Countryhouse Individual Tree Analysis Guide

Trees essentially have three parts: the canopy, the trunk and supporting branches and root system.

Initially identify the subject tree species

The Canopy:

1. How large/high?
2. How balanced is the canopy on its trunk?
3. How exposed to sun and prevailing winds?

The Trunk and supporting branches:

1. Does the trunk lean and to what degree based on its canopy spread and growth toward light?
2. Do the branches support the overall canopy or are there errant branches growing in different directions?
3. Do these branches negatively affect adjacent trees or structures?
4. Is the subject tree canopy blocked from direct sunlight by adjacent trees?
5. Is the tree bifurcated or trifurcated? What is the angle of separation of these main trunk stems?
6. Any branches in state of decline or decay?
7. The Tree Committee has adopted the Forestry Dept recommendation clearing limbs 6-8ft from sides or over bldgs.

Root System:

1. How much access to water, nutrients and water is there?
2. What is the base soil ingredients and decomposing matter?
3. What is the slope and gradient that can erode the soil?
4. How far from adjoining root systems is the subject species that they openly compete for nutrients and water?
5. Trees (species type does matter) should have the opportunity to grow to maturity with a sound root system and therefore be a safe distance (at least 5ft) from other trees and ten feet from buildings. (Declaring at the outset what the distances from buildings trees in general should be either as policy or guideline can place a huge financial burden on Association budgets and alarm homeowners when there are many other factors to consider.) Maples have aggressive root systems; Bradfords and Crepe Myrtles, not so much.

Seedlings & Saplings:

On our fifty acres of Country House Property nearly all of it is wooded and far too subdivided and broken up into small parcels to be considered forested. In our acreage it is estimated that we have 1,500 tree seedlings germinating each year. Most of these are removed by the landscapers, the Tree Committee or

gardening homeowners. A few grow into saplings which the Tree Committee evaluates and either, if growing in an open space, may leave or may have a resident volunteer remove. These two low-cost actions will make our tree policy more cost effective long-term because if left unchecked these potential trees will only grow larger, taller and into more costly removal projects in the years to come.