

**Bernards Township  
Community Forestry Management Plan  
2013-2017**



**Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission**

Prepared by  
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&  
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In Cooperation with  
Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission

**Bernards Township**  
**Community Forestry Management Plan 2013-2017**

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# Community Forestry Management Plan

## Municipal/County Information Form

Municipality Bernards Township

County Somerset

Address 1 Collyer Lane

Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contact Name and Title Randy Santoro -- Chairperson Bernards Twp. Shade Tree Commission

Phone # 908-766-9709

Fax # and E-mail randysantoro@gmail.com

Organization Name Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission

Mayor/County Freeholder's Signature 

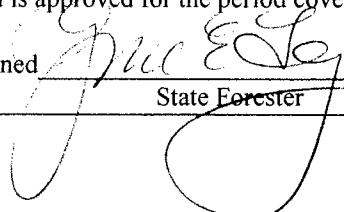
Date of Management Plan Submission January 2013

Time Period Covered in Management Plan 2013 - 2017

- Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) Practices Identified in Management Plan
- CSIP #1 Training
  - CSIP #2 Community Forestry Ordinance Establishment
  - CSIP #3 Public Education and Awareness
  - CSIP #4 Arbor Day
  - CSIP #5 Tree Inventory
  - CSIP #6 Hazard Tree Assessment
  - CSIP #7 Storm Damage Assessment
  - CSIP #8 Tree Maintenance and Removals
  - CSIP #9 Insect and Disease Management
  - CSIP #10 Wildfire Protection
  - CSIP #11 Tree Planting
  - CSIP #12 Tree Recycling
  - CSIP #13 Sidewalk Maintenance Program
  - CSIP #14 Storm Water Management
  - CSIP #15 Other

### Official Use Only Certification

The above named municipality/county has made formal application to the New Jersey Forest Service. I am pleased to advise you that after our review, the NJ Forest Service has concluded that this plan meets the standards set forth by the State and the NJ Community Forestry Council and is approved for the period covered.

Signed   
State Forester

3/14/13  
Approved

## **II. Introduction**

### **A. Scope**

This Bernards Township Community Forestry Management Plan 2013-2017 (the Plan) has been prepared by the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission (the STC) to document the manner in which Bernards Township currently manages the community tree resources under its jurisdiction including trees and shrubbery along streets, in parks, rights-of-way and around township buildings and other holdings. This plan will also outline how Bernards Township intends to further improve this system over the next five years.

### **B. Mission Statement**

Bernards Township desires to maintain and promote a healthy, safe and sustainable shade tree resource that will physically and aesthetically benefit the community and its residents in the most cost effective manner possible.

### **C. Goals and Objectives**

The following is a list of goals of Bernards Township's Community Forestry Management Plan.

1. Continue a diversity of trees and shrubbery plantings to provide for long term coverage of public lands, parks and recreation areas.
  - a. Maintain the yearly planting program following the guidelines of an established list of trees developed with consideration of the size of the plant at maturity, the local climate and environment (clay soil, rocky, or wetland) conditions.
  - b. Utilize "Cool Cities" grants as available to augment the effectiveness of our tree planting initiatives. Continue to coordinate with Bernards Township Board of Education regarding planting trees on school property.
  - c. Revisit plan for the cooperative planting program along Somerset County and State rights-of-way in conjunction with municipal efforts. This goal was established in the original five year plan. Due to turnover of the entire volunteer commission, this was not accomplished.
  - d. Continue to qualify for Sustainable Jersey certification by increasing the tree canopy in Bernards Township through effective tree management practices.
  - e. Identify potential projects and educational opportunities related to trees and their impact on the hydrologic cycle and water quality in Bernards Township.

2. Continue without diminution the existing ongoing maintenance program for trees along township rights-of-way by working more closely with DPW and our CTE consultant. Also, continue communication with county, state and utility company maintenance divisions to ensure compatible procedures.
3. Compile an inventory of tree resources on all local, county and state roads, lands and parks using planting lists from previous five years and windshield surveys.
  - a. Identify maintenance deficiencies and propose corrective action.
  - b. Establish a priority list for the implementation of corrective action.
4. Review annually and revise tree ordinances as necessary.
  - a. Develop policies for the ongoing maintenance of community shade tree resources. Establish where the greatest liabilities lie and address these areas.
  - b. Propose policies based on the need to promote the safety and welfare of the community.
  - c. Review and revise the current approved tree list used for planting in township easements and post on the Township website.
5. Create new opportunities for educating the public about trees and their importance to the entire community.
  - a. Update the map of community tree resources and add more points of interest. i.e. Historical trees and State Champions
  - b. Maintain Tree City USA status and publicize throughout community.
  - c. Develop a plan for a tree education site. Identify community partners to assist with project funding and plan objectives. Promote through local publications.
  - d. Continue to hold Arbor Day Celebration in cooperation with local schools and advertise event in local papers.
  - e. Publish tree related articles and related events in local newspapers.
6. Expand Bernards Township's shade tree resources and continue a proactive role in establishing the aforementioned goals.
7. Identify hazardous trees and continue the plan to remediate hazardous tree conditions. Continue windshield surveys by zone with the aid of a NJ Certified Tree Expert.
8. Ensure that the goals of the Community Forestry Management Plan are compatible with the Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan.

9. Continue, and expand if possible, educational opportunities and training for Shade Tree Commission Members and Public Works Employees.
  - a. Send one or two members for CORE training and seminars at the NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting annually.
  - b. Attend training sessions for proper pruning, tree identification and hazard tree identification at Rutgers, or other comparable programs.
10. Investigate updating the local land use ordinance to make provisions for a site plan review by a Shade Tree Commission Member.
11. Establish a closer relationship with the Bernards Township Deer Management Committee to support efforts to control the deer population in Bernards Township and thereby protect new plantings and encourage and enhance natural regrowth.
12. Create a “Significant Tree” inventory of historical or otherwise important trees that reflect the diversity in Bernards Township.

#### ***D. Liability Statement***

Bernards Township recognizes the benefits provided to the community by its tree resource. As trees are living entities, it is inevitable that as they mature they eventually require care, maintenance, removal and, in some cases, replacement. Bernards Township must, however, work within a limited budget and may not be able to meet every demand. Therefore it is the intent of this plan to focus available resources on reducing tree hazards.

Since it is impossible to predict or prevent all hazardous conditions that may arise, the STC has developed this Plan in part to remediate hazardous tree conditions in a timely manner. This Plan evidences the STC’s commitment to proactive tree management and hazard remediation in order to reduce the occurrence of reasonably foreseeable accidents or failures attributable to diseased or damaged trees on the public property or rights-of-way.

Adherence to this Plan will demonstrate that Bernards Township is devoting reasonable levels of resources in a planned manner to reduce the number of hazardous-tree-related accidents and thereby reduce its exposure to liabilities and increase public safety.

### **III. Community Overview – FIVE YEARS OF PROGRESS**

#### **A. Achievements**

During the term of the previous five-year Plan, the STC coordinated the planting of approximately 50 new trees each year, throughout the Township. This was done with outside contractors for the first few years, but has been moved internally the last three years with the aid of the DPW, and has saved much needed funds and improved our planting success rate. The diversity of tree species was increased during this timeframe by planting new varieties such as: Valley Forge American Elm, Autumn Flame Red Maple, Autumn Blaze Maple, Scarlet Oak, Swamp White Oak, Skyline Honeylocust, Ruby Slippers Amur Maple, London Plane Tree, Canada Red Cherry, American Hornbeam, Celestial Rutgers Dogwood and Rutgers Stellar Pink Dogwood on public lands, parks and recreation areas.

The 2011 October snow storm provided an opportunity for the STC and other township boards and committees to partner in order to identify tree hazards and pursue remediation efforts, identify future planting sites, work cooperatively with utilities, county and state agencies, and begin laying the ground work for a future storm damage response plan.

The maintenance program for the trees along township rights-of-way was continued by conducting windshield surveys in each of the eight previously developed zones with outside consultant, David Welch, CTE. The results included lists of identified maintenance needs and a priority list for corrective actions which were taken by DPW.

Through a stable Committee membership, the STC has effectively maintained the structure and objectives of the original Plan. This had been a problem during the administration of the previous plan due to member turnover.

The STC continued fostering a public education program by presenting information during the annual Bernard's Township Community Charter Day each year 2008-2012. Informational flyers were distributed and training seminars held by Shade Tree Commissioners as well as an outside CTE consultant. New planting site suggestions were taken from residents as well as identifying potential tree hazards within the Community. Seedlings were distributed free of charge to residents.

A map of community tree resources and important points of interest was developed and is available for use by interested members of the public. The map describes a walking tour of twenty different trees near the center of town to encourage residents and visitors to our unique diversity of trees and learn about their historic importance to the community.

The STC expanded and updated our online presence to achieve a more comprehensive webpage on the Bernards Township website which is regularly

updated to reinforce the goals and objective of STC efforts in the community. The site is located at:  
[http://www.bernards.org/boards\\_commissions/shade\\_tree](http://www.bernards.org/boards_commissions/shade_tree)

The STC organized an Arbor Day celebration each year as well as maintaining Tree City USA status for six consecutive years. The STC also worked in conjunction with Bernards Township to plant Liberty Elm trees to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the township as well as the opening of Sons of Liberty Park. A bronze plaque was also installed with the trees to commemorate the event. The goals of the STC include continuing to promote tree efforts throughout the community with these and other functions.

The STC developed a Bernards Township Shade Tree resource by working closely with David Welch, CTE, on a consulting basis, regarding difficult issues and identifying “best practices” being conducted by other townships.

The STC continued to identify hazardous trees with windshield surveys performed by BTSTC members, the DPW and David Welch, CTE. The STC developed and implemented a plan to remediate hazardous tree conditions by coordinating results with Bernard’s Township DPW.

The STC reviewed the township Master Plan and the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The efforts of the BTSTC over the last five years have led to a closer working relationship with the DPW than in the past, to the benefit of Bernards Township’s trees. There is also a Township Commissioner liaison with BTSTC to review other Plans within the Township.

The STC expanded the educational opportunities and training for STC members and Public Works Employees. BTSTC has sent one or two members for CORE training annually for the past five years. Some members have also attended the Rutgers Continuing Professional Education training classes as well as classes at the annual meeting of the NJ Shade Tree Federation. Training demonstrations on proper pruning techniques were conducted by a CTE at recent Charter Day festivals for residents and BTSTC members.



## **B. *Problems Encountered and New Issues***

The October snowstorm of 2011 was a significant drain on tree resources. It stretched both financial and human resources beyond any anticipated expectations. While it did present new opportunities for cooperation, it also severely damaged a large number of trees, and destroyed more than 3% of the trees within the township's right of way.

Budget constraints and the extraordinary clean-up costs incurred following two major storms in 2011 forced us to reallocate our resources. As a result, the township has discontinued planting trees in the right-of-way along privately-owned property and will limit plantings to township property until expanded funding becomes available.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy and the following nor'easter in the autumn of 2012, it is estimated that over 15,000 trees were lost throughout the township. The damage was still being assessed at the time this plan was being finalized, but it is expected that effects on the STC and DPW policies and budgets will be significant.

The Eagle Scout planting project on Haas Road was started with great enthusiasm, but ultimately failed. Approximately 200 seedlings were planted to start the project. Unfortunately, because of budgetary and water restraints, and the fact that the newly planted area could not be fenced and properly maintained, deer destroyed the seedlings. Recent reductions in the deer population over the past few years and coordination with the Bernards Township Deer Committee might warrant reexamination of seedling plantings if adequate funding becomes available in the future. The STC will continue working with the Deer Committee and other Scouts to find new ways to reforest naturalized areas in town.

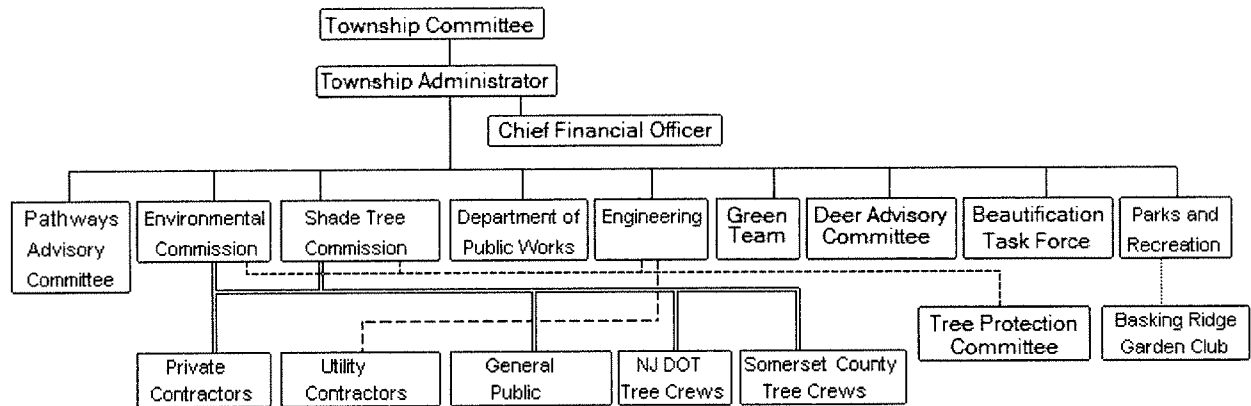
## **C. *Statement of Benefits***

Implementation of the first two 5-year CFM plans has benefited the community by establishing methodical goals, timelines and procedures. The effectiveness of the BTSTC has been enhanced by implementing the Plan's objectives. Structured tasks and adequate training of members has led to quicker decision-making and more satisfied residents regarding maintenance and replacement of trees throughout the community. With this plan, communication has improved by having documented common goals shared by DPW, BTSTC and town officials. This results in fewer tree problems throughout the community and in coordinated effort to resolve issues.

## IV. Community Forestry Program Administration

The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission advises the Township Committee, Planning Board, and Zoning Board on Shade Tree concerns on public property and along public rights-of-way. The following chart depicts the relationship of those involved in the shade tree management process.

### A. Flow Chart – Shade Tree Management Process



- A. The Township Committee
  1. The Township Committee is responsible for appointing members of the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission.
  2. The Township Committee reviews the policies and plans of Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission.
  3. The Township Committee approves annual budgets for the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission and the Department of Public Works.
  4. A member of the Township Committee acts as a liaison to the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission.
  
- B. Township Administrator
  1. Reviews plans and policies submitted by the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission and makes recommendations to the Township Committee.
  
- C. Township Chief Financial Officer
  1. Recommends the annual budget of the Shade Tree Commission to the Township Committee.

- D. Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission  
 The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission consists of a seven member volunteer board along with two alternate members appointed by the Township Committee.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES:</u>
Randy Santoro	Chairperson	12/31/2013
Fred Burgerhoff	Vice Chairperson	12/31/2015
Judy O'Connell	Secretary	12/31/2013
David Ferratti	Advisor	12/31/2013
Carolyn Gaziano	Twp Committee Liaison	12/31/2013
Jonathan Vidler	Regular Member	12/31/2017
Michael Zaidel	Regular Member	12/31/2014
Jack Gray	Regular Member	12/31/2017
Ron Bailey	Regular Member	12/31/2016

The STC is the advisory agency for all community trees on municipal streets, rights-of-way, parks, or other properties. STC member duties include:

1. Provide guidance on the planting, removal and general maintenance of Township trees.
  2. Develop and recommend the policies and goals that will preserve and develop Bernard's tree resource.
  3. Perform public outreach to foster better understanding and care for Bernards' trees on both public and private properties.
- E. Propose tree-related items for inclusion in the annual township budget.
- F. Department of Public Works
1. Reviews some requests for tree planting, removal or maintenance and makes the necessary inspections in conjunction with the Shade Tree Commission.
  2. Inspects work performed by private contractors for the township.
  3. Develops annual plans and budget requests for tree maintenance.
  4. Maintains through public employees and private contractors all trees on public property concerning tree hazards and other problems.
  5. Responsible for tree removal, pruning and brush clean-up along municipal roadways and on township properties.
- G. Township Engineer
1. Inspects all the work performed by utility contractors on Bernards Township's properties.
- H. Environmental Commission
1. The Environmental Commission cooperates with the Shade Tree Commission in tree related projects.

- I. Deer Management Advisory Committee
  - 1. Advises the Township Committee on matters relating to the Township deer population and its control.
  
- J. Green Team
  - 1. Advises the Township Committee on ways to improve municipal operations with “Green” initiatives which are economically and environmentally sound.
  - 2. Maintains certification in the Sustainable Jersey Program.
  - 3. Advises the Township Committee on energy savings and storm water initiatives.
  
- K. Department of Parks and Recreation
  - 1. Responsible for upkeep of newly planted and young trees in Township Parks i.e. mulching, watering, fertilizing, trimming
  
- L. Recreation, Parks & Pathways Advisory Committee
  - 2. Recommends and reviews resource allocations for the diversified opportunities of leisure interests provided by the parks, pathways and physical infrastructure of Bernards Township.
  
- M. Beautification Task Force
  - 1. Improves public awareness and civic pride, and promotes involvement and coordination of services, in the pursuit of further beautification of the Township to enhance the quality of life and property values for all residents.
  
- N. Private Tree Contractors
 

Generally, most tree care and maintenance activities are done by outside vendors except emergency situations as they arise, which may be handled by the Department of Public Works, Somerset County or utility tree crews. Private contractors are responsible for the following:

  - 1. Provide proof of appropriate insurance, certifications and licenses as necessary to the appropriate department heads.
  - 2. Report prior to and following all work performed to the appropriate department supervisor.
  - 3. Complete all work in a safe and timely manner according to all applicable safety standards set by OSHA or ANSI, as they pertain to tree care operations.
  - 4. Follow all current arboricultural practices and recommendations.
  - 5. Report all hazards or problems directly to appropriate department head immediately.
  
- O. Utility Contractors
  - 1. Must notify the Bernards Township Director of Public Works prior to the start of any non-emergency work in the township.
  - 2. Must follow all current arboricultural practices and recommendations.
  - 3. May assist Public Works Department Tree Crews in clearing trees to a safe distance from their facilities when necessary.

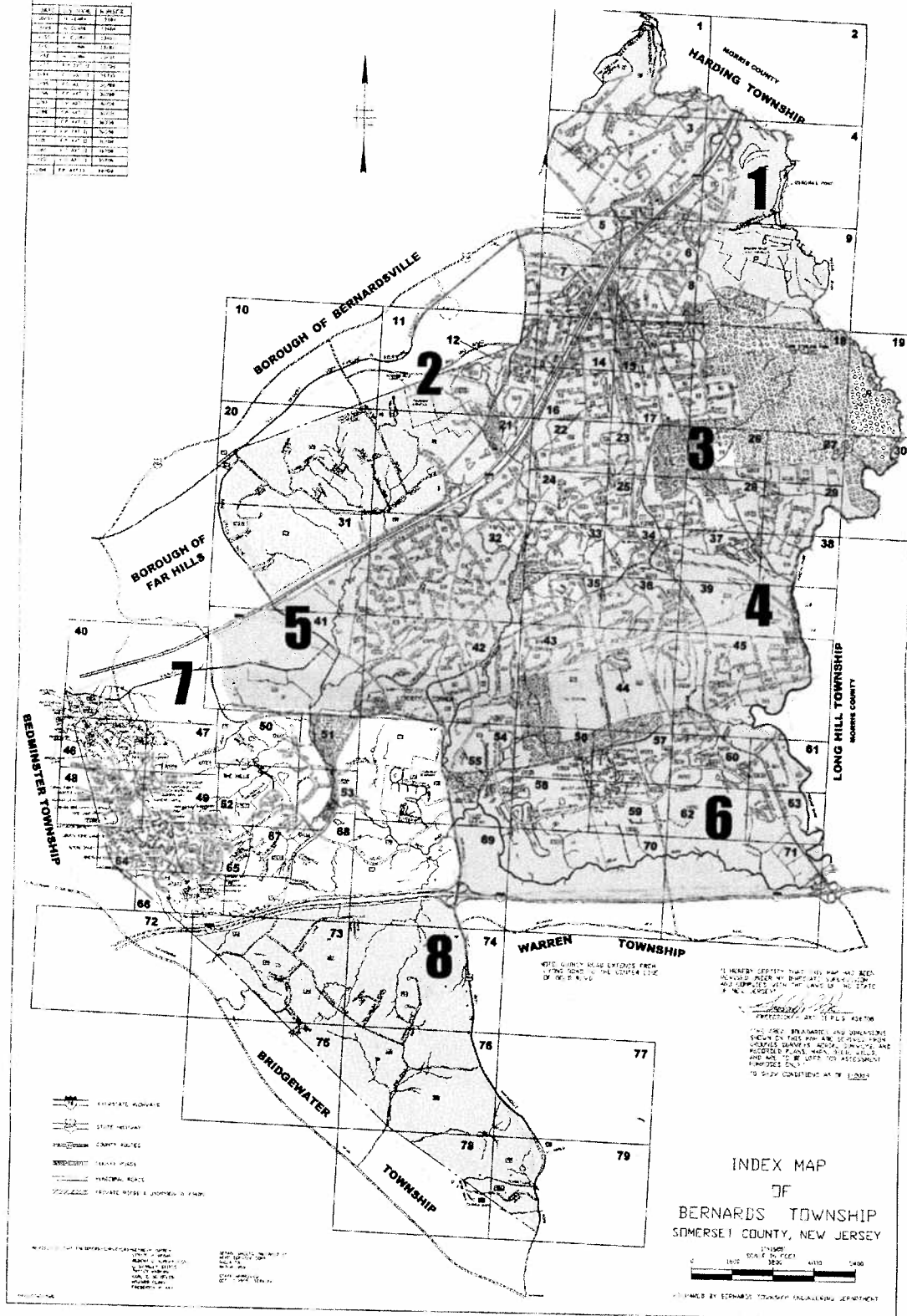
- P. General Public
  - 1. Continue to report all requests for removal or maintenance to the Department of Public Works or the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission.
  - 2. Assist in follow-up care to the newly planted trees on adjacent properties or in County or Township rights-of-way.
  
- Q. Somerset County Tree Crews
  - 1. At the request of the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission will remove dead trees on county rights of way.
  
- R. NJ DOT Tree Crews
  - 1. Responsible for maintaining trees on state roadways.
  
- S. Basking Ridge Garden Club
  - 1. Assist with tree plantings and beautification projects throughout the township.

## **B. *Tree Service Request Process***

Planting, removal, or pruning requests can be made by any department or individual residing in Bernards Township so long as the property in question is owned and maintained by Bernards Township. Due to current budget constraints, planting requests will be considered only on township-owned property. All requests must follow these procedures:

1. All requests can be mailed, emailed or called in to the Bernards Township DPW Office, Township Clerks Office or to the STC's secretary. Phone numbers and email addresses are posted on the Township website.
2. All information pertinent to the request is sent to the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission prior to action, except in the case of emergencies - which will be sent directly to the Director of Public Works to be handled in an expeditious manner. The STC secretary coordinates requests received from residents, DPW and commissioners and routes the request to the commissioner assigned to the zone in question.
3. Requests from all sources are reviewed at the monthly STC meeting. The review process ensures that requests and inquiries are reviewed by the entire STC, prompt action is taken and proper feedback is given to the requestor.
4. All non-emergency work will be inspected by the Bernards Township DPW and Shade Tree Commission, prioritized and referred to the appropriate department.
5. Work requests are completed in the order in which they were received (excluding emergency or priority work) and good faith efforts are made to ensure that requests will be completed in a reasonable time period.
6. The property owners adjacent to the requested work location and/or those making the request will be notified of any action to be taken, even if no action is deemed necessary at that time.

# V. Bernards Township Map



SECTION	AREA (ACRES)	PERCENTAGE
1	1,000	12.5
2	1,000	12.5
3	1,000	12.5
4	1,000	12.5
5	1,000	12.5
6	1,000	12.5
7	1,000	12.5
8	1,000	12.5
TOTAL	8,000	100.0

## **VI. Training Plan**

Since arboriculture is constantly changing with fast-paced technological and scientific innovations, Bernards Township recognizes the need for a broad-based and ongoing training program for individuals at all levels of the Community Forestry Management Program. From Public Works employees to Commission members and administrators, all need continued technical and managerial information to benefit Bernards Township's tree resource.

### Current Training

1. The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission utilizes a portion of its budget for ongoing training of its members.
2. The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission encourages and provides for its members to participate in continuing education classes and CORE training as included in the New Jersey Shade Tree & Community Forestry Assistance Act. At the time of this writing, one township employee and all seven STC volunteers are CORE trained.
3. Some members of the Shade Tree Commission and DPW township employees have attended the Hazardous Tree Identification class at Rutgers, and newer members will be sent as soon as is practical.
4. STC members have attended the all-day training session at the NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting for the past seven years.
5. In 2011 2 individuals were trained in Excavation, Trenching and Shoring and 4 people received training in Playground Safety and Heavy Equipment Safety Modules 1 & 2. Five people attended Flagger/Workzone Safety and 10 people received Chainsaw/Chipper Safety training.
6. In 2012 3 people received training in Defensive Driving, 8 people attended Flagger/Workzone Safety, and 13 people had Blood borne Pathogen training.
7. The above mentioned courses and others are available to all individuals involved in managing tree resources.

### Goals and Objectives

1. To have all individuals involved in the management of tree resources CORE trained. To accomplish this, each new Commission volunteer will be sent to the next available CORE training session.
2. To increase the quality of care given to Bernards Township's trees, the most current technical arboricultural information will be provided to tree maintenance crews and Shade Tree Commission Members.
3. To ensure the safety of tree maintenance crews and residents by providing current and advanced training in hazard tree identification, equipment safety, and electrical hazard awareness.
4. Continue annual training at Rutgers or NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting, on current techniques or new developments for Town employees and Commission volunteers.
5. The BTSTC will allocate part of its training budget to send more of its members to the Hazard Tree Identification class at Rutgers University.



## **VII. Public Education, Awareness and Outreach**

Since its beginnings on August 20, 1968 the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission has supported public education with regard to tree care. While this provides a valuable service to the community at large, it also encourages public support for the Shade Tree Commission. The Commission provides community forestry education through some of the following public outreach methods and hopes to expand this program to include each of these objectives.

- A. Providing tree advice to residents at no charge.
- B. As budgets will allow, continue planting trees each year throughout the Township.
- C. Continue to conduct and promote Arbor Day plantings.
- D. Participate with a booth in the annual Town Charter Day, distributing tree information, conducting information learning sessions and gathering information from residents requesting tree work and new plantings.
- E. Notifying local newspapers of tree-related events when appropriate.
- F. Publishing Shade Tree Commission meeting dates in compliance with the "Sunshine Law."
- G. Continue to invite and work with Scouts and other youth groups to assist with planting activities and getting schools more involved with the Shade Tree Program.
- H. Assisting teachers and school groups in tree related projects.
- I. Working with Garden Clubs to help maintain and beautify public spaces and parks.
- J. Create a tree identification walking path in Mountain Park as an educational site for the community.
- K. Advising the Planning and Zoning Boards regarding trees proposed in development applications including recommendations for proper planting techniques. Develop relationships with home owner associations in local developments.
- L. Posting the current Community Forestry Management Plan on the township website.
- M. Placing tree related information on the Township's internet website ([www.bernards.org](http://www.bernards.org)) with a link to the Shade Tree Commission webpage.
- N. Historic Tree List-To further develop and chart all of the historic and champion trees in Bernards Township.
- O. Maintaining Tree City USA status on an annual basis.

## VIII. Statement of Tree Budget

Bernards Township spends approximately \$6.65 per capita on total Community Forestry expenditures. The year 2012 budget for the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission is listed below, along with funds allocated for the Tree Management Program by the Department of Public Works Tree Crew.

### Shade Tree Commission Budget

Tree plantings	\$6,500.00
Shade Tree Federation dues publications and training	\$300.00
Consulting Fees for CTE	\$1,000.00
Training	\$1,800.00
Secretary Salary	\$1,500.00
Arbor Day Planting and Education Site Expense	\$360.00
Educational Supplies	\$200.00
Advertising, postage and other miscellaneous materials	<u>\$40.00</u>
<b>Total STC Annual Budget</b>	<b>\$11,700.00</b>

### Shade Tree Commission In Kind Hours

	<u>Cost/Hr</u>	<u>Hours</u>	
Committee Member Monthly Meetings	\$21.36	160	\$3,417.60
Special projects (Arbor Day, Charter Day, site evaluations, special meetings, training)	\$21.36	<u>342</u>	<u>\$7,305.12</u>
<b>Total In Kind Contribution</b>	\$21.36	502	<b>\$10,722.72</b>

### DPW Tree Budget

Personnel costs for Tree Care	\$72,000.00
Outside Consultant for Tree Care Services	\$40,000.00
Recycle of brush/chips/stumps/log disposal	<u>\$45,000.00</u>
<b>Total DPW Tree Budget</b>	<b>\$157,000.00</b>

### Basking Ridge Garden Club In Kind Hours

Town Beautification	\$21.36	240	\$5,126.40
<b>Total Tree Care Budget</b>			<b>\$184,549.12</b>

## **IX. Shade Tree Management Plan Implementation**

### **A. Tree Assessment and Inventory**

The Township of Bernards has a large and diverse tree resource. Currently there is no formal street tree plan and only a partial tree inventory. A computer based database is being populated with the goal of a comprehensive street tree inventory in Bernards Township that will lead to the eventual inventory of traditional street trees to be included in maps and in a searchable data repository. A preliminary tree inventory was begun in 2005 with information concerning newly planted trees, and has been updated each year since. In 2008, the inventory began tracking GIS data to be included in the annual updates.

#### **1. Goals**

The current goals of the tree inventory are to:

- a. Determine the overall health of the township tree resource.
- b. Catalogue all planted trees along roadways in the township.
- c. Catalogue all trees in township parks and on township owned properties.
- d. Identify open planting spaces in the community.
- e. Develop maintenance cycles for systematic rotation pruning.

#### **2. Action Statements**

The following action steps were taken to accomplish the goals during 2008-2012:

- a. Compiled a list of prior year's STC tree plantings in a comprehensive spreadsheet.
- b. Began cataloguing trees planted by developers, DPW and Parks Commission in all public places along Township rights-of-way.
- c. Continued windshield surveys with a hired Certified Tree Expert who assisted STC members in estimating the range and species distribution of the Bernards tree resource.
- d. As a result of the information gathered in the inventory; set up systematic pruning cycles for newly planted and established trees; and identified locations for new tree plantings.

## ***B. Tree Hazard Identification and Management***

Bernards is dedicated to providing a healthy and productive tree resource for its residents in the safest and most cost effective manner possible. Public safety is of the highest concern throughout every aspect of the tree management program from planting to removal. A Hazard Tree Assessment covering all eight zones in the Township was completed from 2007-2010 through a windshield survey. Follow up inspections have been performed after significant storm events. Information gathered in that survey has been forwarded to DPW for hazard abatement work. The eight zones will be surveyed again in an ongoing rotation covering at least two zones per year.

### 1. Goals

- a. To ensure public safety in relation to trees and shrubs on all Bernards Township properties and along public thoroughfares.
- b. To establish an ongoing, comprehensive plan for Hazard Tree Assessment on all Township properties and along public thoroughfares.

### 2. Action Statements

The following action steps will be taken to accomplish the goals during 2013-2017:

- a. Hazard tree evaluation training will continue for all the Shade Tree Commission members and selected Public Works employees through in-house training and other available outside sources.
- b. Conduct windshield surveys covering two zones each year throughout the plan timeframe. Surveys will be conducted by STC members in conjunction with a NJ Certified Tree Expert to identify hazard tree areas in town. The zones that were surveyed first in the previous plan will be surveyed first, and then the other zones will be surveyed again in the order they were completed last time, barring any hazardous conditions that may arise and need to be addressed out of that order.
- c. Continue to communicate with DPW on findings of potential tree hazards through email or face to face at meetings.

### **C. Tree Planting**

The previous tree planting program was designed to replace dead trees, fill open spaces located by the STC, meet the requests of residents, and add species diversity to Township parks, streets and other facilities. However, due to budget constraints, the planting policy was revised in 2012 to eliminate planting on right-of-ways in favor of township-owned properties, at least until additional funding becomes available.

Builders are also responsible to plant 3 to 3-1/2 inch caliper trees chosen from the STC approved planting list for all new developments. Arbor Day and memorial plantings have also been an integral part of the Bernards tree planting program. Bernards recognizes the need for diversity and stability in its aging tree population and intends to develop a formal plan to integrate young trees into areas with aging and declining tree populations. Implementation of this program has helped beautify the town and also increased the diversity of species and age of the trees in Bernards.

#### 1. Goals

- a. Continue to increase species diversity throughout the township.
- b. Increase the number of smaller tree species in proximity to overhead utilities, reducing future tree and utility conflicts.
- c. Develop plans to work with Township Parks Commission on species selection for planting projects within Town parks.
- d. Seek better ways to maintain and help establish newly planted materials i.e., water, mulch, deer guards. Develop a working relationship with the township Deer Committee.
- e. Enhance entrance signs and hang Tree City USA signs welcoming residents and visitors into town.

#### 2. Action Statements

The following action steps will be taken to accomplish the goals during 2013-2017:

- a. Continue planting new trees per year throughout the community as budget permits.
- b. With the cooperation of Somerset County tree crews and utility companies, continue removing declining and poorly or over-pruned trees and replace them with smaller species around overhead utilities.
- c. Find suitable tree species not currently existing on township properties, and incorporate them into new plantings.
- d. Seek grants or donations to fund new plantings and beautification of township parks, including Adopt-a-Tree and memorial garden programs.
- e. Solicit help of the Public Works Department and the public in aftercare new tree plantings.
- f. Annually review the BTSTC approved tree planting list.
- g. Continue to apply for Tree City USA status and strive for growth awards.
- h. Monitor for potential “no-net-loss” tree planting opportunities.

## **D. Tree Maintenance and Care**

Bernards Township recognizes that trees need general wellness care and not just emergency care. A proactive plan of routine scheduled maintenance will ensure a healthy, aesthetically pleasing and cost effective urban forest with a reduced hazard potential.

This management plan aims to provide a framework that will benefit and raise the level of care for all township-owned trees and trees along township thoroughfares. This care begins with young trees. Within 5 years of planting, structural pruning cycles begin to train young trees to establish good form. Trees with good structural form reduce potential liabilities and maintenance costs in the future. Continued maintenance on established and mature trees should reduce the risk of hazardous situations and increase tree life spans, generating benefits to the community. Routine maintenance also provides opportunities for closer inspection of upper tree canopies and a chance to identify and correct potential problems.

### 1. Goals:

- a. To install healthy, viable trees into the existing landscape and help them to establish as quickly as possible to insure longevity.
- b. Train and develop young trees with good structure.
- c. Maintain the health and extend the useful life span of existing trees.
- d. Encourage re-growth and natural repopulation by encouraging and supporting deer herd management programs
- e. Promote public safety with regard to trees on township properties and rights-of-way.
- f. Maintain the maximum benefit of trees in the most cost effective manner.
- g. Review and revise all tree related ordinances as necessary consistent with Township Committee standards.
- h. Educate the public with regard to trees and their benefits and care.

### 2. Action Statements

The following action steps will be taken to accomplish the goals during 2013-2017:

- a. Require quality planting material from internal departments and outside contractors when annual planting is conducted or when bonding requirements are met. Hire a Certified Tree Expert to examine plant material before planting occurs.
- b. Windshield surveys have been completed for all eight designated zones. At least two zones will be surveyed each year.
- c. Work with utility companies to develop a removal and replacement program to eliminate future hazards and tree line conflicts.
- d. Seek additional funds and grants for hiring of private contractors for general tree care needs beyond the scope of county and utility cooperation.
- e. Continue to seek cooperation from Somerset County tree crews to establish a routine pruning cycle in Bernards Township.
- f. Continue to work with DPW on structural pruning of young trees and remedial

- pruning based on assessments of the current windshield survey by the Shade Tree Commissioners.
- g. Expand the Shade Tree Commission website to include FAQ by homeowners. Develop letters to the editor in local newspaper to inform the public of the Shade Tree Commission's progress and also general tree care tips.
- h. Monitor Rutgers disease and insect alerts.

## Shade Tree Management Plan Implementation

### ***E. Timeline for the years 2013-2017***

#### Year 1, 2013

- ⇒ Review at the annual organization meeting (typically the first regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the STC) the goals for the upcoming year as set forth in the current Community Forestry Management Plan.
- ⇒ Continue the windshield survey hazard tree assessment to identify existing hazards in the first two zones, starting over from the beginning, to complete all eight management zones. This hazard assessment will be carried out by the Public Works department, The Shade Tree Commission and a hired CTE consultant.
- ⇒ Continue already established tree planting projects. The Shade Tree Commission with the help of the DPW will continue to plant approximately 50 trees per year plus incidental planting and special projects such as Arbor Day. Planting will also be done through bonding requirements from developments.
- ⇒ Identify potential projects and educational opportunities related to the hydrologic cycle and water quality that might benefit from selective tree plantings as well as the preservation of existing trees and native vegetation.
- ⇒ Continue yearly public relations activities, such as Tree City USA recertification, Arbor Day celebrations, newspaper and on-line articles, Sunshine Law notifications, Charter Day and updating township website with activities. Apply for Tree Planting Grant or tree planting money from CSIP.
- ⇒ Investigate methods to improve the street tree inventory.
- ⇒ Perform an annual review of tree ordinances and recommend any changes as needed.
- ⇒ Have a booth at the annual township Charter Day to provide public outreach and education as well as gather information from residents requesting tree work or plantings.
- ⇒ Send two or more people from the Shade Tree Commission and Public Works representatives as well to the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting for CORE training and CEU's. Continue to support the training programs for the Public Works Department with the use of outside consultants and safety trainers.
- ⇒ Develop an inventory of historic and otherwise significant trees in Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Continue to develop a working relationship with the local utility company to begin a proactive tree removal and replacement program underneath overhead conductors.
- ⇒ Maintain good working relationships with other committees and commissions within Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Submit an Annual Accomplishment Report to NJ Forest Service.
- ⇒ Respond to resident inquiries and requests on tree issues throughout the community.

Assist and coordinate with DPW and outside tree consultant on tree maintenance resolutions.

- ⇒ Continue monthly Shade Tree Commission meetings.

#### Year 2, 2014

- ⇒ Review at the annual organization meeting (typically the first regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the STC) the goals for the upcoming year as set forth in the current Community Forestry Management Plan
- ⇒ Working from the assessment performed in 2013, identify hazardous situations and hire a contractor to prune or remove the hazardous trees identified in at least one zone per year. Consider applying for CSIP Grant to fund this project.
- ⇒ Continue with windshield survey in zones 3 and 4 with the cooperation of the STC, DPW and a NJCTE.
- ⇒ Continue with regular tree planting of approximately 50 trees per year. Consider applying for tree planting grant or some tree planting money from CSIP depending on the severity of the hazard problem identified above.
- ⇒ Identify potential projects and educational opportunities related to the hydrologic cycle and water quality that might benefit from selective tree plantings as well as the preservation of existing trees and native vegetation.
- ⇒ Continue to expand the inventory of historic and otherwise significant trees in Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Continue to update and improve the comprehensive street tree inventory by inputting all of the trees planted, maintained or removed in the previous year.
- ⇒ Meet with the Planning Board to review ordinances for compliance with the Municipal Master Plan and to discuss what is working and what is not. Ordinance review should include an update of the Approved Species Planting List and a review of the existing permitting process and a fine structure for failure to comply with the ordinance.
- ⇒ Continue yearly public relations activities, such as Tree City USA recertification, Arbor Day celebrations, newspaper and on-line articles, Sunshine Law notifications, Charter Day and updating township website with activities.
- ⇒ Continue attendance at the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting (Shade Tree Commission and Department of Public Works). Continue in-house training of Public Works employees.
- ⇒ Investigate the feasibility of applying for the Cool Cities Grant to plant trees near community buildings.
- ⇒ Continue to develop a working relationship with the local utility company to begin a proactive tree removal and replacement plan.
- ⇒ Maintain good working relationships with other committees and commissions within Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Work to identify an area in town for tree planting to be used as an educational and tree identification resource for residents.
- ⇒ Submit an Annual Accomplishment Report to NJ Forest Service.
- ⇒ Respond to resident inquiries and requests on tree issues throughout the community. Assist and coordinate with DPW and outside tree consultant on tree maintenance resolutions.
- ⇒ Continue monthly Shade Tree Commission meetings.



### Year 3, 2015

- ⇒ Review at the annual organization meeting (typically the first regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the STC) the goals for the upcoming year as set forth in the current Community Forestry Management Plan
- ⇒ Continue using the current tree assessment, identify hazardous situations and hire a contractor to prune or remove the hazardous trees in the next 1 or 2 zones depending on the scope of work identified. Consider applying for CSIP Grant to fund this project.
- ⇒ Continue with windshield survey in zones 5 and 6 with the cooperation of the STC, DPW and a NJCTE.
- ⇒ Tree Planting goals remain the same as last year.
- ⇒ Continue to expand the inventory of historic and otherwise significant trees in Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Identify potential projects and educational opportunities related to the hydrologic cycle and water quality that might benefit from selective tree plantings as well as the preservation of existing trees and native vegetation
- ⇒ Continue to update and improve the comprehensive street tree inventory plan by inputting all of the trees planted, maintained or removed in the previous year.
- ⇒ Initiate discussions with the Planning Board to gain recognition of this latest rendition of the Community Forestry Management Plan in the new Master Plan and Open Space Plan for the municipality, which will be under review in 2016.
- ⇒ Continue every year public relations activities: Tree City USA recertification, Arbor Day celebration, articles in the local newspaper and on-line, participation in Charter Day, and Sunshine Law notifications as well as updating the township website.
- ⇒ Continue training program with attendance at the NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting (keep up with CORE and CEU requirements). Continue in-house training with Public Works, address any training needs that may present themselves as we work through the plan or as other things happen. Training on how to recognize and deal with Bacterial Leaf Scorch, Asian Long-Horned Beetles, Emerald Ash Borer and gypsy moths, might be necessary.
- ⇒ Continue working with local utilities to cooperate with management of tree resources within Township.
- ⇒ Maintain good working relationships with other committees and commissions within Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Perform an annual review of tree ordinances and recommend any changes as needed.
- ⇒ Develop a plan for a tree education site. Identify community partners; i.e., Parks, businesses in town, to assist with project funding and plan objectives.
- ⇒ Submit an Annual Accomplishment Report to NJ Forest Service.
- ⇒ Respond to resident inquiries and requests on tree issues throughout the community. Assist and coordinate with DPW and outside tree consultant on tree maintenance resolutions.
- ⇒ Continue monthly Shade Tree Commission meetings.

#### Year 4, 2016

- ⇒ Review at the annual organization meeting (typically the first regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the STC) the goals for the upcoming year as set forth in the current Community Forestry Management Plan
- ⇒ Using the current tree assessment, identify hazardous situations and hire a contractor to prune or remove the hazardous trees in the next 1 or 2 zones. Consider applying for CSIP Grant to fund this project.
- ⇒ Continue with windshield survey in zones 7 and 8 with the cooperation of the STC, DPW and a NJCTE.
- ⇒ Tree planting goals should remain the same as in previous years, with possible adjustments considering the number of removals necessary as part of the hazard removal program and availability of grant money.
- ⇒ Continue to expand the inventory of historic and otherwise significant trees in Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Identify potential projects and educational opportunities related to the hydrologic cycle and water quality that might benefit from selective tree plantings as well as the preservation of existing trees and native vegetation
- ⇒ Implement the street tree inventory action plan and begin data gathering.
- ⇒ Continue meeting with the Planning Board, to keep them informed of our progress and to address any concerns. Investigate and begin discussions with the Township Planning Department to incorporate the latest rendition of the Community Forestry Management Plan into the Master Plan.
- ⇒ Continue public relations activities: Tree City USA recertification, Arbor Day celebrations, Charter Day, articles in local newspaper and on-line, Sunshine Law notifications and updating website.
- ⇒ Continue training program with attendance at the NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting (keep up with CORE and CEU requirements). Continue in-house training with Public Works, address any training needs that may present themselves as we work through the plan or as other things happen.
- ⇒ Continue working with utility companies to remove hazardous or high maintenance trees under the overhead conductors and begin replacing them with smaller ornamental varieties.
- ⇒ Perform an annual review of tree ordinances and recommend any changes as needed.
- ⇒ Evaluate effectiveness of communication and working processes between STC and DPW. Address concerns and implement improvement plan if needed.
- ⇒ Maintain good working relationships with other committees and commissions within Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Begin identification work at site for Tree Education grove.
- ⇒ Submit an Annual Accomplishment Report to NJ Forest Service.
- ⇒ Respond to resident inquiries and requests on tree issues throughout the community. Assist and coordinate with DPW and outside tree consultant on tree maintenance resolutions.
- ⇒ Continue monthly Shade Tree Commission meetings.

## Year 5, 2017

- ⇒ Review at the annual organization meeting (typically the first regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the STC) the goals for the upcoming year as set forth in the current Community Forestry Management Plan
- ⇒ Using the current tree assessment, identify hazardous situations and hire a contractor to prune or remove the hazardous trees in the next 1 or 2 zones. Consider applying for CSIP Grant to fund this project.
- ⇒ Continue with windshield survey starting over in zones 1 and 2 with the cooperation of the STC, DPW and a NJCTE.
- ⇒ Tree planting goals should remain the same as prior years.
- ⇒ Identify potential projects and educational opportunities related to the hydrologic cycle and water quality that might benefit from selective tree plantings as well as the preservation of existing trees and native vegetation
- ⇒ Continue to expand the inventory of historic and otherwise significant trees in Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Continue the tree inventory process. Continue to update and improve the comprehensive street tree inventory plan by inputting all of the trees planted, maintained or removed in the previous year.
- ⇒ Consider meeting with the Planning Board to involve them in the formation of the next 5 year Community Forestry Management Plan. Representatives of other committees and boards in Bernards Township may be invited to this meeting as well.
- ⇒ Public relations activities will remain the same: Tree City USA recertification, Arbor Day celebration, involvement in Charter Day, and Sunshine Law notification and articles in local newspaper and on-line, plus updates to the township website.
- ⇒ Training goals will also remain the same as last year, with a focus on any specific topics/problems that may have come up as a result of working through this management plan, or topics that may be seen as necessary to move forward through the next 5 year plan.
- ⇒ Perform an annual review of tree ordinances and recommend any changes as needed.
- ⇒ Continue to work with local utilities in the removal and replacement project.
- ⇒ Maintain good working relationships with other committees and commissions within Bernards Township.
- ⇒ Implement and develop the tree education site within the township.
- ⇒ Create and submit the next 5 year Community Forestry Management Plan. Apply for a CSIP grant to fund this project.
- ⇒ Submit an Annual Accomplishment Report to NJ Forest Service.
- ⇒ Respond to resident inquiries and requests on tree issues throughout the community. Assist and coordinate with DPW and outside tree consultant on tree maintenance resolutions.
- ⇒ Continue monthly Shade Tree Commission meetings.

## **X. Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP)**

The fifteen items listed below as a part of the Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) have been identified throughout this plan with current procedures or a recommended course of action.

The following is a synopsis of the suggested practices.

### **A. CSIP #1 Training**

Currently one member of the Bernards Township Department of Public Works and all seven volunteers have been CORE trained. Training in tree care practices for Public Works crews will also be expanded, especially with regard to hazard tree identification and equipment safety. **Further detail can be found in section VI.**

### **B. CSIP #2 Ordinance Establishment**

The Bernards Township STC was created by ordinance on August 20, 1968. The Shade Tree Commission recently reviewed the current ordinance which was revised in 1999 and found that it would be helpful to add two alternate members to the Commission. The Township Committee approved the revision to the ordinance and will be appointing the new members in 2013. The ordinance will be reviewed annually and the commission will update the document to meet arboricultural practices as necessary. In response to the 2011 storm damage, the STC reviewed tree ordinances in effect in other municipalities governing property owner responsibilities for the maintenance and removal of hazardous or downed trees and shrubbery located in the right-of-way and submitted a report in March 2012 to the Township Committee. The STC remains committed to reviewing proposals from time to time as may be appropriate and necessary. **See section IX on pages 19 - 22**

### **C. CSIP #3 Public Education and Awareness**

The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission would like to expand all public outreach and take a more proactive role in the community. The Commission recognizes that public education and support is vital to its success and intends to implement an outreach plan, which can be found in **section VII.**

#### **D. CSIP #4 Arbor Day Activities**

Arbor Day has been celebrated each year with the support of the Shade Tree Commission. The Commission is hopeful that Arbor Day programs will be expanded to:

1. Continue having the mayor proclaim the last Friday in April as Arbor Day on an annual basis;
2. Sponsor tree planting programs in cooperation with the local schools or community organizations;
3. Seek the involvement of local civic and youth organizations to participate in Arbor Day programs; and
4. Maintain the Tree City USA status over the next five years and beyond, striving for growth award achievements.

#### **E. CSIP #5 Tree Inventory**

The Township of Bernards initiated a preliminary street tree inventory in 2005 and expanded to include GIS mapping in 2008. The inventory began with basic information to record newly planted tree species and locations. Future plans to expand the inventory will capture other information including species, size, condition and location. Potential planting sites are also being identified. See section IX on pages 19 - 22.

#### **F. CSIP #6 Hazard Tree Assessment**

Tree hazard identification is a major area of concern for Bernards Township and has already been initiated with windshield surveys completed under prior Plans. This CSIP practice is of the highest priority to Bernards Township and will continue to take priority in the Plan, to ensure public safety regarding Township owned or maintained trees. The windshield survey will continue annually and cover all zones in the community. Results will be reviewed annually to aid in the quick identification and remediation of potential hazards to the public with the help of a certified tree expert. See section IX on pages 19 - 22.

#### **G. CSIP #7 Storm Damage Assessment**

Bernards Township does not currently have a Tree Care Disaster Plan. At present, tree emergencies are handled by County tree crews, utility tree crews, outside contractors and public works tree crews for downed trees. In case of any large-scale tree emergencies, such as recent hurricanes and damaging snow storms, Bernards Township would follow plans developed by Somerset County or the Office of Emergency Management. The expansion of the tree inventory in conjunction with the annual windshield survey should help with future storm preparedness.

## **H. CSIP #8 Tree Maintenance and Removal**

Bernards Township will continue to evaluate the Township's future needs for general tree care and future equipment purchases. Bernards Township has implemented a cost effective plan to care for its tree resource whether through conventional or innovative means to help newly planted materials as well as established and mature trees. The Township will continue to utilize a consultant who is a Certified Tree Expert, for guidance with tree resources and maintenance issues. Bernards Township DPW will continue to support smaller maintenance projects and purchase buckets, chippers, stump grinders, chainsaws and other necessary tree care equipment at that time. **See section IX on pages 19 - 22.**

## **I. CSIP #9 Insect and Disease Management**

No formal management plan exists for trees along township roads or on other properties. Any insect or disease outbreaks are handled on a case-by-case basis. Diagnosis and consultation would be sought from NJ State Department of Agriculture, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service, or a Certified Tree Expert. In the event of an outbreak, State or Federal assistance would be requested.

## **J. CSIP #10 Wildfire Protection**

Bernards Township Fire Management practices include wildfire training from the NJ Forest Fire Service. The state Fire Warden responsible for Bernards Township is located in the Andover field office. The Bernards Township Fire Prevention Bureau's fire safety policy includes monitoring the condition of trees near buildings, identifying trees that are fire hazards and prescribed removal as needed. The Somerset County Environmental Center, located on almost 500 acres in Lord Stirling Park of Bernards Township, maintains a Burn Master Plan and has held approximately 10 prescribed burns by the state in the last 14 years without incident. The Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, which shares a border with Bernards Township, has a current comprehensive Fire Management Plan (last updated in 2002). The Refuge does not currently use prescribed burns. They rely on the NJ Forest Service for wildfire support, not Bernards Township Fire resources.

## **K. CSIP #11 Tree Planting**

All future tree planting projects undertaken or overseen by the Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission will be guided by the goals and objectives outlined in **sections II and IX on pages 5 and 19** of this plan.

## **L. CSIP #12 Tree Recycling**

Bernards Township does not generate enough green waste to warrant running its own full time recycle plant. The township purchased a horizontal mulching machine in order to process vegetative debris, including the mulching of brush, logs, branches and Christmas trees at Pill Hill. Woodchips and mulch are temporarily stored at the Pill Hill location and at various times made available to township residents. It should be noted that the township uses woodchips and mulch for township properties and availability to residents would be subject to Bernards Township Department of Public Works priorities. Leaves are also accepted at the Pill Hill location and hauled to an outside facility. During tree maintenance and removal operations, some firewood is left for residents and woodchips are used in parks. Other large wood debris is hauled to a private facility. Outside contractors are responsible for disposal of all materials generated during tree pruning and removal operations. There are no further improvements planned for the recycling program at this time.

## **M. CSIP #13 Sidewalk Maintenance Program**

Sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owner. Healthy trees are not to be removed for sidewalk conflicts unless it is determined by the Shade Tree Commission or DPW that there is no alternative in order to make the repairs.

## **N. CSIP #14 Storm Water Management**

The current tree planting program aids in the absorption of storm water runoff as does the preservation of naturalized areas where possible. Tree leaves and other debris can pose problems if left unchecked. Leaves are the resident's responsibility and may not be placed at curbside. Residents can bring leaves to the Pill Hill facility for disposal. Violations are subject to fines. Outside of these basic practices, other specific Storm Water requirements are described on the Township web site at: <http://www.ecode360.com>.

## **O. CSIP #15 Other- Deer Management**

The deer population has created many challenges to the tree planting program in Bernards Township and as a result, the Township has established the Deer Management Advisory Committee to make recommendations to reduce the damage to planted trees and the native environment.

## **Grants Awarded:**

- 2002 Green Communities Grant of \$2,000 was awarded to assist in the development of the first Community Forestry Plan.
- 2007 Green Communities Grant of \$3,000 was awarded to assist in the development of the renewal of the Community Forestry Management Plan.
- 2009 Business Stimulus Grant of \$7,000 was awarded to aid in hazard tree mitigation and removal.
- 2012 Green Communities Grant of \$3,000 was awarded to assist in the development of the renewal of the Community Forestry Management Plan.

Resolution #

Acknowledging and Endorsing the 2013-2017  
Five-Year Community Forestry Management Plan Prepared by the Bernards Township  
Shade Tree Commission

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Bernards desires to maintain and promote a healthy, safe and sustainable shade tree resource that will physically and aesthetically benefit the community and its residents; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to §2-17 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of Bernards, the Township Committee of the Township of Bernards appoints a Shade Tree Commission to further this goal; and

**WHEREAS**, the Shade Tree Commission shall have the power and authority for the regulation, planting, care and control of shade and ornamental trees and shrubbery upon or in the highways, parks or parkways within the jurisdiction of the Township of Bernards and shall exercise all powers and rights and be subject to all duties provided in Chapter 325 of the 1915 Laws of New Jersey (N.J.S.A. 40:64-1 et seq.), as amended and supplemented; and

**WHEREAS**, the Shade Tree Commission has submitted a 2013-2017 Community Forestry Management Plan (the "Plan") for endorsement by the Township Committee of the Township of Bernards.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Bernards that we do hereby acknowledge and endorse the Plan; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Bernards, that a copy of this resolution, and Plan be forwarded to the Planning Board, Environmental Commission, Greenways Advisory and Parks Committee; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Bernards that we do hereby thank and acknowledge the dedication of the Shade Tree Commission in the preparation and submission of this Plan.

Dated: 3/5/2013

Explanatory Statement:

This Management Plan is our guide for the maintenance and care of the tree resources of Bernards Township for the next five years. It encourages the Commission's members to be proactive in the stewardship that we have over the Township's resources. It encompasses new plantings, current maintenance, education, community involvement, and special projects related to the Township's trees. With the approval of the Township Committee and the acceptance by the New Jersey Forestry Department, the Township's liability will be greatly reduced or eliminated by the State. In addition, once this plan is accepted we are eligible for grant monies to implement many of our plans.