



Pittsburgh Shade Tree Commission

January 15, 2026

Minutes

Lisa Ceoffe	Angie Martinez	Nazin Bagherynejad	Isabella Gross
Clara Kitongo	Zinna Scott	<i>Guest: Elliot Williams, Mayor's Office</i>	<i>Guest: Michael Kelley, Forestry</i>
<i>Guest: Hana Kneiser, Forestry</i>			

Old Business:

Lisa opens meeting at 9:15am with introductions all around. She discusses PSTC commissioned members and the notices from the Mayor's Office that members can expect to receive regarding interest in staying on the Commission. All members present expressed interest in staying on.

New Business:

Lisa presents Forestry's 2025 Accomplishments:

- 20 Years Tree City USA celebration including 20 events for Arbor Day throughout the City of Pittsburgh
- Tree City USA flags installed at City buildings
- Memorial tree planting at Forestry
- Responded to more than 600 311 calls after April 29 storm, cleaning up damaged trees
- Assisted in relocating a Great Horned owl to a new nest after falling more than 100 feet. A collaborative effort between Forestry, City Parks, Park Rangers and the Tamarack Wildlife Center
- Spent nearly \$1 million on removals and prunes
- 968 removals
- 1,195 prunings
- 248 stumps removed
- 39 root prunes
- 29,226 feet of Right of Way cleared
- ReGreen Beechwood Boulevard grant was submitted by the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition and approved by PSTC. The plan involves replacing 350 trees damaged from April storm and those that are aging out throughout the neighborhood
- TreeVitalize – replaced shade canopy and will do more this Spring to get as many trees in the ground as possible

Hana provides update on IRA grant activity:

- Focused on meeting people, organizations and planners
- Worked with City Planning and Tree Pittsburgh to turn vacant lots into greenways for communities
- Collaborated with Nafasi Art Gallery, the Pittsburgh Zoo, and Tree Pittsburgh to hold multiple charrettes to gather community input and support for the future of the parcels in the Hill District
- Assisted the Hilltop Alliance with the transformation of a formerly overgrown and dangerous section of property in Knoxville. Working with Tree Pittsburgh to gather community input and plan next steps for the space
- Starting to talk about greenways in Chatham Park which will create safe access to ballfields, increase canopy and get rid of invasives

Lisa discusses vacant lots. She is meeting with the new department director to find out what the delay is. She also talks about the LandForce grant and Tree Pittsburgh affiliation agreement. The new Director will meet with Dan Gilman in Mayor O'Connor's office to see if he can move things forward.

Lisa shares that the DCNR grant for \$600,000 is closed. Grant-funded work included:

- Up to 100 trees removed
- 100 new trees planted
- Partnered with Resilient Cities Catalyst (RCC) and Tree Pittsburgh to install 20 new sidewalks
- Street Tree Inventory - the new AI-powered program inventoried a total of 50,524 of trees, of which 1765 were given an enhanced in-person inspection to evaluate their safety to the public

Michael Kelley provides summary of utility work done in 2025:

- Finished 67 contracts for lead-safe line replacements for Pittsburgh Water for tree and root conflicts
- Visited 2,800 homes for restoration of Rising Main 3 in Highland Park. This is an ongoing project
- \$500,000 in fees collected and an additional \$400,000 fees for trees around restoration
- Right of Way manual updates will be published in February
- Tree Inventory is done which includes an estimated 59,000 trees with 3-D scans on every tree. Database and spreadsheet will be merged into Cartegraph

Michael discusses budget from Urban Forestry Plan for ongoing recommendations. 17 trees are high risk removals. Lisa comments that Forestry will use inventory to prioritize high-risk trees. Duquesne Light will remove the remainder of 308 high-risk trees. Forestry will verify if they will take the trees that are under power lines.

Angie states that DOMI did Collect A Tree study. Need to get it into the hands of the people who are responsible for it. Mike and Lisa both add that they have read the study.

Lisa says the biggest challenge for Forestry is fleet maintenance. She discusses the need for a new mini skid which PSTC has funded in the past. The cost is \$53,328. The quote from Vermeer is circulated among members and Michael shows a photo. Lisa makes a request to the Commission to fund the purchase of a new mini skid in 2026.

Zinna makes a motion to purchase a new mini skid from Vermeer for use solely by Forestry at the estimated cost of \$54,000.

Nazin seconds the motion.

Lisa abstains from the vote. Motion passes.

Lisa provides a summary of the PPG Arena tree replacement. Had \$21,000 for tree removals on Fifth Avenue. A tree planting is planned for this Spring to replace the trees that were removed. Lisa makes a request to utilize up to \$21,000 to replace up to 10 trees removed at PPG Arena for mitigation costs.

Nazin makes a motion to approve utilizing up to \$21,000 to replace up to 10 trees removed at PPG Arena for mitigation costs.

Zinna seconds the motion.

Lisa abstains from the vote. Motion passes.

Approval/Meeting Minutes-November:

Clara makes a motion to approve minutes.

Zinna seconds the motion.

Motion passes. Minutes are approved.

Reports/Community Partners**Clara Kitongo - Tree Pittsburgh**

- Tree plantings at multiple sites
- California-Kirkbride – hoping to have something soon
- Highland Park Rising Main
- Pruning season
- Planning for upcoming planting season

Isabella Gross – City of Pittsburgh – Department of City Planning

- New Director has been approved

Angie Martinez - City of Pittsburgh – DOMI

- Collaborating with Forestry to build substantial tree protection for permitting
- Street tree requirements for new developments
- Working with Mayor O'Connor on permit process
- Surveys for volunteers to collect data on sidewalk conditions and tree pits. Public interest has been great but still no funds for sidewalks

Nazin Bagherynejad – URA

- Planted 350 trees. Will be re-seeding in the Spring

Public Comment

In person meeting not available for public comment.

Clara makes a motion to adjourn meeting.

Angie seconds the motion.

Meeting adjourns at 10:07 am.