

Village of Gates Mills Tree Canopy Meeting

Jan 13th 2026

Attendees: Smith/Tuner/Weist/Bourne

Visitors: Marie and Jane from Garden Club

Quick recap

The Tree Canopy Committee reviewed their tree city status application and discussed plans for an Arbor Day celebration, including a proposal to plant 200 trees for Gates Mills' 200th anniversary. The group presented a 10-year plan for remediation of village and conservancy properties, including costs and funding sources, and reviewed a visual map of invasive species control efforts across various properties. They approved a budget for conservation projects in year two and discussed various initiatives including tree planting, invasive species management, and potential controlled burning techniques.

Next steps

- [Sandra: Contact the 5th grade teacher to determine available dates for Arbor Day activities in the first two weeks of May](#)
- [Mitch: Present the approved Tree Canopy budget to Council at next Tuesday's meeting](#)
- [Peter and Mitch: Develop and submit the Tree of Heaven/Spotted Lanternfly grant application by January 25th](#)
- [Mitch: Talk to mayor and have Todd draft language for budget presentation](#)
- [Sandra: Assist with Arbor Day organization](#)
- [Adam Buechler: Create detailed management plans for Arboretum and Feller Field](#)
- [Peter and Nat: Determine if village property can be included in Tree of Heaven/Spotted Lanternfly grant application](#)
- [Mitch: Follow up with Chris to refine mapping details and colors for treatment areas](#)

Summary

Tree City Application and Planting

The Tree Canopy Committee discussed their tree city status application, which was accepted at the local ODNR office and sent to Columbus for review. They plan to host an Arbor Day celebration in the spring, though they noted April weather might be too cold for a large event.

The committee also discussed a proposal from the Improvement Society to plant 200 trees for Gates Mills' 200th anniversary, suggesting strategic planting in specific areas rather than scattered throughout the village.

Tree Memorial for Marston Park

The group discussed plans for planting a tree in Marston Park in memory of a member who passed away. They agreed to plant the tree during Arbor Day activities, potentially involving the elementary school students. The exact date for the Arbor Day event was not finalized, but they considered holding it in early May. The group also mentioned that the mayor was interested in making the event a significant production.

Tree Canopy Remediation 10-Year Plan

The Tree Canopy Committee presented a 10-year plan for remediation of 440 acres, including village and conservancy properties, with estimated costs of \$373,000 over the period. The plan includes initial invasive maintenance at \$37,000 annually, ongoing costs of \$15,000 per year for the village and \$22,000 for the conservancy, and utilizes various funding sources including EQIP for private properties. The committee will focus on approximately 40 acres of land each year, with costs decreasing from \$800 per acre in year one to \$200 in year three, and has already completed work on 60 acres in the first year.

Invasive Species Control Progress Review

The meeting focused on reviewing a visual map of invasive species control efforts across various properties in Gates Mills and the surrounding areas. The discussion highlighted the progress made in Year 1 and the plans for Year 2, which include treating additional parcels and coordinating efforts between the village, Gates Mills Land Conservancy, and Cleveland Metro Parks. It was noted that Metro Parks have committed to treating 33 acres in Year 2 and will use Better Woods and Meadows for invasive control. The team also discussed the need to refine the map for clarity, particularly in distinguishing between village and Metro Parks properties, and acknowledged the limitations of the volunteer effort in managing the scope of the project.

Conservation Budget Approval Meeting

The group approved a \$50,491 budget for conservation projects in year two, which includes funding for land management plans, drone purchase, and grant writing. They discussed presenting the budget to council next Tuesday at 5:30, where it could potentially be voted on. The village's conservation fund currently has \$407,341, with \$206,132 spent on various projects including Tree Canopy Committee and Chagrin River Watershed membership. They also briefly discussed potential stairs installation at the arboretum, which would require further planning and design work.

Invasive Species and Tree Planting

The meeting focused on invasive species management and tree planting initiatives. Sandra presented before-and-after videos of various invasive species treatment projects across village properties, showing significant progress in areas like Fellers Field and the Arboretum. The group discussed a potential controlled burning technique for invasive species removal, with Jane planning to consult the fire marshal about regulations. They also reviewed a proposal for planting 200 trees to celebrate the village's 200th anniversary, with Jim Stafford planning to present this to the Improvement Society on the 22nd. The conversation ended with a discussion about applying for a \$15,000 grant to extend Tree of Heaven elimination efforts to private and village properties, with Peter and Nat planning to collaborate on the application.