

Ferguson Township Tree Commission (FTTC)

Date February 22, 2016

Meeting Agenda

Time 5:30pm

Call to Order

January 18, 2016 Meeting Minutes:

These minutes will be approved at the next meeting in addition to the minutes from this meeting.

Blue Course Drive

FTTC should discuss a possible restocking of the median on Blue Course Drive for 2017.

Arbor Day 2016

The FTTC should discuss possible projects for Arbor Day 2016. The Arborist will provide details of communications up to this point.

Review 2nd Draft Of The Township Tree Plan

The Arborist has completed the second draft of the Ferguson Township Tree Plan taking into consideration comments made by the FTTC at the last meeting. The FTTC should review this draft of the plan and recommend changes as necessary.

Arborist report:

The Arborist will review work activities and plan reviews since the last meeting.

Communications to Commission Members

This is an opportunity for FTTC members to report on any contact by residents regarding FTTC matters.

Future agenda items

Arbor Day Preparation, Review Blue Course Drive Planting Plan, Review Educational Tools for FTTC

Other

Next meeting date and time March 21st at 5:30pm

Ferguson Township Tree Plan 2015



Plan Developed 2015

Ferguson Township Tree Plan

Section 4 of Ordinance 991 details the creation of the Ferguson Township Tree Commission and outlines their responsibilities. In accordance with this ordinance the Township Arborist and Tree Commission have prepared this Tree Plan. This is the first edition of the document and it is expected that it will be updated periodically to ensure it describes the current state of the urban forest in Ferguson Township.

Tree Commission Members

Marc McDill, Chairman

Mike Jacobson, Vice Chairman

Darlene Chivers

Troy Bayletts

Jackie Esposito

Township Arborist

Lance A. King



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Appendix I: Ferguson Township Street Tree Ordinance 991

**Appendix II: Ferguson Township Street Tree Ordinance
Amendment 1006**

**Appendix III: Ferguson Township Resolution 2014-25
Regulations and Standards for Arbor Work**

Appendix IV: Ferguson Township Resolution 2015-29

Approved List of Tree Species, Cultivars, and Hybrids for Street and Park Planting

Appendix V: Tree Permit Application

Appendix VI: Ferguson Township Street Tree Budget



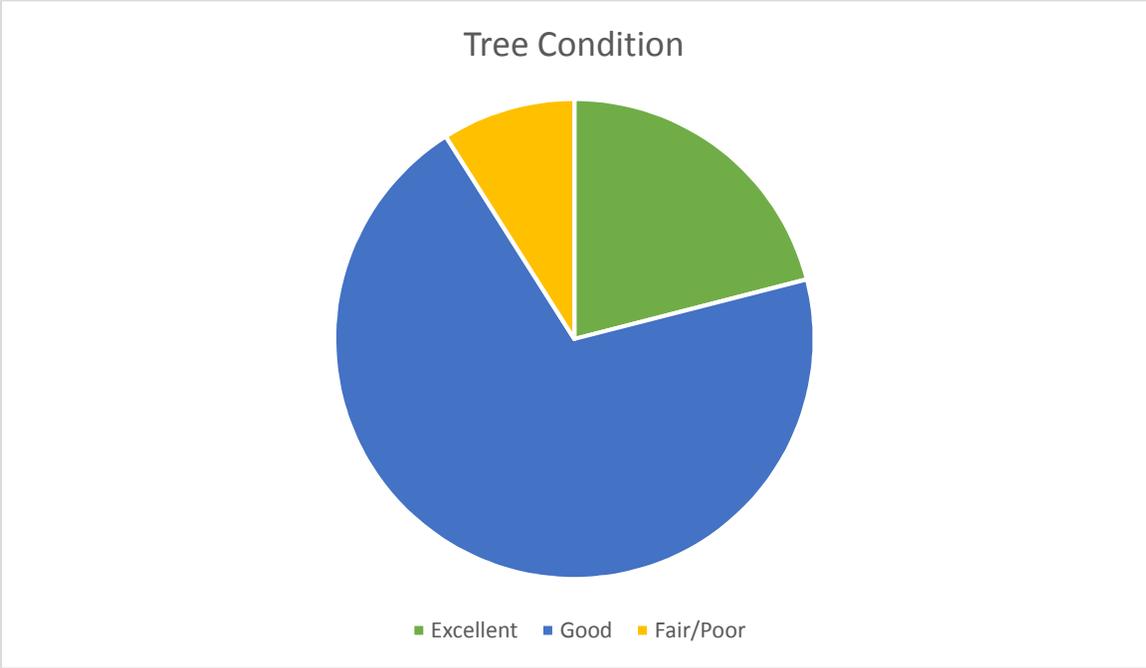
Part I: The state of the Urban Forest of Ferguson Township

Ferguson Township was formed in 1801, and was named after settler Thomas Ferguson. It contains approximately fifty square miles of area in the south west corner of Centre County. Ferguson Township is home to over 18,000 residents, though much of the township remains undeveloped.

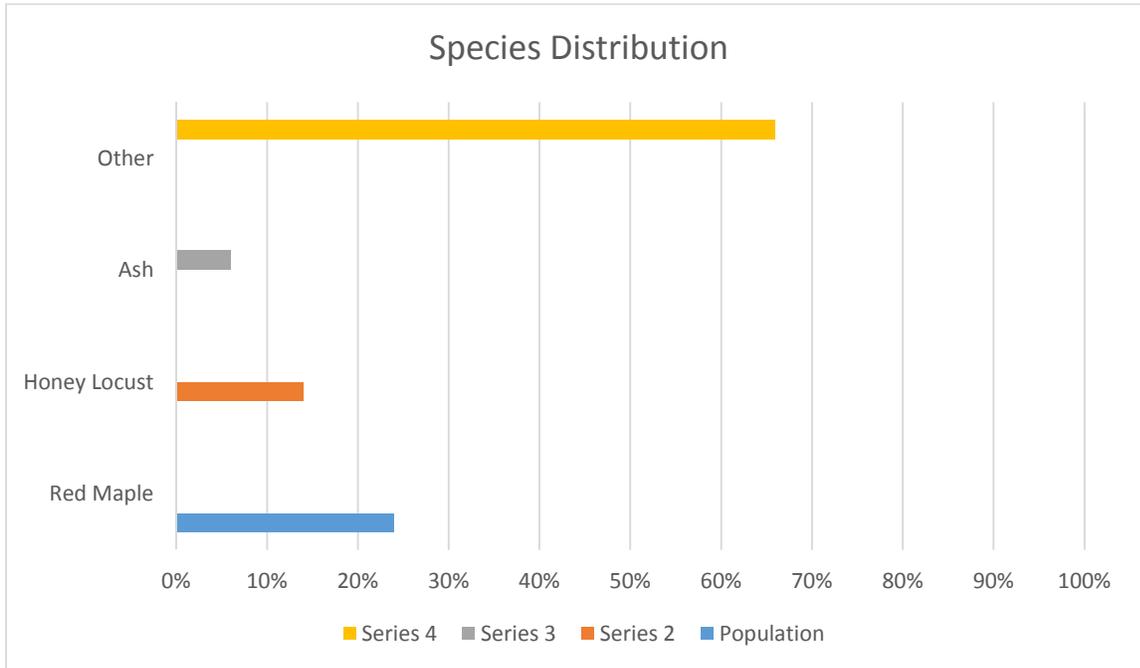
Ferguson Township continues to grow at a steady pace. In recognition of this growth, and the value of green infrastructure the Township formed the Ferguson Township Tree Commission in 2014 and in addition hired the first full time Township Arborist in 2015. Ferguson Township also adopted a Street Tree Ordinance and two resolutions to help guide the township’s tree program in the future.

Ferguson Township actively manages over 4,000 street trees along with trees in township owned parks. The township’s Urban Forest maintenance program is all encompassing, including pruning, pesticide application, removal and replacement, and new tree plantings. Ferguson Township also has a full street tree inventory completed every five years.

The most recent street tree inventory was completed in 2014. The inventory showed that approximately 21% of the street trees in Ferguson Township were in excellent condition. Another 70% were listed as being in good condition, with the remaining 9% being in either fair or poor condition.



Of the trees inventoried, the top three species in order were: Red Maple 24%, Honey Locust 14%, and Ash 6%.



The inventory also showed that 85% of the trees in the urban forest were under 10 inches in diameter. 13% were between 11 and 20 inches in diameter, while only 2% were over 20 inches.



To continue to improve the quality of the urban forest in Ferguson Township, the township should look to increase diversity both by tree species, and age. A single tree species should make up no more than 12% of the inventory, and approximately 2% of the urban forest should be removed and replaced annually to increase age diversity. This diversity helps the township to combat issues including diseases, pests, storm damage, and maintenance costs.

Ferguson Township continues to deal with Emerald Ash Borer. In 2015, approximately 100 infested Ash Trees were removed. Of the remaining Ash trees 30 will be chemically treated to increase their life expectancy while the others will be left standing until fully declining. By systematically removing the worst trees each year and allowing the others to remain the township stretches out the cost associated with removing and replacing a significant number of trees.

Part II: Management Policies

Administration

The Township Arborist is directly responsible for the management of the urban forest in Ferguson Township. The Arborist prepares pruning and planting contracts, conducts inspections, reviews plans, and performs arboriculture work as needed. The Arborist also serves as the staff representative to the Ferguson Township Tree Commission.

The Ferguson Township Tree Commission helps guide the township's tree program. Some of their responsibilities include holding public meetings and hearings to address resident concerns, provide recommendations on various issues, and provide education and outreach for the Ferguson Township tree program. Tree Commission members are appointed by the Township Board of Supervisors to staggered, 4 year terms. Commission members must be residents of the township, and are selected based on education and interest in the fields of forestry and horticulture.

Tree Planting

Tree planting in Ferguson Township is done by outside contractors and Public Works staff. The Township strives to replace all trees removed in the previous year, along with planting additional new trees as budget allows. All street trees planted in Ferguson Township are done so at no direct cost to the property owner. The planting of native tree species is encouraged.

The majority of new street trees planted in the township are planted by developers. Current ordinances require that developers plant street trees in all new subdivisions as part of construction. This rule ensures that new residential neighborhoods will have street trees without putting the financial burden on the township, or individual property owners.

Due to the current imbalance in species diversity, Ferguson Township is reluctant to allow planting of Red Maple and Honey Locust. Though both species are approved as street trees in the township and normally perform well, another monoculture planting should be avoided. Recommended standards for planting including species make up, can be found in the attached appendices.

Tree Maintenance

Ferguson Township has an active tree pruning program. Most routine pruning on street trees is done by outside contractors. The miscellaneous pruning requests throughout the year are handled by the Township Arborist and Public Works Staff.

The Township routinely prunes approximately 500 street trees per year. This number equates to all street trees in the township being pruned every nine years. Routine pruning includes crown cleaning, crown raising, and structural pruning. As more street trees are planted in the township these numbers will need to be altered to ensure maintenance pruning stays on a reasonable schedule.

Currently pruning efforts focus primarily on clearance and structure due to the immature state of the urban forest. As more and more trees mature pruning priorities will shift as well to more deadwood removal and hazard mitigation.

Tree Removal

Due to its current battle with the Emerald Ash Borer, Ash species make up the majority of trees removed each year in Ferguson Township. These Ash trees, along with a few other selected trees are removed over the winter by Ferguson Township Public Works Staff and the Township Arborist. As the overall population of Ash in the township continues to decline, so will the number of tree removals. At that point only dead, diseased, or hazardous trees will be removed each year.

All non-hazardous trees to be removed must be reviewed and approved of at a Ferguson Township Tree Commission public hearing. These hearings give residents the opportunity to voice their opinion on the removal of each tree, and the proposed replacement species. The Tree Commission does its best to reach an agreeable solution with each resident during this process while keeping in mind the overall goals and wellness of the program.

As a general rule Ferguson Township does not remove and replace healthy trees, or trees requested to be removed by residents simply for aesthetic reasons. If a resident insists on removal and replacement of a healthy tree it may be permitted on a case by case basis with the understanding that the resident is responsible for all associated costs.

Pesticide Application

In 2014, Ferguson Township entered into agreements with three homeowners associations to chemically treat Ash street trees in those selected neighborhoods for Emerald Ash Borer. These agreements cover a period of ten years for the treatment of trees that continue to remain in good condition. Each homeowners association pays half of the treatment cost. Currently there are thirty trees scheduled for treatment in 2016. This number continues to decrease as more Ash trees succumb to this invasive pest.

Outside of these agreements, Ferguson Township does not treat any other trees for insect or disease issues.

Tree Permits

In 2015 Ferguson Township created its Tree Permit application. The permit, designed to protect township trees must be applied for by residents or contractors before performing any work on or near a street tree. The permit is free of charge, and requires information regarding what type of work is being performed, by whom, and where. The applications are reviewed by the Township Arborist for approval. In general permits are not issued to residents to perform work on street trees. This work should only be done by qualified professionals.

Upon completion of permitted work, an inspection is done by the Township Arborist to insure proper procedures were followed and no unintended damage was done to any effected trees.

