

Shade Tree Committee

Review of Design for Arctic Avenue between Georgia and Mississippi Avenues, and Georgia Avenue corner north of Arctic Avenue

March 14, 2023

Description:

The design calls for replacing six existing trees with five new ones and one new low-plant area, as well as adding two other low-plant areas. Overhead wires run along the north side of Arctic Avenue about seventeen feet above the sidewalk where the plants would be located. London Plane trees are called for as the new trees. Red Yucca, Feather Reed Grass, Blue Fescue Grass and Autumn Joy Sedum are called for in the low-plant areas, with a ninety pound boulder helping define each low-plant space.

Concerns:

1. London Plane trees, although somewhat resilient to occasional flooding, are too large a tree for the Arctic Avenue sites, since they may try to reach fifty feet in height and have a massive limb and root structure, not easily accommodating to wires or small tree pit area.

Recommendations:

1. Do not plant London Plane trees in the design's tree pits. London Plane is just too big a tree for the space.
2. Substitute a smaller tree species native to New Jersey for the London Plane trees of the design. Smaller trees might be:
 - a. Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) to 25', or
 - b. American Hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) to 25', or
 - c. Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*) to 25' (with a single trunk; multiple trunk plants would behave like a bush), or
 - d. Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) to 30', or
 - e. Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) to 20', or
 - f. Waxmyrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) to 20' (grows as a tall, airy bush; after some period of growth it should be pruned to narrow it at the base).
3. Red Yucca, a plant native to North America, is a good choice for the low-plant areas. Feather Reed Grass, Blue Fescue Grass and Autumn Joy are not indigenous, and the sites might be more easily successful with native grasses or flowers. Native grasses would include Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) and Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*); Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum rochebrunianum*); or Yarrow (*Achillea Asterales*). Perennial flowering native plants that might do well include: Blackeyed or Browneyed Susans (*Rudbeckia herta* or *triloba*); Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*); Ironweed (*Vernonia fasciculata*); Columbine (*Aquilegia*).
4. Some kind of border (not shown in the design drawings) is desirable for the low-plant areas, to hold in soil and define the space.

will send
photos of
plant 15 and cut
of stake

5. New trees, with a water-dispensing bag as part of the installation, should have the water bags filled at least WEEKLY during the FIRST TWO SUMMERS after planting, to avoid shriveling or die-back.