

**The Village of Martin's Additions
(Urban Forest Ordinance)**

Ordinance No.: 2021-3-1
Introduced: March 18, 2021
Adopted: June 17, 2021
Effective Date: July 7, 2021

ORDINANCE TO ADOPT AN URBAN FOREST PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Maryland Code, Local Government Article, Section 5-202, as amended, grants to the legislative body of every incorporated municipality in Maryland general power to pass such ordinances not contrary to the Constitution of Maryland, or the public general law, as deemed necessary in order to assure the good government of the municipality, to protect and preserve the municipality's rights, property, and privileges, to preserve peace and good order, to secure persons and property from danger and destruction, and to protect the health, comfort and convenience of the citizens of the municipality;

WHEREAS, the Natural Resources Article, Title 5, Subtitle 4, Part IV of the Maryland Code authorizes a municipal corporation to implement a local urban and community forestry program within its jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, Section 501 of the Charter of the Village of Martin's Additions authorizes the Village Council to pass such ordinances as it may deem necessary for the preservation of the property, rights, and privileges of the Village and its residents;

WHEREAS, trees are important natural resource and benefit the Village and its residents in many ways, including by filtering the air, capturing carbon dioxide, providing shade, buffering noise, harboring wildlife, controlling storm water runoff, and stabilizing soils, and the Village Council has determined that trees should be planted to help offset the impact of development activities; and

WHEREAS, after proper notice to the public, the Village Council introduced the following Ordinance in an open meeting conducted on the 18th day of March, 2021;

WHEREAS, after proper notice to the public, the Village Council considered this Ordinance in public session assembled on the 17th day of June, 2021; and

WHEREAS, upon consideration of the testimony and evidence presented at the public

NOW, THEREFORE, the Village Council does hereby adopt the following Ordinance.

BE IT ORDAINED AND ORDERED, this 17th day of June, 2021, by the Village Council, acting under and by virtue of the authority given it by the Maryland Code and the Charter of the Village of Martin's Additions, that the Village Code is hereby amended as follows:

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CHAPTER 6 REGISTRATIONS AND PERMITS

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ARTICLE 3. VILLAGE BUILDING PERMITS

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Section 6-303. Applications; Investigations and Inspection; Issuance

- (a) Any person planning to engage in an activity covered by this Article that requires a Montgomery County building permit shall apply for a Village building permit within three (3) days of applying for the County permit.
- (b) An application for a Village building permit shall be submitted in a form prescribed by the Council and shall be accompanied by (i) a copy of the Montgomery County building permit or application for a Montgomery County building permit for the activity, **(ii) a statement as to whether a Montgomery County sediment control permit is necessary for the project and, if so, whether the applicant intends to plant an Environmental Impact tree or pay the associated fee according to Chapter 9 of this Code,** and (iii) such plats, plans, drawings, reports and the like as the Council or Code Enforcement Officer deems necessary to determine whether the proposed activity would be in derogation of the health, safety, comfort or welfare of the present or future inhabitants of the Village. For any construction that would be located within four (4) feet of a required setback, or within two (2) feet of a lot line, a site plan and boundary survey with a margin of error of +/- one-tenth (0.10) of a foot, or better, must be submitted depicting all existing and proposed buildings and their distances to the lot lines. The application shall be signed by all the owners of the property and, where related to the erection or construction of, or addition to a building, shall also state the intended use of such building or addition thereto.

CHAPTER 9

URBAN FOREST; VILLAGE TREES

Section 9-101. Definitions

For purposes of this Chapter:

“Environmental Impact tree” mean a tree planted in accordance with the requirements of this Chapter, selected from a list of approved trees adopted by resolution of the Village Council, from time to time.

“Village tree” means any tree, the center of whose trunk at ground level is located on public right of way and which was planted by or with the permission of the Village or for which the Village has assumed care and treatment.

(Ord. No. 2021-3-1, adopted 6/17/21, effective 7/7/21)

Section 9-102. Purpose

- (a) The tree canopy is an attractive, distinctive feature of the Village. Trees are part of a larger ecosystem and assist in the control of air, noise, and visual pollution. They moderate the climate and help conserve energy. **They filter air, capture carbon dioxide, provide shade, buffer noise, harbor wildlife, control storm water runoff, and stabilize soils.** They **help mitigate the impacts of the development of land and** play an important part in controlling water run-off and thus in maintaining the health of Rock Creek, the Potomac River, and the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to improving the quality of residents’ lives, trees positively affect the property values of the entire community. It is therefore in the interest of the Village, its residents, and its property owners to protect, preserve, and enhance the tree canopy.
- (b) The provisions of this Chapter are declared necessary for promoting and enhancing the beauty of the Village; **mitigating the impacts of development of private land by requiring the planting of Environmental Impact trees;** protecting Village trees from damage or destruction; regulating the planting, maintenance, and (when necessary) removal of Village trees; guarding against and eliminating any dangerous conditions caused by trees; and preventing damage to any public sewer main, street, sidewalk, or other public or private property.

(Ord. No. 2021-3-1, adopted 6/17/21, effective 7/7/21)

unavailability to the Tree Supervisor. The duties and responsibilities of the Tree Supervisor are, subject to the approval of the Village Council or its designee, to:

- (1) direct, manage, supervise, and control the planting, maintenance, protection, and (when necessary) removal of Village trees.
- (2) obtain all necessary permits or authorizations from the Maryland Forest Service for the maintenance or removal of Village trees.
- (3) (Reserved).
- (4) inspect all Village Trees with a Licensed Tree Expert at least once a year to determine their health and needs.
- (5) order the treatment, pruning, or removal of any Village tree that is deemed to be injurious to sewers, gas or water lines, or other public utilities; is infected with disease or pests; interferes with the visibility of any traffic-control device or signal; interferes with the proper spread of light along the street from a public street light; or impedes pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- (6) obtain an opinion from a second Licensed Tree Expert before removing a tree unless the tree meets the conditions noted in subsection (5) above or presents an immediate hazard to people or property. Any Licensed Tree Expert providing a second opinion shall not be hired to perform the removal.
- (7) consult with utility companies concerning scheduling of their pruning of Village trees.
- (8) implement any Village tree plan approved by the Village Council.
- (9) **make recommendations from time to time to the Village Council regarding what species of trees should be included on the Village's list of approved Environmental Impact trees.**
- (10) **monitor compliance with the provisions of this Chapter concerning the required planting of Environmental Impact trees.**

- (b) The Village Council may appoint a Tree Committee to advise the Council and the Tree Supervisor on matters pertaining to trees in the Village, to assist the Tree Supervisor with tree inspections, and to participate in consultations regarding Village trees.

requires the permit.

- (b) If the permittee or property owner concludes that a required Environmental Impact tree cannot be planted on the subject property because of a lack of sufficient open space or for any other reason, the permittee or property owner must pay a fee to the Village in the amount established by resolution of the Village Council, from time to time. The Village will use fees collected under this Section to implement this Chapter and to install Village trees.**

(Ord. No. 2021-3-1, adopted 6/17/21, effective 7/7/21)

Section 9-104. Planting a Tree on Public Right of Way

- (a) Only the Village is authorized to plant trees on public right ways.
- (b) All new trees planted on public right of ways shall have a caliper of at least two (2) inches, shall have straight trunks, and shall be free of disease and pests.
- (c) Species, spacing, and exact location of trees planted on public right of ways shall be determined by the Tree Supervisor, taking into consideration any Village tree plan and the proximity of any sidewalks, streets, traffic-control devices, public utilities, and other pertinent factors. However, no tree shall be planted:
 - (1) within thirty (30) feet of a street intersection, measured from the corner of the intersection curb nearest to where the tree is to be planted.
 - (2) within twenty (20) feet of a fire hydrant.
 - (3) within six (6) feet of a driveway or light pole.

Section 9-105. Tree-Care Standards

Treatment of Village trees shall be performed according to standards approved by the Tree Supervisor, the Maryland Forest Service, and any other State or County entity having authority over such work.

Section 9-106. Protection of Village Trees

Without prior approval from the Tree Supervisor, it shall be municipal infraction to:

- (a) remove (or cause to be removed) any Village tree.
- (b) injure or prune (or cause to be injured or pruned) any Village tree.

- (b) The utility company must give a least two (2) weeks' notice to the Village Manager of its intent to prune Village trees and include with its notice a copy of the State issued permit. Upon receipt of such notice, the Village Manager will notify the Tree Supervisor. In circumstances where compliance with the notice requirement is impossible or highly impractical, the utility company shall provide notices as far in advance as is reasonably possible and in any event shall inform the Village Manager before commencing work.

(Ord. No. 11-15-1, adopted 1/21/16, effective 2/10/16)

Section 9-108. Protection of Village Trees During Construction

- a) During the erection, alteration, or repair of any building or structure, guards, fences, or barriers shall be placed in such locations as are determined by the Tree Supervisor or Code Enforcement Officer to be necessary to prevent injury to Village trees. It shall be a violation to alter, damage, or remove such guards, fences, or barriers.
- b) It shall be a municipal infraction to remove, injure, or prune a Village tree in preparation for or during construction. The owner of the property under construction and the contractor performing the construction are jointly and severally liable for such actions.

(Ord. No. 11-15-1, adopted 1/21/16, effective 2/10/16)

Section 9-109 Protection of Village Tree Roots

All subsurface projects shall comply with the following requirements for the protection of the roots of Village trees and shall also comply with any requirements of the Maryland Forest Service, unless specific deviations are authorized by the Tree Supervisor, the Maryland Forest Service, or other entity with authority over such trees.

- (a) When persons, including any working under contract with the Village, encounter roots of a Village tree while conducting or engaging in a subsurface project, they shall modify the project to protect the tree's root system.
- (b) For trees less than 6 inches in diameter, as measured 4.5 feet above average ground level, all machine digging shall stop at the drip line of the tree. For trees 6 inches or more in diameter, as measured 4.5 feet above average ground level, all machine digging shall stop when roots over 1 inch in diameter are encountered. Roots over 1 inch in diameter may not be cut without the approval of the Tree

- (a) All trees and shrubs located on private property in the Village shall be maintained in a condition so as not to interfere with:
- (1) the proper spread of light along a street from a streetlight;
 - (2) the visibility of any traffic-control sign, device, or signal; or
 - (3) the required clearance over public sidewalks (8 feet) or streets (12 feet).
- (b) All trees and shrubs located on private property in the Village shall be maintained in a condition so as not to constitute a hazard to persons or property on public right of way or to harbor pests or diseases that constitute a threat to other trees within the Village.
- (c) The owners of property on which is located any tree or shrub that has been determined by the Tree Supervisor to be not in compliance with the provisions of subsections (a) or (b) above shall be notified of that determination in writing by hand delivery or certified mail and shall treat, trim, or remove and destroy the tree or shrub or portion thereof with such period as the Tree Supervisor may specify. The time specified for compliance shall be at least thirty (30) days unless a shorter period is indicated in the judgment of the Tree Supervisor.
- (d) An owner may appeal any determination by the Tree Supervisor to the Village Council. The appeal shall be made in writing and delivered to the Village Manager within ten (10) days of receipt of the notice [described in (c) above] or within the time specified for compliance, whichever is shorter. The nature and grounds for the appeal shall be specified, and any materials or information relied upon in support of the appeal shall be submitted with the appeal.
- (e) The Village Council shall consider the appeal at a public meeting at which any interested party may appear and participate. Written notice of the meeting shall be delivered or sent by certified mail to any owner who appealed at least five (5) days before the meeting. The Council may affirm, withdraw, or modify the notice and shall advise the appellants in writing of its decisions. If the notice is upheld in whole or in part, the Council shall specify a date for compliance.
- (f) If the owner fails to comply with a notice from the Tree Supervisor within the time specified, the Village may perform any work directed in the notice and shall bill the reasonable costs thereof to said owner. The Village may recover any expenses related to the performance of such work from the owner through any means available under law, including, but not limited to, as a lien on the property tax bill.

or shrub, or branch thereof, shall fall into a public right-of-way, the Village shall remove the fallen vegetation that obstructs the right-of-way. The owner shall be responsible for removing that portion of the tree or shrub, or branches thereof, which fall onto the owner's private property. The Village and the owner may reach an agreement as to the cost-sharing for the removal. If no agreement is reached, the Village shall remove only that portion of the vegetation that has fallen into the right-of-way.

(Ord. No. 2019-09-2, adopted 11/21/19, effective 12/11/19)

Section 9-111. Entry on Private Property to Treat Village Trees

With prior notice to a private property owner, the Tree Supervisor and any agent or contractor of the Village may enter upon such private property when necessary for the purpose of inspecting or treating Village trees or monitoring compliance with a requirement to plant an Environmental Impact tree. However, any private property disturbed for such purposes the purpose of inspecting or treating Village trees shall be returned by the Village as nearly as possible to its original condition, and any expenses incurred shall be borne by the Village.

(Ord. No. 2021-3-1, adopted 6/17/21, effective 7/7/21)

Section 9-112. Interference with Tree Supervisor

No person shall prevent, delay, interfere with, or otherwise obstruct the Tree Supervisor or any agent or contractor of the Village while engaged in planting, treating, caring for, or removing any tree as authorized in the Chapter. Any person violating this Section shall be guilty of a municipal infraction and shall be subject to penalties.

Section 9-113. Enforcement

- (a) It shall be a violation of this Chapter to:
 - 1) fail to comply with a notice from the Tree Supervisor.
 - 2) interfere with the Tree Supervisor or any agent or contractor of the Village in the performance of their duties and responsibilities under this Chapter.
 - 3) fail to plant a Environmental Impact tree or pay the associated fee within six (6) months of the date of commencement of the activity that requires a Montgomery County sediment control permit.
 - 4) fail to comply with any other provision of this Chapter.
- (b) A violation of this Chapter shall constitute a municipal infraction for which a citation may be issued and a fine imposed.

that:


(1) If any part or provision of this ordinance is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the part or provision held to be invalid shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any remaining part thereof; and

(2) This Ordinance shall take effect on the 7th day of July, 2021 (at least 20 days after adoption).

ATTEST:


Katie Howard, Secretary

THE VILLAGE OF MARTIN'S ADDITIONS


Andrew Kauders, Chair
Village Council

Underline indicates new material

~~Strikethrough~~ indicates material deleted

* * * indicates material unchanged

