



Verona Shade Tree Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 8, 2026

at 5 p.m. in person and via Internet Conferencing

		Action Required
1.	Call to order at 5:07 pm a) Open Public Meetings Act Statement: Read b) Roll Call: Carol Thomas (chair): present Bob Prout (member) present _____ Ira Jacobs (member): present Val Ryan (member): present Catherine Tamasik (member) : present Diane Conboy (alternate): present Kathy Rutherford (alternate): present Councilwoman Christine McGrath (Council Representative): present Quorum Established: Yes	
2.	Public Comment Period: Also present was Steve Cherep, a member of the public and a landscaper who is interested in becoming a member of the STC.	
3.	Correspondence: Emails between Ms. Thomas and the Township Manager regarding Everett Field	
4	Approval of Minutes of Meeting of March 9, 2026 Motion to Approve: Ryan ; Second: Jacobs All in Favor = Unanimous Approval of Minutes of Meeting of May 11, 2026. Motion to Approve: Prout; Second: Ryan All in Favor = Unanimous	approved minutes will be sent to Township Clerk
5	<u>Budget</u>: No discussion.	

	New and Unfinished Business. a. <u>Strans Presentation</u> re Streetscape Project. Ms. Thomas asked the members to watch the video of the Strans presentation which was made to the Council on May 18. The STC was not aware that Strans was on the agenda that evening. Discussion items: what existing trees will be replaced; the STC recommends removal of the Callery Pears; the drawings call for “native” plants but none of the listed plantings appear to be natives, and the planting locations aren’t designated; the plan shows oaks and sugar maples on Bloomfield Avenue. The STC has been adamant that the Township cease planting maples of any kind, because our tree inventory is already nearly 40% maples; the proposed multi-tree groupings proposed for Bloomfield Avenue are not acceptable; tree grates are potentially hazardous; will columnar trees be used. Councilwoman McGrath noted that the presentation is conceptual only; details will follow. Ms. Thomas noted that this is a \$3 million project. Discussion moved on to the holiday tree, which Strans has indicated will be close to the existing tree. Ms. Thomas asked Mr. Cherep his opinion about this, and he advised that a new planting must be at least 10’ from the current site to avoid roots. A new holiday tree is not included in the Strans budget. Mr. Prout expressed concern that the STC has given its recommendations about the holiday tree and Civic Center generally, and Strans has ignored these. The Council does not want the holiday tree in the proposed new park area next to Civic Center. b. <u>CFMP</u>. Being resubmitted with additional information requested by NJDEP. c. <u>Everett Field</u>. The pines at the southeast corner are badly placed and should be moved. Mulch is 2.5 feet deep in places. This will kill trees. The slopes should have been terraced; mulch is not the answer. Green Valley was hired to train landscaper who will maintain the diamond. New field manager is licensed to use chemicals DPW cannot use. Ms. Thomas and Mr. Prout have complained to Township Manager about Everett. <i>TM says punch list is still open and concerns will be taken care of.</i> Mr. Prout noted that the parking lot is porous; how will freezing temps affect it? d. <u>Street Tree Inventory</u>. Capstone students are updating. e. <u>Health/Warranty check</u> of trees planted less than 5 years ago. Ms. Thomas reported nine dead trees on Balston/Whitney/Windemere. Ask for replacements under the contractor’s 2-year warranty bond. We need to check new plantings on Hillside, Morningside, So. Prospect. Derwent: Ms. Tamasik reported that nearly every tree needs pruning. Lynwood: Ms. Tamasik reported that 7 – 8 trees need pruning. STC will not do pruning. Discussion about tree bags vs. donuts. <i>We need continuing education for people who receive new street trees: water until August; prune water spouts in Fall.</i> f. <u>Linden Avenue</u>. 47 trees were removed. 63 requests for new trees submitted; probably can accommodate about 40 of these. Project budget included 12 new plantings. Other trees will be paid out of ST’s capital. g. Ms. Thomas noted that <u>Hillside and Morningside</u> are next. We need to be involved from the beginning and stress using alternate sidewalks. Councilwoman McGrath suggested the STC make a presentation to the Council when the CFMP is final. h. <u>Planting plan</u>. No \$ will be left after capital is expended on Linden replacement trees. <i>Should we map out suggested planting areas/ streets anyway?</i> i. <u>Schools project</u>. STC has been cut out. School’s president changed the planting list. The trees they chose will cost substantially more than our recommendations. j. Other: Ms. Thomas noted that 2 trees on Summit Rd. and a few on Dodd Terrace will be removed. <table border="1" data-bbox="172 1818 1417 1913"> <tr> <td data-bbox="172 1818 289 1913"></td> <td data-bbox="289 1818 1385 1913"> Motion to Adjourn: Prout Second: Jacobs Adjournment: 6:40 pm Next Meeting: July 13, 2026 </td> <td data-bbox="1385 1818 1417 1913"></td> </tr> </table>		Motion to Adjourn: Prout Second: Jacobs Adjournment: 6:40 pm Next Meeting: July 13, 2026		Punch list items need follow up Get commitments for replacement trees and pruning What can we do now to ensure trees are saved
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