

The Trees of Ackerman Woods

At the April 10th Public Meeting on Ackerman Woods, the Village of Glen Ellyn and the Glen Ellyn Park District said “a lot of the trees are undesirable.” On March 27, 2008, the Daily Herald wrote:

“Dave Scarmardo, the district's superintendent of parks, said most of the trees earmarked for removal are scrub trees and non-native plants.”

The facts do not support these statements. Kramer Tree Company was hired by the Park District to survey the trees in Ackerman Woods the week of April 1. We obtained from the Park District the list [1] of the trees that the Village and Park District plan to cut, including their species and diameter at breast height. Kramer also indicated whether the trees are native or non-native.

There are 342 trees listed with diameter of 6 inches or greater. Only 15 of these trees, less than 5%, are non-native, which is all the more impressive given that these are completely unmanaged woods.

The survey shows that the trees to be cut include numerous gems such as 25” Black Walnut, 31” American Elm and 42” Black Cherry. Black walnuts are protected trees in Glen Ellyn, and 78 black walnut trees will be destroyed by the Village for this project.

The Village and Park District claimed at the April 10 Public Meeting that they plan to plant 108 trees and shrub-clusters now and 250 trees and shrub-clusters at Ackerman Park in the future.

The landscaping plan for these 108 plants [3] shows that only 24 of these are trees (the other 84 are all shrubs). Also, the 108 plants are being planted as wetland mitigation for the wetland buffer the soccer fields will be built on – not for replacing the trees we will lose.

If we consider only the native trees slated for removal, there are 4,284 total caliper inches of native trees that will be destroyed. Glen Ellyn’s pending tree ordinance, like many neighboring communities, requires that trees are replaced on a per caliper inch basis. This means over 2,000 new 2” diameter trees must be planted, at a minimum estimated cost of \$400,000 [2].

It is clear that the Village and Park District plans do not come close to offsetting the tremendous loss of trees to our community. Indeed, the financial gains from the sale of the Walgreen’s property will barely cover the true costs of tree replacement. This is a bad plan that should be immediately halted. The Village and Park District must find a way to permanently protect these woods.

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[1] See www.saveackermanwoods.com/d/Kramer_Tree_Survey_List.pdf

[2] Using a conservative wholesale estimate of \$200 for a contractor to furnish, plant and guarantee these trees.

[3] See www.saveackermanwoods.com/d/Landscape_Plan.pdf