



Clifton Park Tree Committee

Minutes of Meeting

February 23, 2026

Present: Joanne Coons, Diana Leis Delker, chair; Stu Feuerstein, Jim Harding, Marc Laymon, Steve Morse, Chris Schmitt & Councilman Zabed Manir, Town Board Liaison

Absent: Jerry Danielski, Anne Orgren, & Danne Parker.

The meeting was called to order by the chairperson at 6:00 p.m.

The minutes from January were approved as written.

Announcements:

- The 2024 Tree of Distinction winners are now posted on the Tree Committee webpage, and the 2025 winners will be added in May. Special thanks to Elisa and Norah for this.
- The Clifton Park Tree Committee will be hosting the next Region 5 ReLeaf meeting at the town library in Room C on Wednesday, April 8, at 10 a.m.
- John Scherer and Linda Seymour, Town Historians, have been invited, and will participate, in the Arbor Day celebration on Saturday, April 25. John will pay a tribute to the Clifton Park veterans who fought in the American Revolution.
- Lori Brockelbank, Davey Resource Group, contacted town officials to inquire about their decision about risk ratings for the trees in the upcoming inventory. Jen informed us that officials are working on the best path forward with the town attorney and existing maintenance/management practices. Steve stated that it's important to have a plan and that it be addressed.
- Clifton Park's Tree City USA 2025 application was approved by the Arbor Day Foundation. The packet with materials to mark our 5th consecutive year as a Tree City USA was sent to the town.

Old Business

Arbor Day Celebration Planning.

The Tree Committee will officially participate in Science Night this year (evening before Arbor Day celebration); Joanne and Diana will staff the tables for activities and a display about trees.

Diana reviewed the action items for February. As far as activities for kids, Joanne has a wealth of activities, including: 1. Dial-a-tree; 2. Birch bark necklaces; 3. Thumb print leaf painting on trees; and 4. Crowns to make for Arbor Day. We will reserve two tables for kids' projects.

After discussion, the team agreed to select a white oak sapling to plant at Veterans Memorial Park on April 25. We will order a tree through Dan Clemens for about \$300.

Steve is working with Anne on the seedling orders. We still need a plan for what to do with seedlings that are not picked up at our celebration.

Chris and Diana have been in contact with the two Tree of Distinction winners to select markers for their trees. The markers will be ordered in the next few weeks.

Diana proposed the schedule for April 25 which we can finalize in March:

Proposed Schedule 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

- 10 a.m. – Welcome, Councilman Zabed Manir
- 10:15 a.m. - Awards for Trees of Distinction – Diana, Steve, & Chris
- 10:25 a.m. - Reading of the Arbor Day Proclamation – Students
- 10:30 a.m. – Remarks by John Scherer, Town Historian
- 10:45 a.m. – Planting of ceremonial white oak tree, Students
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. – Seedling pick-up
- 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Kids activities and staffing of display with handouts for adults
- 1:00 p.m. – Distribute leftover seedlings to residents

We will go over the Arbor Day tasks for March and April at the next meeting.

Volunteer Education & Engagement Program.

The proposal to the Capital Region Partnership for Invasive Species Management (PRISM) for the Volunteer Education & Engagement Program should be in its final draft this week after review by the committee. After visiting several potential training sites, Danne recommended Veterans Memorial Park. First, there is a heavy concentration of Oriental bittersweet, the invasive vine that we would focus on. Second, there is ample parking for the event. And third, the committee could publicize the project there, and visitors could see the committee's work in action.

Danne and Jim had a productive Zoom meeting with Addison Kubik from PRISM to ask questions and get more information about the training. In Danne's absence, Jim shared that the discussion was very helpful. He said Addison had enough tools to accommodate 9-14 people. Each person will have to sign a waiver if they borrow PRISM's tools. Jim also shared that there might be grants available to purchase more tools if needed. Addison recommended purchasing a metal sign for Veterans Park to advertise the partnership between the town and PRISM and their effort to combat invasive vines and save municipal trees.

New Business

Special thanks to Joanne for sending us the list of Clifton Park residents who fought in the Revolutionary War. Joanne told us about the Pomeroy markers that will be placed at their gravesites to acknowledge their participation in the freedom war. We will honor those individuals at the Arbor Day celebration.

Joanne briefly discussed Envirothon which she intends to coordinate for Clifton Park. She will recruit and instruct the students. She would like the GREEN & Tree Committees to be listed as sponsors. There were no objections.

Finally, Chris expressed an interest in possibly getting involved with the town's "Plant a Tree for a Newborn." We currently don't know which person at town hall is coordinating this giveaway, but Chris would like us to give them the list of preferred trees for planting in town. Chris also suggested that we explore possible involvement in the stewardship hikes coordinated by Open Spaces.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.