

Market Street Tree Removals

A poster this week placed on a tree on Market Street and in a merchant's window announces, "The village government is cutting down the trees on Market Street. Apparently they are too disruptive to the sidewalk so they must die." The announcement is repeated on Facebook where it created a flurry of responses and speculations.

Here are the facts: The four honey locust trees on Market Street were planted in 1978, along with those that line both sides of Main Street. All have grown to be graceful mature trees which provide filtered shade in our business district making it an attractive place to walk and shop.

Unfortunately, as the trees became quite large they outgrew the spaces on Market Street in which they were planted. In fact, the tree lawn (public area between sidewalk and street) on Market Street was too narrow for these honey locust trees in the first place, and they should not have been planted there. Their roots have now uplifted the sidewalks creating tripping hazards for pedestrians and causing stormwater and snow melt water to drain towards the foundations of the buildings. In some places the roots have raised the sidewalk above the level of the curbside brick border. Because the Market Street trees are also much closer to the buildings than those on Main Street, they require heavy pruning so their branches do not rub against the building facades. This has caused them to lean slightly towards the street. None of this bodes well for the trees, the sidewalks, or pedestrians.

The one honey locust on the south side of Market should be removed soon. The other three trees on the north side can remain for the time being, but eventually they too will have to be removed. The Main Street trees are fine.

Be assured that any Market Street trees removed will be replaced—with smaller trees more suitable to the narrow tree lawn space there and appropriate for downtown plantings in business districts. In doing so the Village will consult with arborists who specialize in such tree plantings. We invite merchants and residents to submit suggestions for tree choices.

Proper stewardship of our urban forest requires not only regularly planting trees but removing those that are diseased, compromised, or unsuitably large for where they have been planted. The Village has planted more than 325 trees since 2006, and we plant more every Arbor Day. We are proud to have been designated a Tree City USA for ten years.

Margay Blackman
Mayor