Dead trees greet postal patrons

In Tuesday’s column, we noted that dead trees mar the 200 block of High Street, the heart of Pottstown’s downtown business district.

But dead trees are everywhere, not just downtown.

The Pottstown Post Office at High and Madison streets attracts thousands of patrons every month. For years, they have been greeted by dead trees on either side of the front door.

The trees died a year after they were planted in 2009, and their decaying trunks have stood sentry for six years.

It would cost less than $1,000 to remove and replace them. Unfortunately, a borough government with 2016 budget of $59 million — including $1.1 million for its parks system — can’t find the money or the will to do so.

The post office trees are among 68 dead trees in sidewalks throughout the borough.

In addition, there are nearly 300 stumps and empty tree pits where trees were removed and not replaced.

From 2001 to 2006, the borough donated about $20,000 annually to Trees Inc., which matched that money with private donations and worked in cooperation with the shade tree commission to ensure dead trees and stumps were removed, and replacement trees were planted. But in 2007 the funding stopped, and in 2010 the commission was abolished by Pottstown Council.

Since then, it has been up to the adjacent property owner to remove dead trees and stumps, which means it rarely happens.

Our community needs to ask, how much do we hurt ourselves and our quality of life by allowing dead trees to blight our streets?

It’s nice to have lovely parks and a handsome borough hall and a new $4 million maintenance garage.

The Colebrookdale Railroad and the Carousel at Pottstown (when it’s finished) are very fine tourist attractions.

But could we do something about the streets — where people who actually live in our town spend most of their time?

Could we remove and replace the dead trees and stumps?