

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **MAYOR HORNİK ANNOUNCES MARLBORO ARBORETUM AWARDED ACCREDITATION**

### **Public Invited to Arbor Day Celebration and Arboretum Dedication**

MARLBORO TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY (April 24, 2024) - The Marlboro Arboretum becomes the second Town in Monmouth County to be awarded a Level I accreditation by the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program for achieving defined standards of professional practice deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens. The Arboretum is located adjacent to and partially surrounding the Marlboro Community Garden at 82 Tennent Road on four acres of dedicated Open Space and bordering wetlands. The annual Arbor Day Celebration and Arboretum dedication will be held on April 27 at 10:00 am.

Mayor Hornik stated, “Our Community Garden was opened in 2016 with 56 garden plots. It now boasts 170 plots enjoyed by 91 families and has grown and flourished beyond what we could have imagined. The Shade Tree committee, chaired by Ellen Simonetti, have been steadfast in their commitment to making our Community Garden a place for residents to come together.” He continued, “I look forward to the dedication of the Arboretum and celebration of Arbor Day. I hope residents will join in celebration of this noteworthy achievement and learn more about this incredible resource in our town.”

The dedication and Arbor Day ceremony will include the planting of a D. D. Blanchard magnolia in the Marlboro Arboretum and the reading of a Mayoral Proclamation. Members of the Shade Tree Committee, the community gardeners, and Sewa International volunteers. Members of the public are welcome.

Ellen Simonetti, chair of the Shade Tree Committee, under whose auspices the Arboretum and Community Garden function, noted, “The arboretum is and will continue to be an asset to the people of Monmouth County. It has been my privilege to work alongside Bob Mellert, arboretum coordinator, and the other volunteers who, along with the support of our township administration, have created this beautiful space.”

“Establishing an arboretum is an important indication of our Township’s commitment to our environment, especially given our canopy depletion due to the loss of trees caused by insect

damage, such as emerald ash borer, spotted lantern fly, Asian long-horned beetle, woolly adelgid, and others. Deer predation has also kept saplings from maturing,” Mellert added.

Since the arboretum’s inception, trees of various sizes have been planted in the area surrounding the garden, from whips to nursery size, many donated from the back yards of the community gardeners. Much of the maintenance is done by volunteers from the garden, SEWA International, and Marlboro High School students. The arboretum also enjoys the support of Marlboro Administration and the Department of Public Works. During the growing season, talks and demonstrations are offered in both the Community Garden and the Arboretum.

Marlboro has achieved Tree City USA in 2023, a status they have enjoyed annually since 2008, meeting the high standards to earn this honor with an active tree board, a tree-care ordinance, a community forestry program and an annual Arbor Day observance. The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service.

Members of the Shade Tree Committee are Chairwoman Ellen Simonetti, Secretary, Robert Mellert, Joanna Boretti, Pat Ondar, Mary Eng, Beth Hutter, Terry Ebert, and Patricia Cleary.

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