

February 10, 2020

Cc: Alan Tosti

Re: Tree Requests for Select Board Protection of Whittemore Park healthy trees endangered by Arlington Planning Department's request for felling - Yellowwood (DBH 12", Norway Maple (DBH 22"), Norway Maple (DBH 16")

Dear Chairperson Mahon, Select Board Members, and Warden Lecuivre,

Following my letter of January 24th (see attached) please recall that at the Annual Town Meeting session of May 8th the approval of Town Meeting was sought for a landscape design chosen by the Community Act Preservation Committee. The Chairperson of CPAC stated to Town Meeting that he was assured by the Town Manager that NO TREES BEYOND THOSE DESIGNATED BY THE TREE WARDEN AS UNHEALTHY WOULD BE REMOVED. With this understanding Town Meeting was persuaded to vote for the chosen design. These statements are recorded at approximately 1.02.50 on the following url:

<https://acmi.tv/videos/annual-town-meeting-may-8-2019/>

Accordingly it is completely unacceptable that the Arlington Planning Department should request the felling of these invaluable established trees and the loss of their shade for the community to facilitate execution of a lucrative landscape contract which should have been planned with the preservation of these important trees in mind. Of the 23 letters sent regarding the endangered trees not one was in favor of their destruction. Also, of the many attendees at the Tree Warden's public hearing the only person anxious for their elimination was a landscape architect who described herself as a member of the Tree Committee who finds large shade trees inconvenient for her work.

It is unfortunate that the extravagant landscaping contract has been pursued since it is evident from comments made by the Director of Public Works that the basic work involved in removing the diseased tree and opening up the site by reduced fencing could have been done by the Town for less than \$20,000. If that option had been pursued then some of the \$1,500,000 total landscape

design plan cost could have been assigned instead for urgent landscape needs and hazards in Town including removal of Japanese Knotwood, rain gardens, more tree planting in East Arlington etc. In addition, some of it could have been used to purchase a couple of condominiums for use as affordable housing in our quest to prevent homelessness. Indeed since no such purchases have been designated by the CPAC I have written to Ms. Jennifer Raitt suggesting that she put such a request for CPAC funding on our agenda for the Housing Plan Implementation Committee meeting.

Arlington is fortunate to have these three established shade trees. The Yellowwood is a beautiful tree suited to urban situations. The two Norway maples in question are coping well with in this environmentally challenged area of Town. The area could become a dangerous heat island without them and their tendency to dominate in more verdant sites is irrelevant since their positions are essentially that of street trees at the periphery of the site in a predominantly hardscape location. Norway maples can withstand a harsh environment including heat, drought, salt spray, poor drainage and tolerate high winds, frost and air pollution, as well as a wide range of soil acidity.

Very truly yours,

**Patricia Barron Worden, Ph.D.
Town Meeting Member, Pct. 8**

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter