



**The Borough of Wilkinsburg  
Nine Mile Run Watershed Association  
Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation**

**2010 Greening Initiatives**

**Introduction**

The Borough of Wilkinsburg, The Nine Mile Run Watershed Association (NMRWA), and The Wilkinsburg community Development Corporation are continuing the partnership that was established last year to work together under the umbrella of the NPP program on greening initiatives. This year's efforts fall into two categories: maintenance of the lots greened last year, and a street tree plan for the Penn Avenue Business District

**Maintenance of Vacant Lots**

In 2009 NMRWA worked with the Borough and the WCDC to identify two Borough-owned vacant lots for improvement. Using the successful Philly Green model, lots at 417 Peebles St. and 301 South Avenue had weeds and litter removed, and then were re-graded, seeded with slow-growing grass, and had trees planted and split-rail fencing erected. NMRWA sub-contracted with Eisler Nurseries for most of this work. We then also subcontracted with Rosedale Block Cluster, Inc. to mow grass on the lots twice a month from late June through October.

The work that went into greening these lots will have been in vain if they are not maintained. Therefore, this year, NMRWA has been asked to include maintenance of these two lots in our Scope of Work (to include mowing of grass and removal of litter.) We are handling this with in-house staff rather than subcontracting. In addition, the Parks Committee of Borough Council expressed concerns with how the trees were planted on the 417 Peebles lot, due to their need for access to the property behind this lot, a need which had not been communicated to us prior to the 2009 work. In light of this, and due to some concerns about the proximity of the large shade trees to the adjacent homes, we plan to move two of the London Plane trees in October 2010.

**Street Tree Plan for Penn Avenue**

Business owners on Penn Avenue have expressed concern about the state of the trees on the street, and the need for improvement in this area was cited often during discussion that were part of the recent comprehensive planning process. The current condition of street trees within the Wilkinsburg Business District is undoubtedly declining. Past plantings have been implemented with little or no attention to species selection, planting pit sizing, and soil compaction within

planting pits. This has resulted in a dead, dying, and an otherwise unsightly tree canopy within the business district. As the body of urban forestry knowledge has expanded within the last decade, trees that are planted to current standards have shown significant survival and vitality. A plan to improve the current conditions of existing trees and to ensure the survival of future plantings is considered a necessary to achieve future goals within the Wilkinsburg Business District.

A street tree plan shall guide the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation in moving forward to develop a healthy tree-lined business district. This plan shall serve as a tool to seek funding sources for further implementation, as it will reflect the WCDC's and NMRWA's commitment to developing and maintaining a system of green infrastructure within the community. The Street Tree Plan for the Wilkinsburg Business District will extend along Penn Avenue, beginning at the intersection of Hay Street and concluding at Swissvale Avenue. The comprehensive work plan shall include: existing tree removal, tree placement, appropriate species selection, pit sizing and/or resizing, along with cost estimates. The plan shall also include renderings of the proposed improvements. Supplemental information shall be provided to business owners regarding tree care and maintenance, along with detailed guidelines for plantings within the Business District, if located outside of the Penn Avenue corridor.

Additionally, NMRWA will implement a portion of this plan in the autumn of 2010, between Wood Street and the new parklet, to serve as a demonstration area. This implementation shall include: the removal of certain trees, increasing the square footage of the existing tree's planting area, the addition of new tree pits, measures to lessen soil compaction, along with the addition of appropriately selected street trees.

**Scope of Work**

1. NMRWA will maintain the lots at 417 Peebles St. and 301 South Avenue throughout the 2010 growing season, keeping grass mowed and removing litter. In fall 2010 2 London Plane trees will be moved from the lot at 417 Peebles as requested by the Parks Committee of Borough Council.

Cost:	\$ 2,200
-------	----------

2. NMRWA will deliver a comprehensive Street Tree Plan for the Penn Avenue Business District by July 30, 2010.

Cost:	\$ 3,674
-------	----------

3. NMRWA will implement a demonstration of the Street Tree Plan for the Penn Avenue Business District between Wood Street and the new parklet, in the autumn of 2010.

Cost:	\$2,200
-------	---------

TOTAL Cost;	\$ 8,074
-------------	----------