

**Subject:** Common Area 13 Tree Uplimbing and Removal

Dear Fellow Homeowners,

As you were previously notified, the Common Area behind your house is the location for the work during Year-3 of a 5-Year plan to remove some trees from the Common Areas and to plant new trees. This 5-year project will create the "baseline" from which future Boards can act to preserve the appearance of all the Common Areas over the long term.

As with the areas where work has been completed and in areas scheduled for work in years 4 and 5 of the project, in Common Area 13, the Board acted upon recommendations from a three-member Environs Sub-Committee of the Board.

In making all its recommendations as part of this project, the Sub-Committee follows procedures that have been approved by the Board prior to starting the 5-year project: It considers recommendations from a certified arborist engaged by the Board as to the health of the trees, potential dangers presented by configuration of individual trees, and for replacement plantings; by the history of prior storm damage to trees; and to the general appearance of the Common Areas as they might be viewed by Association membership using those areas for their purposes.

Additionally, through the Environs Committee, the Board routinely solicits input from Association members whose homes abut the Common Area under consideration, but recognizes that while these abutters have a clear interest in a specific Common Area, the Board's actions are to be based upon what is felt to be in the best interest of all the Association's members. After the selected trees have been removed, the Committee again consults with abutting homeowners regarding plans for planting new trees.

The Environs Committee and the arborist have explained to the Board and to homeowners that the white pines on the Common Areas have been for many years "highly stressed" by a combination of having been planted too close together (crowding each other out both at the root level and as branches "search for the sun"), lack of regular pruning, and the hot dry summers ... drastically reducing their anticipated lifespan. The arborist stated that without action to remove some trees to reduce this stress now, we risk losing all the pines within 10 years.

Such has been the case in Common Area 13; in fact, the Environs Committee delayed the start of work on this project to hear concerns from abutters who had not attended the original meeting scheduled by the Environs Committee for that purpose. On 29 July, the three members of the Environs Committee, the Board President, and a representative of the arborist walked Common Area 13 with three abutters explaining the logic behind the recommendations the Committee had made and the Board has accepted. At the close of the meeting, the Committee solicited written input from each of the three homeowners attending..

Following the walk through discussed above and written input from some of those in attendance, the Environs Committee has stated that, based upon input from the arborist's representative and its own observations, it will recommend to the full Board at its August meeting a small modification to the Scope of Work such that tree # 172 would be retained and tree #171 would be removed instead. I anticipate that the full Board will approve this modification in the scope of work.

While one abutting homeowner continues in strong objection to removing what they continue to describe as "perfectly healthy trees," the Environs Committee disagrees with that characterization for the reasons discussed above.

The contractor has already started work to remove low-hanging branches from trees that will remain, and to begin removing trees designated for removal in the Scope of Work along the boundary with HOA 1 as previously marked; he will then begin to remove trees closer to homes in our HOA. Trees #172 and #171 will not be worked upon until after the August Board meeting.

Our thanks for your continued consideration and interest in the Association.

Laszlo

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