Minutes
Wilmington Tree Commission
Tree Ordinance Review Committee Meeting

Join the virtually via Teams
Meeting ID: 274 024 861 164 76
Passcode: Nu6Lk27e

11:00 AM November 4, 2026
929 Skyline Center, Room 156.7

Members in attendance:
Tom Boland, Chair – Absent Excused
Lloyd Singleton – present
Susie Rivadeneyra – present
Robin Morgan – present
Rhonda Waterhouse – present

Staff in attendance:
Linda Painter, Planning and Development
Brian Chambers, Planning and Development
Todd Rademacher, Planning and Development
Halley Hopkins, Planning and Development
Sally Thigpen, Asset & Property Management
Dina Ricardo, Asset & Property Management

Public attendance:
Isabelle Shepherd
Laura McCabe

1. Chair Lloyd Singleton called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. and confirmed that a quorum was present.
2. Staff, committee members, and members of the public introduced themselves.
3. The committee reviewed October 21, 2026, meeting minutes for approval (vote).
    a. With no discussion, Rhonda Waterhouse moved to approve the minutes. Robin Morgan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
4. The Chair invited public comments.
    a. Laura McCabe of the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees expressed appreciation for the committee's work and emphasized tree mitigation and property-owner

restrictions involving specimen trees as priorities for the proposed ordinance updates.

b. Isabelle Shepherd of the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees reiterated the organization's support for the subdivision discussion and emphasized the one-acre exemption's impact on tree preservation.

5. To begin deliberating and prioritizing amendments ideas, each member shared their top priorities. All members noted revisions to the tree planting list with more detailed categories, tree save areas, and revisions to the protected trees table as top priorities. Highlights of the discussion that followed include:
    - Encouraging tree save areas that preserve the natural habitat, understory, and ecological function of the area,
    - Planting list categories that prioritize native trees such as "Recommended," "Not Recommended," "Incentivized", and "Prohibited,"
    - Finding the right incentives for preservation and native plantings,
    - The need to update stormwater standards in tandem with the tree ordinance,
    - Standards for tree care after planting such as irrigation,
    - Consideration of the understory and brush within a larger tree's CRZ,
    - Balancing flexibility and regulatory requirements, and
    - Keeping nurseries and growers in the loop to ensure recommended species are available."

6. Recommendations
    a. The committee recommended prioritizing two key focus areas and further refining the recommendations at the next committee meeting before presenting them to the full Commission on November 18.
        i. Planting the Right Tree in the Right Place & Protecting Mature Trees: Review Land Development Code requirements, including planting sizes, tree diversity, definitions, and regulated tree species and size criteria. Review of applicable Technical Standards.
        ii. Tree Save Areas: Establish tree saving areas to preserve groups of trees, maintain their ecological functions, protect existing habitats, and simplify and improve tree preservation in new developments.

Adjourn – Lloyd Singleton moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:59 a.m. Rhonda Waterhouse seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 18 at 9:30 a.m. at the Skyline Center, 929 N. Front St., 1st Floor Azalea Room.