

## VAPM Maple Tree History and Replacement Program January 25, 2019

It's a long read but that's history, right?

**2013** – A disease was first seen on the maple trees in the devil strips (aka street trees). It was identified as Gloomy Scale. The Landscape Committee put together a short and long-term plan for Gloomy Scale remediation and worked with the Board to fund the plan.

Definition: Bark becomes roughened and encrusted with scales from insects. This results in branches and limbs dying back and result in a rapid decline in the health of the tree. See attached for more detail on Gloomy Scale.

**2014** - Obtained consulting services from Bartlett Tree Experts, Jeff Kish (a very well respected arborist in the area) , on the best course of action to save the trees if possible. Gloomy scale chemical treatment was recommended as the best way to extend the life of the trees by several years. This type of treatment was applied 2 times per year.

Root collar surgery was also deemed necessary, in conjunction with the gloomy scale chemical treatment, to extend the life of the trees. Over the years, mulch was piled high around the tree base, promoting unhealthy root growth above the surface. This is compounded by the fact the trees were planted in an area too small to support their mature size.

The above mentioned work was conducted between 2014 – 2015.

**2015** – See above. Three maple trees were replaced in 2015.

**2016** - Knowing that the trees were on life support, a plan (budget) was put in place to begin an orderly replacement of the maple trees over the course of 10 years. We have approximately 100 maple trees. The selection of the replacement tree was well researched and determined to be a good choice given the space constraints that bind the trees. It is called a Zelkova serrata, "Village Green", more on this particular tree in a bit.

Concurrently, we have had many cherry trees in our alleys die due to natural causes (age) that have needed replacement. So the Board has been budgeting for both maple and cherry tree replacement.

Funds were budgeted for/approved at the Annual HOA meeting for the replacement of 10 red maples.

**2017** - Funds were budgeted for/approved at the Annual HOA meeting for the replacement of 10 red maples. Trees were replaced on Upper Harp.

**2018** - Funds were budgeted for/approved at the Annual HOA meeting for the replacement of 10 red maples. Trees were replaced on Middle Harp, Haynes, and N. Blount.

**2019** - Funds were budgeted for/approved at the Annual HOA meeting for the replacement of 10 red maples.

During the Annual HOA meeting, held in November 2018, the “planting” plan was discussed. Consensus was reached that it made the most sense to approach the replacements in a section-by-section manner. The thinking was that the trees would be of consistent type and size, yielding an aesthetically pleasing landscape and tree canopy in the coming years.

Eight trees have been replaced on Haynes and two on Lower Harp, in front of 1221 and 1225.

**2020** - We will continue with the Street Tree Replacement program to identify and budget for this activity. The cherry trees will be on an as-needed basis.

It has always been the goal of the HOA Board to have a beautiful tree canopy on our streetscape, similar to Oakwood and Boylan Heights, but it is just not possible with the trees we have currently.

The City of Raleigh played a heavy hand on dictating the type of tree that was planted in 2003 – 2005 timeframe when our beautiful community was being built. Unfortunately, the tree chosen at that time was not the best choice for the small area in which they were planted.

Knowing what we know now, the Board researched potential replacements, sought professional advice, and ultimately chose the Zelkova serrata, “Village Green” because of its shape, size, growth rate, hardiness and appropriateness for the space in which it will grow.

Zelkova has a vase-shaped habit. It is fast-growing, with a handsome shape and arching, upright branches. Leaves are orange and bronzy-red in autumn. Bark in youth is cherry-like, in mature trees it exfoliates in patches giving the tree an attractive mottled appearance.

In summary, no one likes to remove trees or lose a beloved shady spot. Over the years, every Board, and our volunteers that support the Board, have struggled with this process on some level but all decisions have been made to maintain VAPM as a well-maintained, fiscally responsible community. It is the Board’s belief that being proactive on replacing the trees in an orderly fashion is the right plan going forward.

Respectfully,  
The VAPM HOA Board