bill (similar to the gas leaf blower bill).

Overall consensus is to wait until the new ordinance passes.

c. Revisit PG County real estate documents

Discussion tabled for a future meeting.

d. Idea for Resident information share – Dawn

The idea is to have a flyer for people to drop off at residences when seeing common issues (overloaded mulch around trees, codependent stems, invasive vines, etc.).

Another idea is to train Shade Tree Board members to do yard assessments to inspect for these common issues. Members could work with their neighbors with a checklist to check for these issues and info on how to care for trees properly.

e. Invasive Vine Project 9/17 and 9/20 - Dawn

Dawn B. will email the members with info on these events so they can sign up.

5) Public Comment

None.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Next meeting will be October 8, 2025.