

TOWN OF CANTON



WEST MOUNTAIN ROAD REPORT

March 21, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Chief Administrative Officer, Robert Skinner's request to submit a report regarding the intersection of West Mountain Road and Cherrybrook Road where a large sycamore tree is growing in the middle of West Mountain Road the following report is submitted.

FACTS:

On March 7, 2023, Director of Public Works, Robert Martin received a telephone call from a town resident about the safety of the intersection at West Mountain and Cherry Brook Roads. In particular, the resident raised concerns about a tree (hereinafter "TREE") that is located on West Mountain Road at the intersection with Cherry Brook Road (State Route 179). The location of the TREE presents sight line difficulties. Likewise, stopping sight distance may be adversely affected from vehicles traveling on Cherry Brook Road at the intersection with West Mountain Road.

As a result of the resident's complaint, Director Martin, Police Chief /Town LTA Christopher Arciero, Town of Canton Tree Warden, Thomas Richardson and CAO Robert Skinner have discussed the matter. In an effort to determine future actions or recommendations, the following additional factors are presented:

- Since 2011 there have been approximately five (5) documented accidents at the intersection of Cherry Brook Road and West Mountain Road where the TREE may have been a contributing factor to the accident. The last documented (TREE-referenced/associated) accident was in October 2018.
- When asked about his concerns regarding this intersection, Canton Fire Chief Gotaski responded via email as follows: *"It is a tight turn for a few of our vehicles entering and exiting. If we are responding to that area, we normally go up route 44 to Indian Hill to avoid that intersection."*
- When previously asked about his concerns regarding this intersection, Canton School Bus (Dean Martel) responded via email as: *"Hi Chief my opinion the tree in question should be removed. I don't use that road with the big busses because of the tree, also we have to pull past the tree too far out with the smaller vehicles to get a good sightline because the state does not clear back enough. We have had a few close calls. Let me know if you need any more info Thanks! Dean."* (2014).
- There are additional concerns that large vehicles, particularly with snowplow blades, exiting from West Mountain Road are extended further onto Cherry Brook Road to improve sightlines. Moreover, some large trucks turning left onto West Mountain Road do so to the left of the TREE which adds another safety concern due to the location of the TREE and traffic on West Mountain Road. (See attached photos).
- Given the expected continued growth of the TREE the adverse sightline issues will continue to occur.
- Since the State DOT has a planned milling and paving project scheduled for Cherry Brook Road, Tom Richardson contacted Department of Transportation (DOT) Arborist, Steven Geddes to discuss the TREE. On March 16, 2023, Mr. Geddes met Chief Arciero and Tom Richardson onsite. Mr. Geddes found the TREE in good health. When asked if

the DOT would consider taking any action to improve the sightline, Mr. Geddes responded when a town road intersects with a state road, Connecticut General Statute 13a-99a(c) provides guidance as to who is responsible for such a situation. Connecticut General Statute 13a-99a(c) states in relevant part “... *When a town road crosses or intersects a state highway right-of-way at grade level, the responsibility for maintenance of that portion of the town road from the edge of the state highway right-of-way to the edge of the traveled portion of the state highway shall remain with the town; and any liability for neglect or default of maintenance of such portion of the town road shall be in accordance with section 13a-149.*”

Mr. Geddes further stated, that as part of the project preparation, State DOT has retained a tree contractor as part of the project and that consideration would be offered to remove the TREE and the other two nearby trees as long as the town of Canton takes responsibility to grind the stumps as part of the paving project.

FUTURE DISCUSSION or ACTION CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Cut down the TREE and the two Sycamores north of the West Mountain/Cherry Brook intersection to improve the sight distance.
2. Cut down the TREE, only and reassess the sight distance with the two remaining Sycamore trees.
3. Cut down the two Sycamores north of the West Mountain/Cherry Brook intersection to improve the sight distance. Re-assess the sight distance and monitor the future growth of the TREE.
4. Retain a licensed traffic engineer to conduct a recognized sight distance analysis as to intersection sight distance and stopping sight distance.

Town of Canton Tree Evaluation

Resident Town of Canton Date 3/17/2023
Address Intersection of West Mt. and Cherry Brook Rd.
Location Middle of intersection Phone 860-693-7875
Inspector Tom Richardson Specis Sycamore Height 80' DBH 36"

Visual Inspection

Target within 1 ½ X Tree height ___ Edge tree ___ Tallest tree ___ Lone tree
 Construction / Soil Disturbance ___ Exposed sight

Crown

___ Small Medium ___ Large ___ Low Medium ___ High Vigor ___ Very dense
___ Dead Branches ___ Unbalanced ___ Two Sections ___ Weakly Attached Sprouts

Scaffold Limbs

___ broken / hanging branches ___ Internodal pruning Dead Limbs ___ Cracks Decay
___ lighting injury ___ Strom injury Open Wounds Abrupt Bends

Trunk

___ Canker / open wound ___ Crack / open seam ___ Decay ___ Conks ___ Burl ___ Lean
___ V-Crotch ___ Dead Bark ___ Open Cavity

Roots / Root Collar

___ Mushrooms ___ Root decay ___ Wet soil ___ Loose / Dead Bark Root flare

Comments

I inspected the tree with Arborist Steve Bristol. When inspecting the tree, we found it to be in good health. The tree has asphalt surrounding it on all sides but that does not appear to be affecting the health of the tree. We did notice debris pushed up against the trunk of the tree which should be removed to prevent the trunk from developing decay. We can perform tests to see if the tree has any decay in the trunk but I would not advise that test at this time.



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