

Guidelines for a Community Forestry Plan
Municipal Information Form

Municipality: Dunellen, NJ
County: Middlesex
Address: 355 North Ave
Dunellen, NJ 08812

Contact Name and title: Ken Baudendistel
DSTC Chairman and Councilman
Phone: 732-968-1422
Fax: Call first

Organization: Dunellen Shade Tree Commission

Mayor's Signature: _____
Date of signature: _____
Time Period Covered by Management Plan: 2007-2011

Please check off the Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) practices identified in your management plan.

- CSIP #1 Plan Preparation CSIP#2 Training
- CSIP #3 Public education and Awareness CSIP #4 Arbor day Activities
- CSIP #5 Assessment/Inventory CSIP #6 Tree Hazard Identification Plan
- CSIP #7 Tree Planting CSIP #8 Tree Maintenance
- CSIP #9 Tree Recycling CSIP # 10 Ordinance Establishment
- CSIP # 11 Tree-Care Disaster plan CSIP #12 Insect and Disease Mgt.
- CSIP #13 Other

Official use only Certification

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

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Dunellen Community Forestry Plan
December 2007

Written by:
Ken Baudendistel
Dean Marzocca

December 8, 2006

2. Introduction:

This Community Forestry Plan is being prepared to outline the goals and objectives to be carried out by Dunellen Shade Tree Commission. This plan will cover activities over the next five years. By following this plan, Dunellen is demonstrating that it is devoting reasonable levels of resources to continue to revitalize an aging street tree population and thereby reducing potential risk to public safety and enhancing the livability for it's citizens.

A. Mission Statement:

To promote a sustainable and productive community forest and shade tree resource on public property and to plant new trees where others have been removed because of storms, drought or old age. Dunellen will continue its efforts to regain the tree-lined streets the Borough has enjoyed in past years.

B. Goals and objectives:

1. Shade Tree Commission

- The Dunellen Shade Tree Commission will continue its efforts to plant more trees then removed each year.
- Will hold annual Arbor Day events with participation from the residents, schools and Scouts
- Will continue to ensure a proper budget is in place to support the efforts for planting and maintaining our trees
- Will continue to work jointly with Borough officials and employees to achieve its goals

2. Tree City USA

- DSTC will maintain its Tree City USA designation by meeting all requirements set forth.

3. Increase current tree populations

- Through this Community Forestry Plan, the borough will plant trees and bring shaded streets back to the community allowing residents a more enjoyable and environmentally sound community. A comprehensive and diverse tree population will improve the quality of life for our residents.
- A tree inventory of public property has been completed and will be used to identify new locations for tree planting. The tree selection will be based on specific conditions of the intended site.
- The population of trees will be given as much diversity as possible so as to reduce monocultures, which can promote disease and insect infestations.

4. Maintain and manage current tree inventories

- Currently, there is a need to repair sidewalks, which are in conflict with existing trees. Re-design efforts to reduce the need for future repairs will be coordinated with Dept of Public Works.

- DPW will continue to attend training seminars to educate them with current updated methods for maintenance. A maintenance program will then be instituted to closely monitor developing problems.
- A person designated by the Borough will complete hazard assessments each year.
- An assessment of the current tree inventory will also include recommendations to help protect some of the mature trees in public parks and school property.

5. Public involvement and awareness

- The scope of this project will include the Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts and the Dunellen Public schools to assist in the planting and maintenance of these trees.
- Dissemination of announcements and educational programs will be through the local Dunellen newspaper and municipal literature distributed to residents on a regular basis.
- Public speaking events conducted at town meetings will focus on tree education and the value of trees. Tree appreciation will also be stressed.
- Continuation of an annual Arbor Day celebration to increase public awareness.

6. Education and certifications

- The Dunellen Shade Tree Commission will continue to send a representative from the commission and a town employee to the mandated Community Forestry training program. We will continue to maintain the CEU's required by the State Forestry Program
- DPW supervisor(s) will attend training sessions to keep current on recommended tree maintenance procedures.
- A Certified Tree Expert (CTE) will be retained by the Commission to be used as needed.
- The Commission members will continue to attend seminars to enhance their knowledge on the planting, maintaining, and caring of trees. This will enable them to control and oversee the tree work performed in the Borough by outside contractors and to more closely supervise the line and utility work being performed.

These goals and objectives will be implemented, enforced and carried out by The Dunellen Shade Tree Commission.

C. Liability Statement:

Although street trees are an asset to the community, it is inevitable that they mature and require care, maintenance and eventually replacement. Care and maintenance, in addition to planting, "the right tree in the right place," can help insure that community trees not only contribute to the environment and economic vitality of the area, but also reduce the potential hazards to public safety. Our community must work within a reasonable budget that may not be able to meet each and every need of the community forest immediately. Therefore it is the intent of this plan to focus available resources to the greatest need and step-by-step work towards a healthy forest with commensurate reduced risk to public safety.

The Shade Tree Commission feels, by taking logical steps outlined in this plan, we will garner public support for plan implementation and demonstrate the long-term benefits to

the environment and public safety. The Shade Tree Commission will continue to be more pro-active in the management and care of our trees. Through inventory and hazard assessment, we will position the Dunellen Shade Tree Commission to take corrective action prior to structural tree failure and other hazardous tree related conditions. It is acknowledged that not all hazardous conditions will be predicted. But, it's much like trying to predict which tooth might break next. Good maintenance and care will reduce the probability but unexpected events will still occur.

Following the plan will demonstrate that Dunellen is devoting reasonable levels of resources in a planned manner to reduce the number of tree related accidents and thereby reduce it's exposure to liabilities and increase public safety.

3. Community Overview

Achievements Against the Plan

Dunellen has experienced many achievements over the past five years directly related to our Forestry Plan.

1. Shade Tree Commission: The creation of the Dunellen Shade Tree commission was directly related to the Forestry Plan as we would not have received the funds to do so if we were not asked to organize under the forestry plan.

2. Ordinance: We introduced ordinances to support the Commission's work, which was passed by the governing body.

3. Training: Six commission members and 2 Department of Public works have attended training on planting and maintaining trees with through the annual Forestry program.

4. Planting: We have successfully planted over 400 trees and shrubs around our 3 schools, along 21 of our streets, and in all 5 parks.

5. Funding: By having an approved forestry plan we were able to take advantage of over \$50,000 in grants, which were used to create a maintenance plan, plant trees, enhance the public's awareness, and hold Arbor Day celebrations

6. Inventory: The Commission has completed the tree inventory of the entire Borough and uses this inventory as a tool for tree maintenance and removal.

7. Collaboration: The tree planting projects along with our annual Arbor Day celebrations has brought the borough closer together both from a residential standpoint as well as the departments within the Borough. The collaboration amongst the groups has improved tremendously to a point where there is less stress and anxiety and more enjoyment when projects are undertaken.

8. Goals: We have successfully worked with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Dunellen Board of Education, and each of the 3 schools in our celebrations and projects, which greatly increased the public awareness and residents desire to participate in the programs.

9. Recognition: The Dunellen Shade Tree Commission rewards students and scouts for participating by planting trees with a plaque in their honor and having media coverage of the events.

Concerns:

One of our biggest concerns we have today is keeping up with the new tree plantings versus the removal of dead or diseased trees. It seems that many of the trees originally planted in the Borough were around the same time so obviously they are dying in close proximity of each other. Because there are limited funds offered by the State and County Governments we are barely keeping ahead of the pace.

In addition but not as concerning is finding the time to accomplish many of the goals set forth and accurately and successfully run a Shade Tree commission. To date we have been very successful but it is always a concern, as we know there is more that should be done if time allowed.

Benefits:

Overall the Borough has had a wonderful experience in its last five years working with a forestry plan. Having a plan has made us more aware of the tree conditions, the problems we are faced with, as well as areas of the borough with the greatest needs. In addition having a plan forces us to stay focused on accomplishing specific goals that we may otherwise miss or not think of. We find it very motivational to have a plan and look forward to working the next five-year plan.

Tree Resource: Dunellen is a small community located in central New Jersey, Middlesex County. The total land area of the Borough is approximately 2.7 square kilometers with zero area identified as water. The population has not changed much over the past 5 years with a density of approximately 2,427.7 persons per square kilometer. The tree canopy continues to cover approximately 38% of the land area, which is slightly above the County canopy cover of 36.9%. We continue to find this unacceptable and is striving to surpass the County average by a wide margin.

The tree age and inventory is also as diverse as the homes. Tall majestic oaks dominate two sections of town. London Plane dominates another section and Norway maple is very visible on many of the Borough streets. Ironically, the oldest section of town with the majestic older homes continues to be the least tree populated but we have focused the plantings on this section of town over the past 5 years. Dunellen continues to struggle with the amount of trees dying due to old age and getting them replaced at a greater rate than those dying. The tree inventory is even more diverse than five years ago as we continue to plant a wide variety of species in order to prevent disease or insects from devouring the majority of borough trees.

Master Plan:

Because Dunellen is a fully developed borough we have very little open space. Our five parks have seen an increase of 260 trees and shrubs from the plantings accomplished in recent years.

This Community Forestry Management Plan is consistent with the Community/ County Master Plan. Since Dunellen is 100% developed with no new land to develop, the Commission will only address tree issues concerning hazards and/or improvements to the current inventory. The only open space in the Borough is designated parks and Municipal property.

The DSTC continually works with the Dunellen Planning and Zoning Board where an existing ordinance requires developers to replace trees one for one, as they are removed for expansions or new construction. The DSTC has benefited greatly because of this and was able to increase the number of trees planted throughout the borough.

The Dunellen Shade Tree Commission is fully supported by the Mayor and Council and receives continued cooperation from other Borough employees such as the Department of Public works who assist with the plantings and the Police who ensure the area is safe when work is being performed. In addition the Borough consistently provides adequate funds each year as part of the budget to maintain a workable commission.

The duties of the Shade Tree Commissioners shall be to render service to the Mayor and the director of the Department of Public Works concerning the regulation, planting, care, and control of shade and ornamental trees and shrubbery upon and in the streets, highways, and public places; the operation, maintenance, planning and the development of parks and parklands, within the jurisdiction of the borough.

4. Community Forestry Administration

Currently Dunellen's Department of Public Works is responsible for the administration and care for the community tree inventory. Outside contractors are used for the actual work performed on the trees if the work is beyond the scope of the DPW.

The Shade Tree Commission will administer this plan. The primary goals of the Shade Tree Commission will be:

- Greater control over the current tree inventory.
- A permit system, which will allow the opportunity to educate the public before a tree, is removed.
- It will also allow for the interaction with the public to advise them correctly if they wish to plant a tree on their private property.
- Permit fees to supplement Borough coffers to purchase replacement trees.

- Fines to help offset inherited costs associated with citizens damaging trees or unlawfully removing them.
- A police reporting system which will allow the Borough to be compensated by an at-fault driver's insurance company in the event that a motor vehicle accident damages public property.

The Borough is changing the method used to direct the flow of information concerning the municipal tree resources. The most significant change involves the Shade Tree Commission being inserted in the chain of command model.

Residents may call the Shade Tree members directly or they can call the Municipal building. All calls to the municipal building will be directed to the DPW if immediate action is needed, i.e. tree down in a roadway, or to the Chairman of the Shade Tree Commission. The Commission then has the option of contacting the resident and providing assistance through education or remedial action such as removal or pruning. Most of the complaints currently handled by DPW have to do with misinformation on the resident's part. They usually misdiagnose a problem simply because they do not understand tree physiology or the DPW procedures. Educating the public is a main concern with the Shade Tree Commission. Each and every contact with the public will help them understand how to save the trees and promote the goals and objectives of this Forestry Management Plan.

Once the Shade Tree Commission has knowledge of a tree situation needing attention it will funnel the resources to the appropriate agency. DPW or an outside contract will perform the work on a timely basis using established horticultural practices. The Shade Tree Commission will then receive a report from the working party and then inspect the work to ensure it was completed in a satisfactory manner.

Utility pruning will be conducted in a similar manner. The utility company will contact Town Hall and secure a permit to complete the needed work. Areas of work and the time period to conduct the work will be stated on the permit. DPW will supervise the work on a periodic basis and then when the work is completed will file a report and possibly attach photographs of the work. This report will then be forwarded to the Shade Tree Commission for their review. A file will be kept on this type of work to refer back to when requests or complaints come in from the public.

The Planning Board and the Zoning Board will also be included in this plan. They will have the Shade Tree Commission review any and all plans submitted to the respective Boards when any activity shall affect trees. The Shade Tree Commission will review the site and make recommendations back to the Board. The Shade Tree Commission shall employ the services of a CTE when expert advice is required.

Shade Tree Commission	Public Works or Contractor	DPW or Contractor
Public Works		
Identify problem areas	Determine the work to be done	Performs work

Public	Commission or DPW	DPW or Contractor
Contacts Borough	Determines action to be taken Education or advisement	Performs the work

5. Community Map

A community map is included with this plan.

6. Training Plan

Members of the Shade Tree Commission will continue to attend training seminars focusing on Urban Forestry. Members of the Shade Tree Commission will attend the Urban Forestry class given by the Rutgers Office of Continuing Education.

The Shade Tree Commission Chair, Ken Baudendistel along with several other Commission members and DPW have attended the CORE training class. All members will continue to accumulate the required 8 CEU's on an annual basis. Annually, a different member of the Commission will attend the CORE training and or additional training until all members have completed the class and are CORE trained. Commission members will also request an elected official attend the training sessions so they become more familiar with the programs and to gain knowledge pertaining to trees. This will allow them to make better, informed, decisions concerning their community tree resource. Funding for this training is allocated in the Municipal Budget listed under the DPW line.

Some of the specific training that is going to be required includes the following:

- Training Shade Tree Commission members and/or volunteers in tree identification.
- Proper pruning techniques
- Hazard tree assessment
- Trees and utilities

The training is not intended for the member or volunteers to do the actual work but it will allow the individual to actively participate in this Management Plan. They will then be able to respond to a telephone call and take the appropriate action. Communicating with the public in a knowledgeable manner not only relates a professional appearance but also assures the person that the correct action will be taken.

There are several classes available to the Commission for such training. The Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education offers many classes throughout the calendar year. Classroom attendance is standard but field training is also available. The International Society of Arboriculture offers training in tree care and tree identification. They have continuing education credits available for members.

Additional training will result from hands-on work with a hired CTE. The Commission is aware that the CTE can and will provide training to the Commission members through lectures, telephone conversations, meetings and actual fieldwork. All members have expressed a willingness to tackle the educational process.

7. Public Education / Awareness / Outreach

Over the past five years the Shade tree Commission has actively advertised the existence and work of the commission by holding annual Arbor Day events. Last years event consisted of planting over 200 trees and shrubs in Columbia Park and was attended by over 150 volunteers from the Community.

The shade Tree Commission holds annual poetry, poster or essay contests with the schools as part of the Arbor Day celebrations and awards winners such things as memberships to the Arbor Day Foundation, books on trees, and trees planted with plaques for the winners.

Dunellen Shade Tree Commission has participated with both the Middlesex County Urban Forestry Advisory Committee and The New Jersey Shade Tree Federation where the Borough gave a presentation on their success and experience.

The Commission wishes to expand on these programs. Community announcements are and will continue to be posted on the Community Bulletin Board located on Washington Ave. The messages will be used as reminders of upcoming events and to provide tips and suggestions.

PCTV, the local cable network will also carry the messages but in more detail. Planting tips, tree and shrub care, watering and pruning tips will also be included. The purpose is to make the residents more aware of the correct timing of such events.

The Shade Tree Commission has been added to the Borough website where information on all events and activities are listed. In addition, the Commission remains determined to establish a Tree of the Month web page. This page will identify a tree found locally in the community. General statistics and information will be provided along with a picture. Residents will be encourage to find the location of the tree in the community and their names will displayed on the web page.

A schedule of public speaking events will be established. Members of the Town Council along with the planning Board will be invited to attend. The programs will include educational, informative and entertaining agendas.

8. Commission Budget

Currently, the Dunellen Shade Tree Commission does have a municipal budget line. The budget has been established in the DPW.

The labor to implement this program will come from volunteers and the DPW. Equipment and other municipal resources will be coordinated through the DPW. Other local sources will also be considered, such as landscapers and businesses. These two groups will be a source for supplies, technical advise, and possibly specialized equipment.

To justify line item requests for the budget, the Shade Tree Commission will track all expenditures including contractor payments and municipal in-kind work. Volunteer time will be calculated at \$18.05 per man-hour. The Commission will collect and compile all hour worked for any Shade Tree project. This record will be used to justify any future budget request.

The current budget includes line items for new planting, Arbor Day celebrations and maintenance of trees. The expenditures are tracked by the Commission and adjusted annually as needed.

2006 expenditures are as follows: (copy of financials attached)

Tree maintenance:.....	\$36,185
Arbor Day Clebration.....	\$ 785
Educational expenses.....	\$ 205
Membership expenses.....	\$ 100
Grant expenses.....	<u>\$ 580</u>
Total	\$37,855

9. Statement of Plan Implementation

Year 1, 2007

On-going: Continue the Tree City USA status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: The Commission will continue celebrating Arbor Day with the community holding contests and planting trees.

On-going: The commission will actively obtaining training for its members and DPW for both CORE and other courses.

On-going: The Commission will continually retain the services of a CTE (currently Dean Marzocca)

On-going: The tree inventory will be continuously updated and assessed. The data base information will be presented to the Borough Council annually to keep them abreast of current tree status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: Continue to apply for grant money to plant more trees and to increase the health of tree resources located in the Borough.

New: Dunellen has been awarded the CSIP Cool Cities Grant. This grant will be used to plant new species of trees in locations designated to lower the cost of utilities for the residence as well as Borough.

New: The Commission will contact and verbalize to the utility company how they want the street trees pruned. Up to this time there has been no communication between the Borough and the pruning companies. The appearance of some street trees is very undesirable and unsightly

New: Complete a tree identification program for Columbia Park. The goal of the project is to have a map of the park placed in a central area that identifies each tree by species and approximate age.

Year 2, 2008

On-going: Continue the Tree City USA status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: The Commission will continue celebrating Arbor Day with the community holding contests and planting trees.

On-going: The commission will actively obtaining training for its members and DPW for both CORE and other courses.

On-going: The Commission will continually retain the services of a CTE (currently Dean Marzocca)

On-going: The tree inventory will be continuously updated and assessed. The data base information will be presented to the Borough Council annually to keep them abreast of current tree status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: Continue to apply for grant money to plant more trees and to increase the health of tree resources located in the Borough.

New: Have an Arborist speak before the community on the many benefits to having trees, how to maintain them and proper planting

New: Develop a process flow for an effective maintenance program by utilizing the current tree inventory, which indicates trees needing attention.

New: Celebrate Arbor Day with a major project involving the community by planting trees and shrubs in Moorecraft Park

Year 3, 2009

On-going: Continue the Tree City USA status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: The Commission will continue celebrating Arbor Day with the community holding contests and planting trees.

On-going: The commission will actively obtaining training for its members and DPW for both CORE and other courses.

On-going: The Commission will continually retain the services of a CTE (currently Dean Marzocca)

On-going: The tree inventory will be continuously updated and assessed. The data base information will be presented to the Borough Council annually to keep them abreast of current tree status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: Continue to apply for grant money to plant more trees and to increase the health of tree resources located in the Borough.

New: Celebrate Arbor Day with a major project involving the community by planting trees and shrubs in McCoy Park.

New: Run a “Identify This Tree Contest” by taking a picture of a tree(s) in town and having the school children find them and awarding the winners during the Arbor Day celebration

Year 4, 2010

On-going: Continue the Tree City USA status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: The Commission will continue celebrating Arbor Day with the community holding contests and planting trees.

On-going: The commission will actively obtaining training for its members and DPW for both CORE and other courses.

On-going: The Commission will continually retain the services of a CTE (currently Dean Marzocca)

On-going: The tree inventory will be continuously updated and assessed. The data base information will be presented to the Borough Council annually to keep them abreast of current tree status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: Continue to apply for grant money to plant more trees and to increase the health of tree resources located in the Borough.

New: Share ideas with the neighboring towns by inviting them to our meetings

New: Arbor Day celebrations will continue as in the past, but adding events each year will enhance the celebration. New ideas will be gained each year the celebration happens.

New: Create and utilize a fertilization program for newly planted trees.

Year 5, 2011

On-going: Continue the Tree City USA status.

On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: The Commission will continue celebrating Arbor Day with the community holding contests and planting trees.

On-going: The commission will actively obtaining training for its members and DPW for both CORE and other courses.

On-going: The Commission will continually retain the services of a CTE (currently Dean Marzocca)

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On-going: Current events concerning the Commissions work will be a regular feature in the local newspaper. The local announcements posted on the community bulletin board will be growing in popularity, which will attract more public support, input and involvement.

On-going: Continue to apply for grant money to plant more trees and to increase the health of tree resources located in the Borough.

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➤ *New:* Public outreach programs will be reassessed and refinements will be made when necessary. Feed back from the public can be gauged by their involvement and support.

➤ *New:* Review and evaluate new planting proposals to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to protect and enhance tree resources.

- *New:* Attend training classes and to encourage members to attend Continuing Education Classes at Rutgers University.
- *New:* The Shade Tree Commission will continue to accumulate educational and reference material for the public library. This material will be readily accessible to the public when they have a question or they can be directed there to decide on a needed tree resource.
- *New:* Continue to identify insects and diseases that may be affecting trees the Commission has planted.
- *New:* Continue to apply for grant money to plant more trees and to increase the health of tree resources located in the Borough.