



Clifton Park Tree Committee

Minutes of Meeting

June 22, 2026

Present: Joanne Coons, Jerry Danielski, Diana Leis Delker, chair; Stu Feuerstein, Marc Laymon, Steve Morse, Chris Schmitt, Stacy Simmons & Councilman Zabed Manir, Town Board liaison. **Special Guest:** Councilwoman Nancy Bellamy. **Other Guest:** Katelyn O’Leary-Schweitzer.

Absent: Jim Harding, Anne Orgren, and Danne Parker.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

Introductions. A warm welcome was extended to Stacy Simmons, the newest member of the team. Stacy brings a wealth of knowledge about trees to the group; she presented a workshop on how to care for trees in 2024 at the library. A guest, Katie O’Leary was also welcomed.

Committee Business:

“Got Bittersweet?” Invasive Species Program, May 16, 2026. Danne was unable to attend but submitted a report that was read: “The workshop went really well. We had 30 people sign up; 25 people attended. They were very interested and asked many questions, and did a great job applying what we learned. We made a dent in the bittersweet at the [Veterans Memorial] Park.”

“Five members of the Clifton Park Tree Committee [in addition to myself] participated. Councilwoman Nancy Bellamy also attended.”

“Addison did an outstanding job. He really knows his invasives and is a natural. With all of the interest expressed, we would like to do another workshop in the Fall.”

After listening to the report, members discussed the recommended event for the Fall, noting that we would need to return to the same park as an ongoing effort to try to control the vines there. However, because of the berries that would be on the vines, the cuttings would have to be cut, placed in bags, and left in the sun for several weeks. Dan Clemens will have to be fully involved in the planning.

Progress of the Tree Inventory by Davey Resource Group. Steve has been in phone contact with Greg, the lead arborist for Davey. He indicated that more team members have arrived, and they are busy on the ground taking measurements of the trees. To date, 5,200 trees out the projected 7,800 have been

inventoried. While Davey will not be formally noting trees that are hazards, they are nonetheless measuring the trees' diameters and noting the trees that need to be pruned. Steve also said that the project will identify up to 500 spots where trees could be planted, and those spots are noted in blue on TreeKeeper, Davey's tree inventory software program.

Committee members also discussed TreeKeeper, acknowledging the importance of having a subscription for some database software, even if it is not TreeKeeper. Such software would provide an invaluable system to show where trees have been pruned, planted, and removed. The cost of a license for Buildings & Grounds and the Highway Department was mentioned—approximately \$3500/year. Zabe and Nancy, Town Board members in attendance, understand the importance of the software and will do their best to support this in the town budget.

Grant Proposal for DEC Urban Forestry Grants, Round 17. Steve and Diana shared the outcome of the meeting they had with Jen Viggiani regarding applying for a Round 17 grant. The meeting went very well, and Jen was enthusiastic about moving forward. The three agreed that there was little to lose by writing a proposal, especially since no matching funds would be required.

During the meeting, the list of property owned by the town was reviewed. Because Clifton Park owns so much land, not all of it could be funded for an inventory, so it was proposed that sites above 40 acres be included for bids. That list includes: Dwaas Kill Nature Preserve (248 acres); Garnsey Park (153 acres); Hayes Nature Park (42 acres); Kinns Road Park (101 acres); North Woods Preserve (81 acres); Riverview Road Preserve (40 acres); and Veterans Memorial Park (81 acres).

While our board liaison, Zabe, is highly supportive, we also discussed the need for support from Dan Clemens, John Scavo, the Open Space Committee, and possibly others.

Proposed Project to Transplant White Pine Seedlings and Saplings. Joanne discussed the abundance of young white pine trees at the Heritage Point retention pond near where she lives. She has been in touch with Robert Anderson regarding the Elks Boy Scout troop possibly helping to transplant some of the trees. This project is still in discussion, and Joanne will brief the committee on its progress.

Other Business. The white oak sapling planted on Arbor Day at Veterans Memorial Park is not doing well. The top of the tree is dead, and Stacy mentioned that eventually the tree will die. Diana agreed to contact Dan Clemens to see if we can get a replacement tree or to determine how he wants to handle the problem.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

