



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

Telephone
(617) 796-1100
Fax
(617) 796-1113
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
Email
rfuller@newtonma.gov

August 1, 2022

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Honorable City Councilors:

I am pleased to submit this docket item to this Honorable Council requesting updates to the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance. The updates are the result of careful work by City Forester Marc Welch over the past year with the Law Department, City Councilors and Tree Commission members. Marc Welch and I believe this proposal is the right mix and pace of changes that are needed to protect our City's tree canopy.

Enacted over twenty years ago with updates in 2014, the City of Newton's Tree Preservation Ordinance was one of the first such regulations in the Commonwealth. Our Ordinance continues to be one of the most comprehensive tree protection ordinances in Massachusetts, one that other municipalities emulate.

The majority of Newton's tree canopy is made up of private trees, and, when combined with the City's trees, our urban forest enhances the quality of life and the City's environment. The presence of trees on private property reduces energy needs, improves air quality, mitigates the effects of stormwater runoff, and enhances the overall sense of community residents and visitors to Newton experience. It is important that we protect this canopy and ensure responsible stewardship.

The Tree Preservation Ordinance was created to help mitigate the effects of the loss of trees from private property. Our Ordinance has resulted in the protection of many private trees, the planting of thousands of trees, and supported the City's urban forestry program.

The changes presented in this draft revised ordinance represent the next evolution of the Tree Preservation Ordinance. Building on the existing ordinance language, the key areas where improvements have been made are:

- Increases replacement requirements for larger trees to address their greater environmental importance
- Adds protections for smaller trees
- Limits significantly the removal of trees without replacement
- Adds effective language that enhances procedures for protecting trees
- Increases the payment required for trees cut without replacement
- Provides the Tree Warden with additional professional input on trees on private property
- Protects trees on lots adjacent to construction

RECEIVED
Newton City Clerk
2022 AUG - 1 PM 3:05

The City Forester will also be coming forward with a Street Tree Master Plan in the next few months to address how the City can further advance the management of our own trees.

Please see the attached memo from Mr. Welch, a one-page summary of proposed changes, and a red-line strike-out version of the ordinance with margin comments.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ruthanne Fuller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Mayor Ruthanne Fuller

Newton Parks, Recreation & Culture Department
246 Dudley Road, Newton, MA 02459
Office: (617) 796-1500
parks@newtonma.gov
Nicole Banks, Commissioner



July 22, 2022

Honorable Mayor Ruthanne Fuller
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton, MA 02459-1449

Dear Honorable Mayor Fuller:

Attached please find for your consideration an update to the City’s Tree Preservation Ordinance. Included is a summary review of the major and notable changes as well as the proposed ordinance language in red line format.

Enacted over twenty years ago with updates in 2014, the City of Newton’s Tree Preservation Ordinance was one of the first such regulations in the Commonwealth. Our Ordinance continues to be one of the most comprehensive tree protection ordinances in Massachusetts, one that other municipalities emulate.

The majority of Newton’s tree canopy is made up of private trees, and, when combined with the City’s trees, our urban forest enhances the quality of life and the City’s environment. The presence of trees on private property reduces energy needs, improves air quality, mitigates the effects of stormwater runoff, and enhances the overall sense of community residents and visitors to Newton experience. It is important that we protect this canopy and insure responsible stewardship.

The Tree Preservation Ordinance was created to help mitigate the effects of the loss of trees from private property. Our Ordinance has resulted in the protection of many private trees, the planting of thousands of trees, and supported the City’s urban forestry program.

The changes presented in this draft revised ordinance represent the next evolution of the Tree Preservation Ordinance. Building on the existing ordinance language, the key areas where improvements have been made are:

- Increases replacement requirements for larger trees to address their greater environmental importance
- Adds protections for smaller trees
- Limits significantly the removal of trees without replacement
- Adds effective language that enhances procedures for protecting trees
- Increases the payment required for trees cut without replacement
- Provides the Tree Warden with additional professional input on trees on private property
- Protects trees on lots adjacent to construction

I have been working with the Law Department, City Councilors and members of the Tree Commission over the past year on this ordinance update. I have also been consulting with staff from other City departments such as Conservation. I believe this is the right mix and pace of changes that are needed at this time to protect our City’s tree canopy. As you know, I will also be coming forward with a Street Tree Master Plan in the next few months to address how the City can further advance the management of our own trees.

Please reach out to me if you have questions and thank you for our consideration.

Respectfully,

Marc R. Welch
Deputy Commissioner
City Forester
Newton Parks, Recreation & Culture

Cc: Nicole Banks, PRC Commissioner