Mayor McFadden

Board of Trustees

January 5, 2023

Dear Mayor & Board:

Happy New Year!

I attempted to participate in the BoT meeting on 12/21/22 but was unable to join as I am out of the country. I would like to include my voice in the discussion regarding the proposed alterations to tree cutting restrictions.

I think rescinding restrictions on tree cutting is the wrong thing to do.

The Village is as lovely and green as it is because over the years past Boards have made it a priority to protect the trees by restricting indiscriminate cutting.

The Village, and common sense, does allow for the removal of trees that threaten real estate or roads, and “vista cutting” (the careful removal of specific branches to open a view, a kind of pruning) could be considered more.

However, the elimination of healthy trees because they are not to an individual’s preference should be prohibited.

I acknowledge that in instances of large high density wooded areas, where there is overgrowth and imbalance, or if there is a disease that travels from tree to tree, it may be prudent to cull some trees to restore a healthier ecosystem or prevent further tree loss. The forests in Europe, I know, are managed that way. But those forest managers often assign numbers to individual trees, so it is a detailed endeavor. However, here in Tuxedo I think that vast acreage is not so common the case.

I have lived in the village for over 35 years and have seen residents move in, make considerable and often permanent changes to a landscape, and move away a few years later. The impact of the individual’s personal decisions in relation to the landscape remains long after they have vacated.

A concept to consider here is that we do not, in fact, “own” the land. People are temporary custodians, stewards really, for the time they are in occupancy, pay their mortgages & taxes, etc. But the land remains long after we are gone and how we have cared for it will impact its condition for future generations.

The fact is that we are already losing numbers of trees against our will - the hemlocks and ash trees for example. I think cutting healthy trees that contribute so much to a balanced environment is a bad idea and should be avoided, not enabled.

Aren’t we a “Tree City, USA?” This proposal seems to be in opposition to this designation and is misguided.

Trustee Brooke, I understand this revision was proposed by you.

You advocate eliminating restrictions and allowing residents to cut a greater number of trees determined by their property size.

You thought it was a good idea to cull the geese that from time to time inhabit the lakeshore.

You also, in a previous meeting, announced you would never plant native floral barriers (riparian borders), along the lake shore to protect the lake and discourage the geese.

It is not my intention, and my apologies to you if I sound like I am painting you as a villain in a Disney movie, yet your record shows a pattern of callous indifference to nature. One that you might, respectfully, reconsider.

Thank you all for considering my comments.

Wishing you all the best for the New Year.

Elizabeth Cotnoir

170-171 Wee Wah Road

*Co-signed:*

Howard Shore

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