

Tree Removal- Replacement Model Ordinance

Appendix A: Trees that shall not be used as replacement trees

Trees reduce energy usage, remove air pollutants, filter stormwater, and cool hot city streets by providing shade and releasing water vapor. Trees increase property aesthetics and value. The presence of trees is even associated with higher levels of happiness. Some benefits of trees are related to a decrease in exposure to air pollution, noise, and heat, and increased contact with nature.

Trees are an investment in the future. The tree you plant now will take time to mature and provide benefits to you and the future of Raritan Borough. Choose your tree and planting location thoughtfully. When choosing a location be aware of the mature tree size in relation to overhead and underground utilities, and proximity to buildings. Not all trees are equal, and there are a few types that should be overlooked when choosing a new tree as they become a liability or otherwise unsuitable as they mature. Some trees are invasive, some grow too large for an average Raritan lot, some are prone to disease or dropping limbs. The following trees should be avoided under most situations and a more suitable species (preferably a native species) selected in their place:

Poplars/Cottonwoods. (*Populus spp.* and hybrids) These are sometimes sold, particularly through mail order, praising their quick growth, maturity and adaptability. Hybrid poplars are one of the fastest growing trees. However, with that fast growth comes weak wood. They get large fast but are prone to insects and disease and the weak wood breaks easily, creating a mess or liability. Species poplars have similar problems.

Weeping Willow (*Salix babylonica* or *Salix* hybrid) and other large willows are similar to the above poplars in that they grow fast but have weak wood and aggressive roots. Weeping willows look good against a lake in a large estate but are too large and problematic for residential planting in an average size lot. Roots are aggressive and seek sources of water. Trees regularly drop limbs and branches.

Ash Trees (*Fraxinus spp.*) Ash trees are beautiful and Raritan and surrounding areas historically included many beautiful ash trees, some quite old. However, an insect, the emerald ash borer, first arrived in the USA from China in 2002 and is quickly killing essentially all of the ash trees in our area. This borer was first documented in Somerset County, New Jersey in 2014. Since then the beetles have quickly spread throughout the state. With the presence of the borers, ash trees should no longer be planted.

Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*). Although native, this tree is more suitable for large open spaces as it quickly grows too large for most lot sizes in Raritan. It also has aggressive surface roots and relatively weak wood. The tree also does not have showy flowers or significant fall color.

Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*) is a widely planted and attractive maple tree. It can be an aesthetically beautiful tree but has, however, become invasive. Consider planting similar and native red or sugar maples instead.

White Mulberry (*Morus alba*) Invasive tree that outcompetes native trees. Fast growing, aggressive roots may damage foundations. Male trees produce abundant pollen that cause allergies in many people. Female trees produce large quantities of edible fruit relished by wildlife but can cause a mess with purple staining fallen fruit and wildlife droppings.

Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) Aggressive and invasive. Abundant fruit is readily dispersed by birds. These trees are also difficult to kill once established.

Siberian Elm (*Ulmus pumila*). Fast growing tough invasive species. Survives extreme conditions and displaces native vegetation. Weak limbs and susceptible to insect attacks.

Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*). “Bradford Pear”. This tree became very popular for its showy white blooms and rapid growth. However they have been found to be extremely invasive and crowd out native species. The branches, particularly in older cultivars, break easily in storms. The flowers can also be foul smelling.

Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*). This tree can look beautiful from a distance with its spreading branches and pink flowers. However it is also fast growing and very invasive. It is also a messy tree dropping leaves, limbs, flowers and abundant seed pods.

Princess Tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*). Sometimes advertised for its extremely fast growth rate and beautiful flowers, this tree is also invasive and has very weak wood.

Please note that this list is not all-inclusive. Choose the right tree for the right location. A tree that is suitable in one location may be problematic in another. For example many Oak trees can be majestic, have strong wood, and provide food for wildlife. However, you don't want a large oak against a house or dropping acorns onto your driveway and car. Ginkgos are beautiful and generally well-behaved landscape trees but the female tree can produce a large, foul smelling fruit. Sweetgums (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) are a nice native tree with good fall color but produce a large, spiny seed capsule that you will not want on your lawn when walking barefoot. If you have overhead powerlines a tall growing tree will not be appropriate.