

Ferguson Township Tree Commission (FTTC)

Date April 18, 2016

Meeting Agenda

Time 5:30pm

Call to Order

March 21st Meeting Minutes:

The FTTC should review and approve the minutes from the March meeting.

Piney Ridge Drainage Project

Public Works is requesting the removal of trees within the Township ROW to install a drainage swale in this neighborhood. The arborist will provide plans, photos, and other background. A Public Hearing will be scheduled on the proposed removals to take place at the June FTTC meeting.

Suburban Park Tree Removals

UAJA is requesting the removal of 12 trees in Suburban park as part of a sanitary sewer line replacement project. The Arborist will provide details, pictures and plans. The FTTC should issue a recommendation based on the scope of work proposed.

Arbor Day 2016

The Arborist will update the FTTC on the status of the Arbor Day program to date.

Review 4th Draft Of The Township Tree Plan

The Arborist has completed the fourth 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.

Website Review

The FTTC will have the opportunity to view the current layout of the Trees section of the Township's website and make recommendations on changes and additions.

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

Township Tree Plan review, Website/Education/Outreach

Other

Next meeting date and time June 20th at 5:30pm

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP TREE COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Monday, March 21, 2016
5:30 pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Tree Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, March 21, 2016 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission: Marc McDill, Chairman
Mike Jacobson, Vice Chairman
Darlene Chivers
Troy Bayletts

Staff: Lance King, Arborist
Dave Modricker, Director of Public Works

Others in attendance included: Mark Troutman and Scott Fozard.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. McDill called the Monday, March 21, 2016 Ferguson Township Tree Commission meeting to order at 5:38 pm.

III. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDill made a motion to APPROVE minutes from February 22, 2016. Ms. Chivers seconded the motion.

IV. TREE REPLACEMENT

Mr. Fozard has requested a permit to remove two Bald Cypress trees that were planted on his property at 2387 Sagamore Drive and replace with a different species of tree. He stated that he was not a part of the decision to use that type of tree, the trees are less than two years old, that they do not fit into the look of the area. Mr. McDill stated that the Commission does not like taking down existing trees and that a policy should be in place to handle this type of situation. Mr. Jacobson expressed a concern over the cost of replacing the trees. Mr. McDill stated that each situation needs to meet the criteria that the Commission will set in place. The Commission decided that the following criteria must be met: Only two years old, replacement species must be on the approved species list, the tree must be paid for by the homeowner, a one-year warranty must come with the purchase, and must be installed by a professional. The Commission recommended that the two Bald Cypress trees will; be removed by the Township and will be planted somewhere else in the Township. Mr. Modricker stated that the Township budgets a cost of \$350 for replacement of a tree. Mr. Fozard has asked that the Township remove the trees since the trees are smaller than 4 inches and if the Township would just plant the trees since the equipment would be there. Mr. Modricker stated that the Township will not do that since that would be a separate operation, and that the warranty would be then void. Mr. McDill made a motion to allow residents to apply for a tree removal/replacement permit under the conditions that the homeowner was not involved in the original selection of the tree, the tree(s) are 2 years old or younger, the species of the tree must be on the Township approved listing, installation of tree would be done by a professional and come with a one-year warranty. Mr. Jacobson seconded the motion. Mr. McDill made a few suggests for types of tree that would be good for the area, mostly Oaks.

V. ARBOR DAY 2016

Mr. King stated that Arbor Day will happen on April 29th at Tudek Park from 10:30am to 2:30pm, with Wonderland Charter School participating with around 100+ child (k-5) adults and teachers. Mr. King stated that he has ordered 300 red oak seedlings to be given at Arbor Day and that Mr. Felice will be dressing up as Smokey Bear, and Centre Region Parks and Rec may have a few activities for the children. 2 Trees will be planted at Tudek Park, and 3 pavilions are reserved for the day's activities. Mr. Modricker stated that Diane Griffith will be present to take pictures. Mr. King said a proclamation will be made and maybe a Township Supervisor would be there to assist. Mr. McDill said he would make the proclamation if no supervisor was available.

REVIEW 3rd DRAFT OF THE TOWNSHIP TREE PLAN

Mr. King stated that he incorporated comments from the previous Commission meeting into the current draft of the tree plan. Ms. Chivers suggested the time line (2016 – 2018) be put on the front page. Mr. Jacobson asked why only a three-year time line and not five years. Ms. Chivers explained that this plan will go to a five-year plan once the initial plan is hammered out. Ms. Chivers had concerns over the graphs on the plan. She expressed a concern that the legend on the graphs would be confusing and should be omitted. Mr. Jacobson asked to make the data on each graphic go from smaller to larger and to break out more species on the graphs. Ms. Chivers asked that the pages be numbered on the print out. She stated that the order of the paragraphs in the section of TREE REMOVAL need to be changed around or the wording be changed. Mr. McDill would like a copy of the Word document and enable "track changes" to enable him to edit and return the document. Mr. King said he would send a copy via email to the Tree Commission members. Mr. Jacobson asked if this included Park Trees along with Street Trees. Mr. King stated only Street Trees are represented and that in the future he would like to have Park Trees. Mr. McDill said that the Commission would give input on trees in parks, but the role of the Commission is not park design, just to respond to plans. Mr. Modricker said that the Township does not have an inventory of trees in parks. There was some discussion about possibly inventorying the purposefully planted park trees, but not the natural woods areas. Mr. Modricker pointed out that the budget has different line items for Street Trees versus Park Trees and Dan Jones typically does the master planning for the Township parks.

VI. SUBURBAN PARK TREE REMOVAL

Mr. Modricker explained where Suburban Park is located in the Township. Mr. King stated that at the entrance to Suburban Park there are two trees that will be in the way of the new drainage system to be installed from Suburban Avenue into the park. Mr. King stated that the option to save the trees is not viable but wanted to discuss whether replacement trees should be planted. Mr. Modricker stated that the Township recently acquired a wooded area along Vairo Boulevard that acts as a buffer added to the park. Mr. Bayletts asked the condition of the trees that are looking to be removed. Mr. Modricker pointed out that in the past that there was \$9000 allocated for Park trees but now Parks and Rec is asking that the money be used for maintenance of the trees instead of planting. Mr. McDill expressed that since the park is going to be redesigned that replacement of the trees wait until the repairs are made to the drainage before replanting. Mr. King asked if overall when trees are removed would the Commission require that new trees are

planted elsewhere. Mr. McDill said that he thinks there should be an inventory for Park Trees for certain areas in Parks, like walking paths or near parking areas. He also stated that these trees need to be maintained and pruned. Mr. King stated he would let the engineer know that the trees can be removed and not required to replant.

VII. 2016 C-13 Street Tree Planting Update

Mr. King said that the Street Tree planting bid was awarded to Robert Behrers Landscaping out of the nine bids that were received. Ms. Chivers asked the range of the costs in the bid. Mr. King stated the range was from around \$33,000 to over \$100,000 for 117 trees that need to be planted. Mr. King stated that the high end bid was from the Pittsburgh area, which would account for the higher cost due to distance for maintenance. Mr. Jacobson asked if Mr. King has used Behrers before. Mr. King indicated he had. Mr. King also stated that some issues did arise from this contact due to availability of the species. He stated an addendum was issued with a list of replacement trees. Red Rage Black Gum, Black Cherry, Sweet Birch, Black Bark Hickory were the issues and were difficult species to obtain for landscape use. Mr. King said that going forward this would be addressed so contractors can obtain the species. Chestnut Oak was the most expensive tree in the contact due to availability in nurseries. Chestnut Ridge manor was not happy that Red Rage Black Gum was not available and Mr. Knoll asked that nothing be planted until that tree could be obtained. Mr. King said that Mr. Behrers was able to find 11 of the 15 Red Rage Black Gum Trees needed to fill the contract and the remaining 4 will be planted at a later date when they become available. Mr. Troutman said that the demand for certain species is down due to the industry being unfavorable. Mr. McDill asked if there would be another joint meeting among the Tree Commissions in the Centre Region. He would like to organize another meeting to discuss obtaining certain species in the future.

VIII. ARBORIST REPORT

Mr. King stated that tree removal operations were completed as of Monday morning. The stump grinders started work the previous week but are having a few complications. He is positive that the work will be complete by the start of the planting season towards the end of April. The Ash Tree treatment purchase orders went out. Bartlett is doing Chestnut Ridge Manor and Aikey is doing Cobblecreek Manor and Stable Hill. Mr. McDill asked what chemical is being used. Mr. King said that Bartlett is using TREE-age and needs to look at what Aikey is using. Mr. Jacobson and Mr. Troutman stated the effectiveness of each chemical and the length of the treatment. Mr. King stated that the contract to treat the ash trees is rebid every two years. Mr. King said he has researched the trees along the sides of a section of Blue Course Drive (north of W. College Avenue) and found that they are not Township trees. He stated that the Township had been mowing and maintaining the trees but this will end. The trees in the median will continue to be maintained. Mr. McDill stated that discussing the trees along the golf course with Penn State could be done at a meeting with the other Tree Commissions in the Centre Region. Mr. King said that the Township could make suggestions to the developer along the other side being developed by Circleville Road Partners. Mr. McDill asked if there are any funds from the State for planting of street trees. Mr. King stated that those figures are not available yet due to the budget issues with the state. Mr. King said he has interviewed candidates for summer help and 3 will be offered positions with the Township. Mr. King said that the plans for the RE Farm Café and State College Alliance Church have been reviewed and he asked that they plant more trees. Mr. King commented on his trip to

the PennDel(Pennsylvania Delaware) ISA Conference a few weeks ago. Mr. King was notified of another potential hazardous tree along Nixon Road. He will send a letter to the property owner to let them know that the tree needs to be removed, either by the property owner or the Township. He stated that the other hazardous tree has been removed.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. Jacobson is going to visit the urban forest in Raleigh North Carolina during a conference. Mr. McDill said that he was trying to find the Township Tree list on the Township website and could not find the list. He expressed an interest in putting more on the Township website regarding trees. Mr. King said he has been in contact with Diane Griffith on updating the website for this information. Mr. Jacobson and Ms. Chivers suggested looking at other websites for info for on the Township website, or adding links to other sites for research on trees.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. McDill asked that maybe the Tree Commission go to every other month in the future. Mr. Jacobson and Mr. McDill both said that they will not be available in May and at the April meeting this will be discussed. Mr. McDill said that the Tree Plan will continue to be reviewed as well as the Educational Tools.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the March 21, 2016 Tree Commission regular meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

David Modricker, Director of Public Works
For the Tree Commission

Ferguson Township Tree Plan 2015



2015-2018

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

Former Tree Commission Members

Jackie Esposito

Township Arborist

Lance A. King



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**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



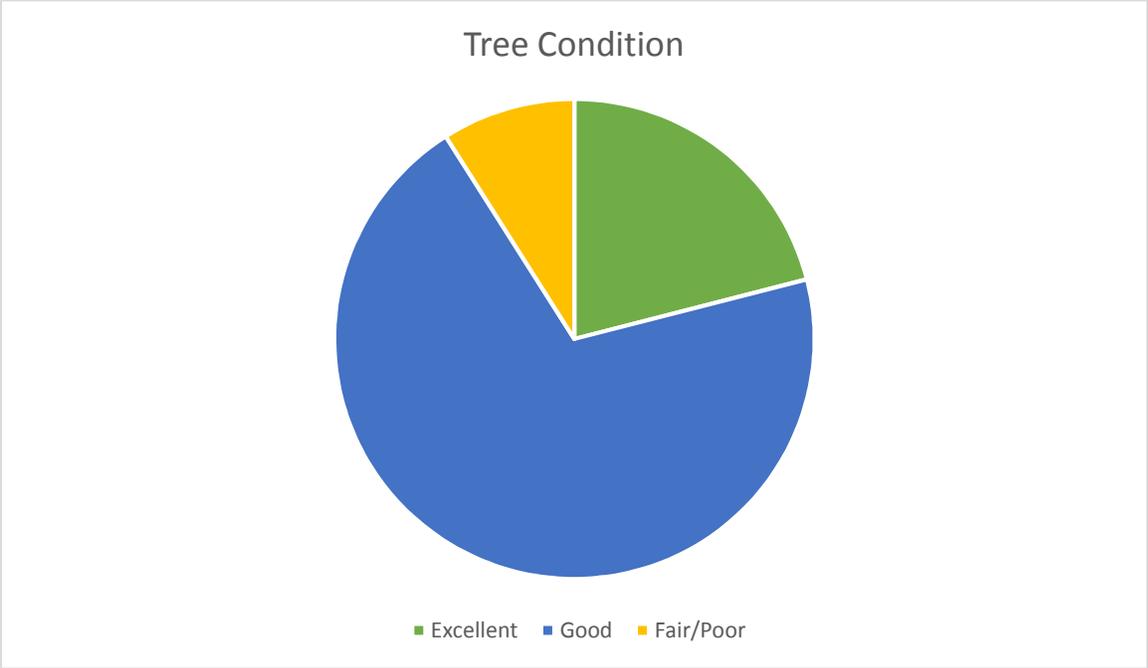
Part I: The state of the Urban Forest of Ferguson Township

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.

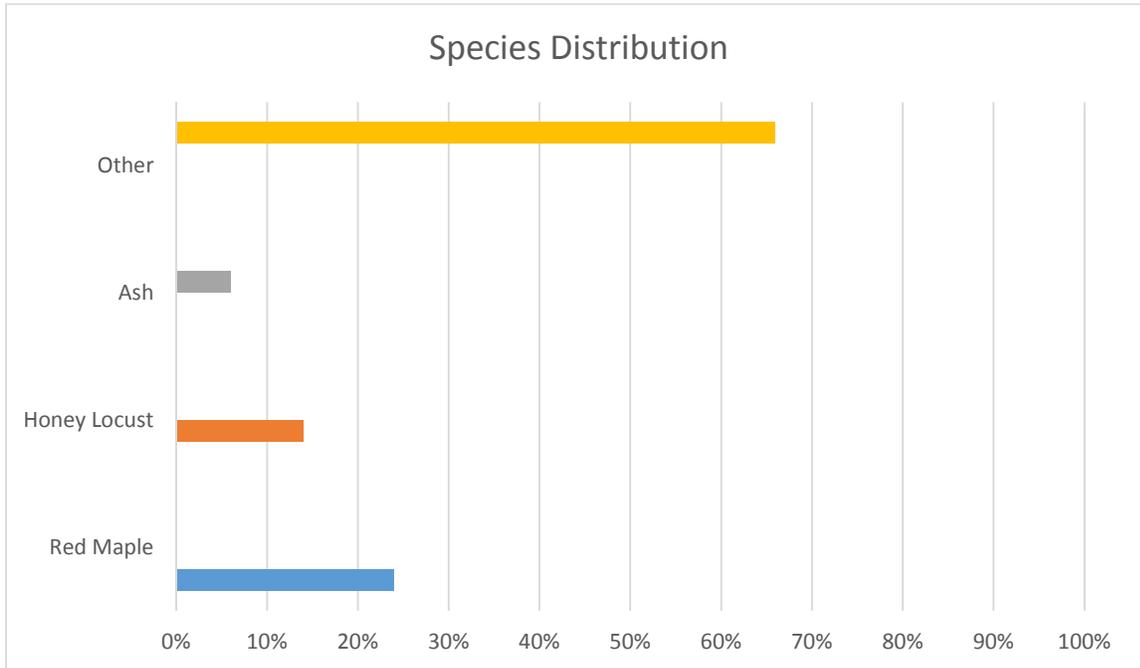
Ferguson Township continues to grow at a steady pace. In recognition of this growth, and the value of green infrastructure the Township formed the Ferguson Township Tree Commission in 2014 and in addition hired the first full time Township Arborist in 2015. Ferguson Township also adopted a Street Tree 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: Program Goals 2015-2018

Tree City USA

Ferguson Township plans to apply for the designation of Tree City USA for the first time ever in 2016. This designation recognizes the conscious effort and financial contribution the township is making to ensure its urban forest is healthy and sustainable. Some requirements of this designation include having a tree ordinance, a tree commission, arbor day proclamation and observance, along with spending a minimum of \$2 per capita on the tree program.

Increase Canopy Coverage

Increasing the canopy coverage of Ferguson Township will provide many benefits to all those who live, work, or do business within the township borders. Trees provide weather mitigation, storm water control, traffic calming and many other benefits. The township will seek to improve canopy coverage in several ways.

One method is to continue to take advantage of planting opportunities for street trees. Each street tree that is removed will be replaced. Furthermore areas where there are currently no street trees planted will be investigated in hopes of planting additional trees.

The Ferguson Township Tree Commission and Township Arborist also have the opportunity to encourage tree planting on private property through land development plan review. As additional land is developed within the township the required plans that are submitted are reviewed by both parties and comments are reported back to the developer. This gives the Tree Commission and Arborist the opportunity to request and/or require additional trees to be planted as part of the development.

Increase Species Diversity

As was previously discussed in this plan and as history has shown us, a monoculture planting of trees is not a recommended practice. If a species specific disease or pest is introduced, the resulting tree

loss can be significant. Ferguson Township shall continue its efforts to increase tree diversity and avoid any further epidemics such as Emerald Ash Borer.

Education and Outreach

In order to both increase support for its tree program and to encourage resident participation, the tree commission plans to increase public education and outreach. Educating residents on policies, current issues, and all the benefits trees provide helps to ensure the urban forest is maintained at the highest level possible. The tree commission plans to utilize the township website, newsletters, social media, and public events to reach the largest possible audience.

Maintenance Plan Development

Much of the past tree work that has been done in the township has been both reactive, and work order related. Trees received attention stemming from windshield surveys, resident complaints, and the like with no set schedule. The township is currently moving toward a more proactive maintenance program.

The first part of this plan is to keep the tree inventory current, and up to date. Rather than relying on data that is up to 5 years old, keeping the inventory current will provide much more useful information.

Using this information pruning cycles can be set up. In this form the township will be divided into sections, with each section receiving attention on a set schedule. With each tree receiving scheduled attention, reactive pruning should decrease.

As a result of having more current data, tree removal and tree planting operations shall also improve. As trees are inspected more routinely, individuals that may need to be removed are identified in a timely manner. This helps to eliminate possible hazards, and speeds up the process of replacing trees that are past their useful life.

Part III: 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

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.

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 of the program and wellness of the urban forest.

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.

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.



