

Ordinance No.12 – 2024

GREENWICH TOWNSHIP GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Ordinance of the Township of Greenwich for Tree Removal and Replacement

SECTION I. Purpose:

An ordinance to establish requirements for tree removal and replacement in the Township of Greenwich to reduce soil erosion and pollutant runoff, promote infiltration of rainwater into the soil, and protect the environment, public health, safety, and welfare.

SECTION II. Definitions:

For the purpose of this ordinance, the following terms, phrases, words, and their derivations shall have the meanings stated herein unless their use in the text of this ordinance clearly demonstrates a different meaning. When consistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words used in the plural number include the singular number, and words used in the singular number include the plural number. The use of the word "shall" means the requirement is always mandatory and not merely directory.

A. "Applicant" means any "person", as defined below, who applies for approval to remove trees regulated under this ordinance.

B. "Critical Root Radius (CRR)" – means the zone around the base of a tree where the majority of the root system is found. This zone is calculated by multiplying the diameter at breast height (DBH) of the tree by 1.5 feet. For example: a tree with a 6" DBH would have a CRR = 6"x1.5' = 9'.

C. "Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)" means the diameter of the trunk of a mature tree generally measured at a point four and a half feet above ground level from the uphill side of the tree. For species of trees where the main trunk divides below the 4 ½ foot height, the DBH shall be measured at the highest point before any division.

D. "Hazard Tree" means a tree or limbs thereof that meet one or more of the criteria below. Trees that do not meet any of the criteria below and are proposed to be removed solely for development purposes are not hazard trees.

1. Has an infectious disease or insect infestation;

2. Is dead or dying;
3. Obstructs the view of traffic signs or the free passage of pedestrians or vehicles, where pruning attempts have not been effective;
4. Is causing obvious damage to structures (such as building foundations, sidewalks, etc.); or
5. Is determined to be a threat to public health, safety, and/or welfare by a certified arborist or Licensed Tree Expert (LTE).

E. "Person" means any individual, resident, corporation, utility, company, partnership, firm, or association.

F. "Planting strip" means the part of a street right-of-way between the public right-of-way and the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic or between the abutting property line and the curb or traveled portion of the street, exclusive of any sidewalk.

G. "Resident" means an individual who resides on the residential property or contractor hired by the individual who resides on the residential property where a tree(s) regulated by this ordinance is removed or proposed to be removed.

H. "Street Tree" means a tree planted in the sidewalk, planting strip, and/or in the public right-of-way adjacent to (or specified distance from) the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic. This also includes trees planted in planting strips within the roadway right-of-way, i.e., islands, medians, pedestrian refuges.

I. "Tree" means a woody perennial plant, typically having a single stem or trunk growing to a considerable height and bearing lateral branches at some distance from the ground.

J. "Tree Caliper" means the diameter of the trunk of a young tree, measured six (6) inches from the soil line. For young trees whose caliper exceeds four (4) inches, the measurement is taken twelve (12) inches above the soil line.

K. "Tree removal" means to kill or to cause irreparable damage that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. This includes, but is not limited to, excessive pruning, application of substances that are toxic to the tree, over-mulching or improper mulching, and improper grading and/or soil compaction within the critical root radius around the base of the tree that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. Removal does not include responsible pruning and maintenance of a tree, or the application of treatments intended to manage invasive species.

SECTION III. Regulated Activities:

A. Application Process:

1. Any person planning to remove a street tree, as defined as Tree removal, with DBH of 2.5" or more or any non-street tree with DBH of 6" or more on their property shall submit a Tree Removal Application to the Zoning Officer. No tree shall be removed until municipal officials have reviewed and approved the removal.
2. An application fee of \$50 and review fee of \$200 shall be submitted with a Tree Removal Application. Additional review fees may be required if the application is for the removal of three (3) or more trees.

B. Tree Replacement Requirements

1. Any person who removes one or more street tree(s) with a DBH of 2.5" or more, unless exempt under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table below.
2. Any person, who removes one or more tree(s), as defined as Tree removal, with a DBH of 6" or more per acre, unless otherwise detailed under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table.

The species type and diversity of replacement trees shall be in accordance with Appendix A or as agreed to by the reviewing authority.

Replacement tree(s) shall:

1. Be replaced in kind with a tree that has an equal or greater DBH than tree removed or meet the Tree Replacement Criteria in the table below;
2. Be planted within twelve (12) months of the date of removal of the original tree(s) or at an alternative date specified by the municipality;
3. Be monitored by the applicant for a period of two (2) years to ensure their survival and shall be replaced as needed within twelve (12) months; and
4. Shall not be planted in temporary containers or pots, as these do not count towards tree replacement requirements.
5. Shall not be planted in a Public Right of Way planting strip. Street trees shall be planted a minimum of ten feet (10') distant from the public sidewalk and be located within an easement for access and emergency maintenance of the trees.

Tree Replacement Requirements Table:

Category	Tree Removed (DBH)	Tree Replacement Criteria (See Appendix A)
1	DBH of 2.5" (for street trees) or 6" (for non-street trees) to 12.99"	Replant 1 tree with a minimum tree caliper of 1.5" for each tree removed
2	DBH of 13" to 22.99"	Replant 2 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed
3	DBH of 23" to 32.99"	Replant 3 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed
4	DBH of 33" or greater	Replant 4 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed

C. Replacement Alternatives:

1. If the municipality determines that some or all required replacement trees cannot be planted on the property where the tree removal activity occurred, then the applicant shall do one of the following:
 - a. Plant replacement trees in a separate area(s) approved by the municipality.
 - b. Pay a fee of (amount to be set by municipality) per tree removed. This fee shall be placed into a fund dedicated to tree planting and continued maintenance of the trees.

SECTION IV. Exemptions:

All persons shall comply with the tree replacement standard outlined above, except in the cases detailed below. Proper justification, including but not limited to photos or statements from a NJ Licensed Tree Expert (LTE) as defined in NJ Statute 45:15C-11 or arborist, shall be provided, in writing, to the municipality by all persons claiming an exemption.

- A. Residents who remove less than four (4) trees per acre that fall into category 1, 2, or 3 of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table within a five-year period. The number of trees removed is a rolling count across a five-year period. For example, if 3 trees from category 1 are removed in July 2023, the 'count' resets to zero in July 2028. However, if 1 tree from category 1 is removed in July 2023 and another in July of 2025 the first tree will come off the count in July 2028 and the second in July 2030.

- B. Tree farms in active operation, nurseries, fruit orchards, and garden centers;
- C. Properties used for the practice of silviculture under an approved forest stewardship or woodland management plan that is active and on file with the municipality;
- D. Any trees removed as part of a municipal or state decommissioning plan. This exemption only includes trees planted as part of the construction and predetermined to be removed in the decommissioning plan.
- E. Any trees removed pursuant to a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved environmental clean-up, or NJDEP approved habitat enhancement plan;
- F. Approved game management practices, as recommended by the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife;
- G. Hazard trees may be removed with no fee or replacement requirement.

SECTION V. Enforcement:

This ordinance shall be enforced by the Township Code Enforcement Officer during the course of ordinary enforcement duties.

SECTION VI. Violations and Penalties:

Any person(s) who is found to be in violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject to a fine of \$ 1,000.

SECTION VIII. Severability:

Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this Ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this Ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION VIII. Effective Date:

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and any publication as may be required by law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Greenwich that this Ordinance shall become effective upon final passage and publication as provided by law.

Appendix A

Approved list of Replacement tree Species and Planting Standards for the Township of Greenwich

The mix, number and location of trees or substitutions shall be reviewed and approved by the Township Engineer. Not all tree species may be appropriate for certain uses, locations, site conditions, and soil types.

Tree Species	Common Name
Acer Rubrum	Red Maple
Acer Negundo	Boxelder
Betula Nigra	River Birch
Carpinus Caroliniana	American Hornbeam
Carya Ovalis	Red Hickory
Cornus Florida	Flowering Dogwood (or other dogwoods)
Fraxinus Americana	White Ash
Ginkgo Bilboa (male)	Ginkgo
Gleditsia triacanthos var. Inermis	Honey Locust (thornless)
Liriodendron Styraciflua	Tuliptree
Nyssa Sylvatica	Blackgum
Populus Grandidentata	Bigtooth Aspen
Quercus Alba	White Oak
Quercus Palustris	Pin Oak
Quercus Rubra	Northern Red Oak
Tilia Cordata	Littleleaf Linden
Ulmus Americana	American Elm "Princeton"

The planting procedure and season for all plantings shown above shall follow the recommendations from the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation, "Trees for New Jersey Streets" Sixth Edition, 2016, or latest edition.

INTRODUCTION: June 17, 2024

Council	Motion	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Chila						
Councilman DiMenna						
Councilman Nastase						
Councilwoman Tranquillo						
Mayor Giovannitti						

TOWNSHIP OF GREENWICH

By: _____
Vincent Giovannitti, Mayor

I, Holly Tropea, do hereby attest the above Ordinance 12-2024 was introduced at a meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Township of Greenwich on June 17, 2024. A public hearing will occur on July 15, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.

ATTEST:

Holly Tropea, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk

ADOPTION: July 15, 2024

Council	Motion	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Chila						
Councilman DiMenna						
Councilman Nastase						
Councilwoman Tranquillo						
Mayor Giovannitti						

I, Holly Tropea, do hereby attest the above Ordinance 12-2024 was adopted at a meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Township of Greenwich on July 15, 2024 after a public hearing which was scheduled for July 15, 2024. Said Ordinance shall take effect in accordance with the law.

ATTEST:

Holly Tropea, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk

On this _____ day of _____ 2024, I hereby approve the above Ordinance **12-2024**.

Vincent Giovannitti
Mayor