

September 11, 2000

To: Tollgate Board

CC: Landscaping Committee

From: Terry Zawacki

Re: Committee recommendations based on neighborhood walk-about

The Landscaping Committee spent Saturday a.m. walking around the properties, making lists of tree/shrub/other work needing to be completed, and then prioritizing that work. In this memo, I've listed those priorities according to trees, shrubs, and other. (\*Note to Landscaping Committee: Karen Stephenson gave me a list of additional items she received in her mailbox. I put those into our list even though we have not yet looked at these properties. I indicated new items with an asterisk.) I want to preface the list, however, with some general recommendations and guidelines we are proposing to the Board and the community.

At the last Board meeting, the Board asked that all landscaping items be brought to the Board for approval, including aesthetic preferences for pruning trees and shrubs. Our Committee would like the Board to endorse the following philosophy and guidelines for landscaping work:

- Landscaping philosophy pertaining to healthy but overgrown shrubberies in the front of properties, on common grounds, and at the entrance to Tollgate: The Committee would like approval to remove or prune dramatically overgrown and/or crowded shrubberies if the homeowners and the Board concur with our selection of shrubs to be removed or pruned.
- Boxwood pruning: Given the different preferences homeowners have for shaping boxwoods, we suggest that boxwoods standing by themselves be pruned into ball shapes. Boxwoods in hedges will be left in a hedge shape.
- Ivy in front beds should be removed wherever it is choking plants. In their itemized list of work they will perform, Living Color says they will remove ground covers from beds if it is growing into trees and shrubs. They do not seem to be doing this. We suggest asking homeowners to pull out ivy if they don't mind doing that work so that we can get started on this task. We will also let Living Color know that they must do that work, according to our agreement with them.
- The Landscape Committee will routinely limb up low hanging branches and prune shrubberies interfering with passage on common grounds. The Board will reimburse Committee members for materials (e.g. trash bags) bought out of pocket.

- If homeowners request work that is not given a high priority but has been approved by the Committee, they may pay to have the work done themselves. We reiterate that all work must be approved by the Board/Landscape Committee before any homeowner undertakes contracting for the work themselves.
- The Landscape Committee feels strongly that we ourselves are capable of purchasing and planting replacement shrubberies, such as azaleas and junipers, along front sidewalks and beds. We propose that we be given Board approval to undertake the following projects.:

102: Replace two plants along front path with liriopse or small shrub of homeowner's choice (Edna said she will talk with us about a shrub she likes). There's a huge azalea in the common area behind 102. We would like approval to remove this azalea and transplant it in an area by the fence next to 135 at the end of the street.

\*104: Missing azaleas (white) need to be replaced in front of house.

110: Remove mugho pines along walk and replace with liriopse and/or another anchoring bush. (Karen Stephenson has requested several times that these be removed.)

108-110: Remove boxwood hedge and transplant boxwoods to other locations where boxwoods of similar size have died. One such location is along the front fence of 101. (Both homeowners feel the boxwood hedge is obscuring the plantings behind it and looks odd where it is.)

111-113: Remove overgrown junipers and replace with periwinkle. (Jim Guyette will have to be consulted if the Board approves.)

116: Remove andromedas which are obscured by other shrubberies to the front of 122 where an anchoring shrub has died.

118: Prune dead branches from spruce and Austrian pines.

121: Prune Cherry where limbs are hanging over the parking pad.

122: Prune bushes under window. Remove dead limbs from Plum tree. Plant shrubs moved from 116.

133: Plant azaleas in area where other shrubs have died. (Jock Bond has planted hostas in the bare spot but would like an evergreen shrub.)

135: Move azalea to the fence bordering this property. Dead spruce will be removed.

### **High Priority Tree Work to be contracted out:**

**Question:** Should hollies by gas meters be removed? Apparently some homeowners are concerned about holly roots damaging these lines.

100: Remove broken branches from Norway spruce.

103: Elevate the sawtooth oak, cutting off heavy, low-hanging branches which may pose a danger to cars parked below.

\*110-112: Large tree needs to be examined and dead branches removed. Several dead branches have already fallen on the sidewalk and parking pad.

111: Remove dead juniper on left side of garage door.

113: Remove and replace dying dogwood. (It was determined that two dogwoods which need to be transplanted are too large for that particular site.)

116: Attend to dying (?) maple. This is a large tree that needs attention from an arborist to determine if it is dying and, if so, what the cause is. We propose moving a star dogwood in front of 114 to that location if the maple needs to be taken out.

122: Large plum tree needs immediate attention. Is it also dying? If so, what is the cause?

\*131: Dead white pine behind property needs to be cut down asap to avoid property damage. Front wild cherry tree needs to be pruned of dead branches at top. Oak tree between Terry Parson's and Ray's house has a fungus and needs to be sprayed again.

135: Remove dead spruce near the chain link fence. Replace with large azalea behind Edna's outer wall.

**White pines behind all of the properties** need maintenance, especially where they are hanging into homeowners' back yards. \*Per Ray Wilkins, Pine directly behind 131 is dead and needs to be removed. Pine tree by gate at 131 is also showing signs of trouble. The Committee will routinely limb them up and remove dead branches within reach.

### **Low Priority Tree Work:**

100: Move dogwood obscured by magnolia.

114: Remove spruce obscured by another large tree on the property. Committee thinks it's okay to remove the spruce but feels it is a low priority.

121: Remove white pine stumps behind the property and replace with another tree.

127: Request that large oak tree be removed because it drops sap on cars. Committee does not concur with this request.

\*131: Apple tree that fell down last year needs to be replaced. (Committee needs to look at this and determine whether high or low priority.)

135: Trim front maple tree. Committee thinks this tree looks fine.

For aesthetic reasons, the Committee thinks the hollies at the end of the street should be cut down.

### **High Priority Shrub Work:**

Entrance to Tollgate: These shrubs are overgrown and unsightly. We would like a professional's opinion about how to re-do the landscaping, saving and enhancing some of the existing shrubberies.

102: At end of walk, replace shrubs which died and were removed with liriopse or small shrub. Plant azalea next to porch. Move huge back azalea to fence at 135. Remove Hollywood juniper from between 102 and 104 (it's falling over). Replace with nandina bush.

108-110: Move boxwood hedge which obscures plantings behind it and looks peculiar where it's located. (Both homeowners approve. Committee would like to do this work). Plant a few more azaleas and mulch.

\*112: Evergreen directly by front porch post needs pruning to keep it away from gutters.

122: Needs replacement bushes for beds around front porch.

133: Plant shrubs in space by driveway where other shrubs have died.

135: Remove pyracantha by front porch. (Committee will do with Board approval.)

**End of cul de sac:** This is a high priority—a creeping vine (source as yet unknown) is choking our trees. This vine must be removed and eradicated. Common grounds at end of street behind the row of photinias must be cleaned up and maintained.

### **Low Priority Shrub Work:**

107-109: Plant azaleas in front of French ditch to fill in and make a row of azaleas.

111-113: Remove overgrown junipers and replace with periwinkle ground cover.

126: Take out yew and holly in front bed if homeowner approves. Shape boxwood into balls if they are standing alone.

\***Hollies** behind 108-114 have several dead areas near the tops. Need to be looked at by an arborist to determine what has caused the damage.

### **High Priority Drainage:**

Bob Donaldson is getting estimates to alleviate drainage problems behind 122 and 114, 116, 118. He and Garry Sauner think it would be good to have a berm built to carry runoff water away from these properties. Such a solution, however, would also entail making slight berms behind 108, 110, and 112. The Committee would like to take up this problem with the Board.

### **Contractual Issues with Living Color:**

Living Color (LC) gave us an itemized list of work to be performed when we initially contracted with them. We do not see that this work is being done or, if done, is being done inadequately. For example:

LC says they will prune all ornamental trees up to 15 feet in height “to remove dead and dying branches and to develop the natural form of the plant.” We don’t think this work is being done.

LC says “**hand pruners**” will be used on all shrubberies with the exception of hedges. We don’t see that any hand pruning is being carried out.

LC says they will remove “sucker growth” from trees and bushes. This is not being done.

LC says they will “keep vines and low growing shrubs from growing into turf areas and other plants.” The ivy is out of control in most front beds, twining around shrubs, up brick walls, porches, and steps.