Dedham Conservation Commission
Guidelines for Reviewing Tree Removal Projects
in Wetlands Resource Areas and Buffer Zones

The Dedham Conservation Commission is frequently asked to allow the removal of trees which are dead and/or damaged and/or diseased, and which pose a threat to private or public property ("hazard trees"), or which are within the footprint of proposed construction. The Commission primarily reviews such requests under the Wetland Protection Act and Dedham Wetland Bylaw regulations in the context of Requests for Determination of Applicability and Notices of Intent. The Bylaw regulations prohibit the removal of any tree within a Protected Resource Area (which includes, without limitation, any wetland; marsh; wet meadow; bog; swamp; vernal pool; bank; reservoir; lake; pond; stream; creek; beach; land under water; lands subject to flooding or inundation by groundwater or surface water), land within 100 feet of any of the aforesaid Protected Resource Areas, and areas within 200 feet of any perennial streams or rivers. These Guidelines have been developed to provide a consistent approach to tree removal that protects the wetland functions and values provided by trees within these areas.

Dedham is designated as a "Tree City USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation, which is a designation demonstrating the extent to which the community cares about its environment and the quality of life. Trees are an important part of Dedham's stormwater management and visual landscape, as well as providing a source of cleaner air, shadier streets, and habitat for birds and other wildlife. The shade produced by trees in the summer reduces temperatures in the Town and can reduce overall energy usage and air conditioning costs, which are important factors to a Green Community. With respect to wetland functions and values, trees also provide shade that maintains a favorable microclimate for wetland plants, reptiles and amphibians, and insects. Trees provide wildlife habitat features which include food, shelter, nesting habitat, migratory habitat, and perching habitat (for predatory and insect-eating birds). Dead limbs and hollow trunks provide cavities which may be used by small mammals and birds for nests, dens, or shelter. Additionally, the leaves shed by deciduous trees in the fall provide a valuable source of nutrients and organic matter that support the texture and fertility of wetland soils.

In recognition of these important values, the Commission requires that, wherever feasible, a "snag" of at least 6 feet high shall be retained when a diseased, dead, or hazardous tree, 6-inches or greater in diameter at breast height is removed. The snag provides valuable wildlife habitat. The Commission also requires that all healthy trees removed within a wetland resource area (including the 100-foot Buffer Zone) be replaced within the 100 foot Buffer Zone and/or 200-foot Riverfront Area, at a minimum 2:1 ratio (two new trees for each one tree removed), with native tree species being used as replacement trees (see approved Replacement Tree List). The replacement trees must be a minimum 1-inch caliper. Although replacement trees from the approved Replacement Tree List are preferred, an Applicant may propose wildlife habitat replacement with high wildlife value native shrub species in lieu of, or in addition to, trees. Shrubs shall be proposed at no less than a 4:1 ratio (four new shrubs for each one tree removed). The following list provides guidance on the types of tree and shrub species that are acceptable. Other native plants may be proposed beyond those listed in this document. Any proposed trees or shrubs are subject to review by the Conservation Commission, or its designee, and must obtain final approval from the Conservation Commission, or its designee.

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Replacement Trees – Native To New England

Wetter Areas	**Drier Areas**
Acer rubrum (red maple)	*Acer saccharum* (sugar maple)
Acer saccharoides (silver maple)	*Betula papyrifera* (paper birch)
Betula lenta (sweet/black birch)	*Fagus grandifolia* (American beech)
Betula nigra (river birch)	*Juniperus virginiana* (eastern red cedar)
Betula populifolia (gray birch)	*Liriodendron tulipifera* (tulip tree)
Chamaecyparis thyoides (Atlantic white cedar)	*Pinus strobus* (white pine)
Nyssa sylvatica (tupelo, black gum)	*Platanus occidentalis* (sycamore)
Quercus bicolor (swamp white oak)	*Prunus serotina* (black cherry)
Tsuga canadensis (Canada hemlock)*	*Quercus alba* (white oak)
	Quercus coccinea (scarlet oak)
	Quercus palustris (pin oak)
	Quercus rubra (red oak)
**Tsuga canadensis* should only be planted if a long-term monitoring plan (approved by the Conservation Commission) is in place to control woolly adelgid.	*Quercus velutina* (black oak)
	Tilia americana (basswood)

High Wildlife Value Shrubs – Native to New England

Wetter Areas	**Drier Areas**
Alnus incana (rugosa) (Speckled Alder)	*Amelanchier spp.* (serviceberry)
Clethra alnifolia (Sweet Pepperbush)	*Swida alternifolia* (alternate-leaved dogwood)
Swida amomum (Silky Dogwood)	*Cornus racemosa* (gray dogwood)
Ilex verticillata (Winterberry Holly)	*Corylus americana* (American hazelnut)
Salix discolor (Pussy Willow)	*Hamamelis virginiana* (witch hazel)
Vaccinium corymbosum (Highbush Blueberry)	*Photinia melanocarpa* (black chokeberry)
Viburnum dentatum (Northern Arrowwood)	*Viburnum opulus (highbush* cranberry)