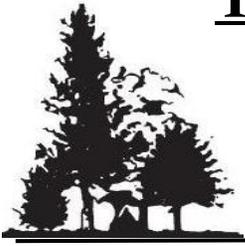


THE KENNETT PIKE ASSOCIATION



SPECIAL BULLETIN



MAY 2019

THIS ISSUE UPDATES THE COMMUNITY ON THE TREE CUTTING ALONG KENNETT PIKE AND CONNECTING ROADS



To ensure the reliability of electric power to residences and commercial establishments, Delmarva Power is required to trim back the branches and limbs of trees that interfere with the power transmission, especially during storms. On a roughly 4-year cycle, Delmarva trims back the trees where they have grown too close to power lines and present a significant threat of power interruption. In the case of trees close to the poles, particularly where there are transformers which need ready access, a 10-foot clearance is required to facilitate the safe use of aerial bucket lifts.

The tree-trimming process is unfortunate but necessary to meet power reliability requirements imposed by the federal and state governments. Sadly, in many instances there simply is not any way to trim back the trees to the required clearances without undermining the aesthetics of the trees. We have all seen trees growing up into power lines with the centers carved out, and trees with a single long limb jutting out over the roadway under the power lines. However, for the past 50-years the tree trimming has been acceptable for the most part along the Kennett Pike, Route 100 and connecting roadways -- done in moderation with respect for both the health and aesthetics of the trees being trimmed.

In late April of 2019 this all changed. Delmarva and their contractor Asplundh began to “trim” trees along the Kennett Pike from Centreville to Kirk Road, and along the connector Roads – Twaddell Mill, Kirk, Centre Meeting, Old Kennett, and Pyles Ford among others. Soon to be done are Valley Way, Holly and Way Road. However, unlike in the past, the “trimming” was clearly much more severe – entire trees were stripped of all limbs and branches leaving only bare trunks, and whole sides of trees were stripped facing the roadway. In some cases the nearest homeowner was told what was to be done, in other cases no consultation took place.

The Kennett Pike Association, in concert with the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Partnership and Delaware Greenways, intervened and a meeting was organized to prevent further damage. On Saturday May 4 a meeting was held. John Danzeisen (President KPA and Co-Chair BVNSB Partnership) and Gary Linarducci (Board Member Delaware Greenways and Co-Chair BVNSB Partnership) led the discussion. Attending were: Senator Laura Sturgeon, Representative Krista Griffith, Representative Gerald Brady, Mary Roth of Delaware Greenways, Bud Freel of DelDOT, DelDot's Byway Coordinator Mike Hahn, and 4 members of the KPA Board including Bill Duncan who is an arborist and horticulturist. Representing Delmarva Power were 2 senior Executives.

After a very useful and productive discussion and exchange of views, the following was agreed:

1. Delmarva would stop all tree cutting and trimming until KPA's Bill Duncan and Delmarva's Forestry representative walked the entire route of the tree cutting and agreed where mitigating plantings were needed, and the parameters for resumed trimming. This was subsequently accomplished with agreement that trimming would revert to more moderate trimming as in the past.
2. In the future, trimming plans along any National Scenic Byway, State Byway and connecting roads will be notified to the appropriate legislators, civic groups (including KPA) and proximate neighbors, facilitating community input.
3. Delmarva will work more closely with the civic groups and the community when any work is done on Byways.
4. KPA and the BVNSB Partnership will work to inform community residents along the Byways about the importance of power reliability and the responsible trimming of trees.
5. KPA and the BVNSB Partnership will work with DelDOT and our legislators to develop extra protections in the permitting process for tree trimming on the Byways.
6. KPA and the BVNSB Partnership will explore ways to get the cables underground on the Byways.
7. Delmarva will remove all logs and unsustainable tree trunks in the near future.

We will keep KPA members up to date on any additional developments. Thank you for your support!

The Kennett Pike Association
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