



Mountain Lakes Shade Tree Commission

2019 Tree Replacement Ordinance

“...Out of the past comes this wish for you.... That the scanty forest derelicts of our day shall have given place to stately shade trees, umbrageous and beautiful...”

- *The Mountain Lakes Association, August 3 1912, found in the cornerstone of the Mountain Lakes train station*



Agenda

- Overview
- Our Canopy
- Tree Ordinance Amendment
- Summary
- Looking Ahead



Overview

“...Mountain Lakes is a special community. You become aware of it as you pass through the stone pillars at either end of town. You know it as you drive along its narrow curving roads and notice the large stucco Hapgoods — their pleasant family resemblance and yet their individuality.

You know it on a hot summer day as you leave Route 46 for Intervale Road — the temperature drops, the glare disappears, your heart gets a little lift — and you know you are home.

This character of the community, the sense of place, is intangible. Something we all want to preserve, yet preservation of character cannot be done directly. It can only be done **indirectly by maintaining the tangible elements that represent and reinforce this sense of place...**”

- From the Mountain Lakes Borough Website | Our History

Our Canopy | A Living Asset

The mature trees of Mountain Lakes provide the town with special character, lending shade in the summer and beauty throughout the year.



Our Canopy | Benefits

- Increases property value
- Reduces soil erosion into lakes and streams
- Conserves water by reducing soil temperatures through evaporation
- Decreases storm water runoff by taking up precipitation
- Improves local, regional, global air quality
- Reduces utility demand, e.g. A/C peak usage in summer
- Abates noise from surrounding roadways
- Enhances quality of life through park-like nature of our community

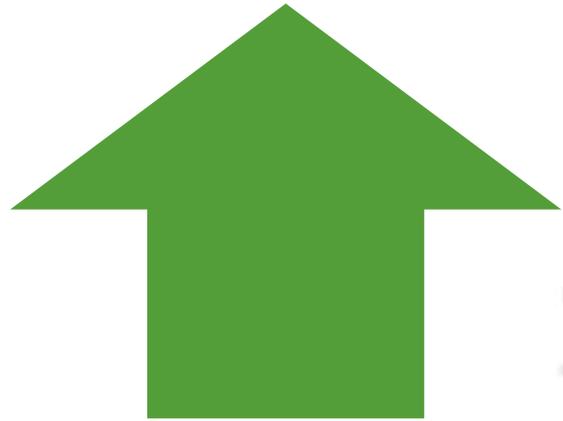
Our Canopy | Under Stress

- In the past 3 years, Mountain Lakes has lost > 300 trees
- Threats to our Canopy
 - Age
 - Diseases and pests
 - Development
 - Severe Storms

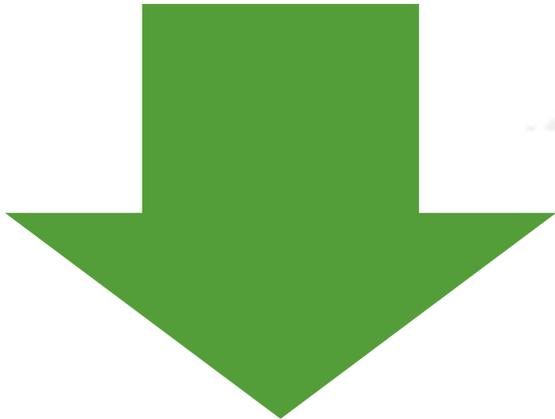


Our Canopy | Under Stress

- More trees are coming down than are being replaced



45 Planted



330 Trees Lost

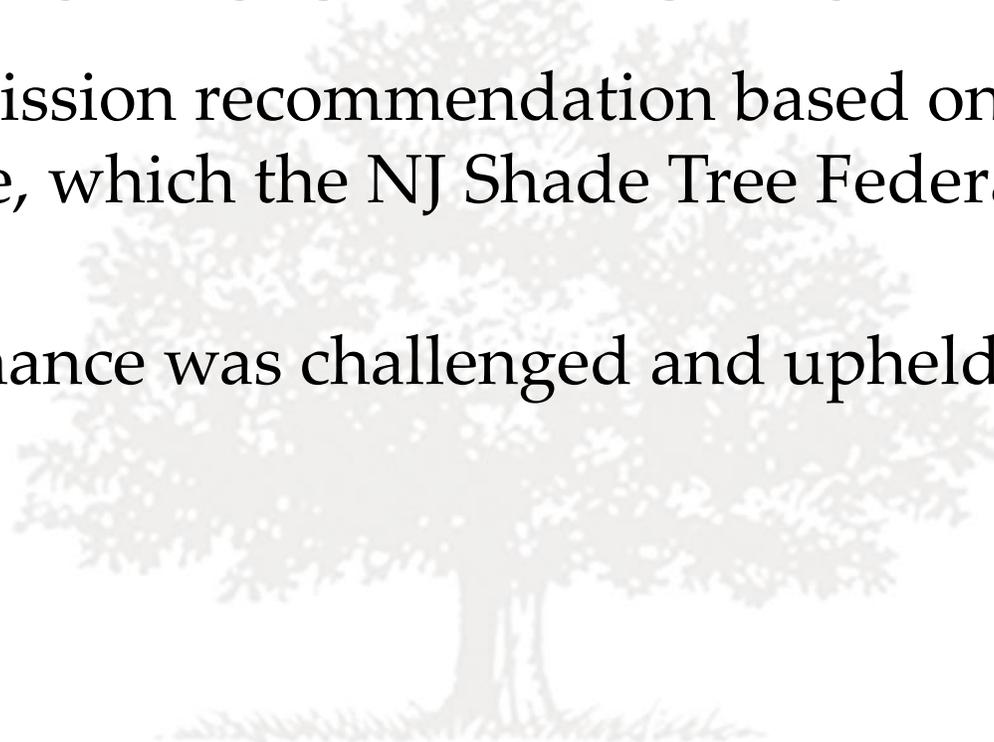
Our Canopy | Pruning

- Enables the root structure to support the large crown; roots can be confined by buildings, driveways and other pavement, and utilities
- Minimizes utility disruption
- Generally safe to prune approximately 15% of a healthy crown
- Helps save older trees; replacement trees will take decades to grow



Tree Ordinance Amendment

- Shade Tree Commission recommendation based on Township of Jackson Ordinance, which the NJ Shade Tree Federation offers as a model
- The Jackson Ordinance was challenged and upheld by the NJ Supreme Court



Tree Ordinance Amendment

Preservation

- Permit required for any tree removal on residential property
- Allowance for removal of diseased and/or dangerous trees with no replacement requirement
- Currently, removal allowed with no requirement for replacement

Replacement

- Required for removal of any healthy tree beyond 6" diameter
- Creation of Tree Replacement Trust
- Homeowners encouraged to replace; otherwise they pay into the Tree Replacement Trust

Summary

- Our tree canopy is valuable
- Our canopy is under stress
- Our canopy is losing trees (net loss of ~300 trees over last 3 years)
- We can act to preserve and protect the canopy
- Our community culture toward our canopy should be “preserve at every opportunity, and when that is not possible replace”, and we believe the Council and Shade Tree Commission should take a leadership role with this effort

Looking Ahead

- What will Mountain Lakes look like in 25, 50, 100 Years?
- Thoughtful action now will preserve, protect, and promote the valuable and beloved tree canopy that makes Mountain Lakes special

