

“BEING YOUR OWN TREE ACTIVIST”

History

2014

Con Com does set-back planting, containerized trees through ATB Grant

Four species, all big; 20 trees, 50 applicants

Town requirements: front yard, visible from road, only one tree per applicant. Applicants had to attend planting workshop, had to be present when tree was delivered

Planting problems: girdling roots confused recipients; half the trees were planted too deep,

3 had to replanted twice

All parties involved agree that project was a success

Planting cost reduced to \$110/tree

Town manager decided to not fund further tree plantings in SK

Lessons

Plantings should have been supervised - would have saved time

Town bureaucracy an impediment

2015

D. Flanders decides to fund bare-root tree planting, “Community Tree Planting Project”

\$10 donation requested, but not required.

Project goals:

Increase canopy cover of community forest in SK

Emphasis on urban core and clear-cut subdivisions

Self-sustaining tree planting

Reduce planting cost to near zero

Publicity and word-of-mouth should balance supply and demand

Advertising: press release / letter to the editor (both local papers), and colorful flyers around town

One species, Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), 25 trees, 3-4’ tall, no stakes required, \$105 including shipping. Supplier: Cold Stream Farm < coldstreamfarm.net > (Michigan)
no minimum order size

Eliminated Town requirements: three recipients accepted 2 trees, two planted tree in back or side yard, not visible from street

No workshop required - recipients had to be home and had to have dug the planting hole (3’ circumference, 4” deep, bowl-shaped), had to commit to watering every other day

Flanders delivered tree, planted it with recipient, demonstrating shape of hole, correct planting depth, and correct mulching. Average planting time: 15 minutes

Planting Plusses

People actually like/love their trees. Small size was not a deterrent

People were grateful for learning how to correctly plant a tree

Planting cost reduced to less than zero

Planting problems

Inadequate watering (2)

Vandalism (1)
Deer damage (3)
Project ended with \$182.00 surplus

Lessons

Anyone who has learned how to correctly plant, mulch, and water trees can replicate this project in their town ([R.I. Tree Council Tree Steward program](#) < RITree@RITree.org >)
Planting trees out of the town ROW, and into the homeowner's yard is key

2016 Community Tree Planting Project

- __ Turned 2015 surplus into taller, more expensive trees. Will decide by April 1st whether to place ads in papers, anticipating 2016 surplus
- __ One species, Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*), 35 trees 4-5' tall, \$188
- Have identified 10 good planting sites in urban core; wrote homeowners an introductory letter; other potential sites would be subdivisions where requisite trees were planted too deep and did not receive necessary water. One person from one such subdivision has requested multiple trees.
- New press release (both local newspapers) and posters
- End of first week: 6 applicants

Additional resources:

- [International Society of Arboriculture \(ISA\) < isa-arbor.com. >](#)_
- __ On line: "Creating the Urban Forest - *The Bare Root Method*"
[Urban Horticulture Institute, Dept. of Horticulture, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY](#)