Board of Directors Note to Cottagers Regarding Ash Trees – 9/11/2015

The Board would like to thank all Cottagers who participated in the September 5th meeting at the Church as well as those Cottagers who have reached out to us during this process. Your comments have been thoughtful, constructive and a benefit to the Board and your fellow Cottagers. Based on your input, the Board is revising the Tree Removal and Assessment Plan that was sent to Cottagers on August 18th.

**Cottager Consent:**

Please respond to both Alex Sade ([alex.sade1@gmail.com](mailto:alex.sade1@gmail.com)) and Nathan Hommel ([twilightc1@aol.com](mailto:twilightc1@aol.com)) no later than September 30, 2015 indicating either your consent or denial of consent to remove ash trees marked with a Red X from your property. A non-response will be deemed to be equivalent to withholding consent. If you have already consented under the prior plan, there is no need to respond again.

**Plan and Revisions:**

Later this fall, we plan to cut down all ash trees that have been marked with a Red X or Pink Ribbon that are located on common Park land as well as Red X trees on consenting cottagers' leaseholds. We have determined to take this action given the advice we have received from tree experts. Assuming we get the full participation of cottagers that will include about 160 ash trees that have been deemed by our Forester to be among the highest risk trees in the Park to property, electrical lines and people. The designation by our Forester is based on trees visibly demonstrating stress from the Ash Borer and considered to be an immediate risk (Red X), or trees not yet infected that were deemed to be a high future risk based on size or proximity to property or people (Pink Ribbon). The estimated cost for taking down these trees is about $85k.

The Board's original plan also included removing untreated trees marked with a pink ribbon located on cottager leaseholds (150 trees est.) We will delay that action step until next year. We continue to believe that we should remove all untreated pink ribbon trees, but we have concluded based on your input to delay such a decision until we have a future meeting with cottagers. If we had continued to include these trees in this fall's cutting plan, it would have added approximately $100k in cost.

**Why the Change in Course?**

Cottagers raised concerns regarding the Board's plan to implement a Special Assessment. That Assessment would have been in the range of $175k - $190k or about $2000 per cottager. After listening to your comments, we concluded that the Board would not implement a special assessment without the consent of a majority of voting cottages.

**Financing the Modified Plan**

In order to finance the estimated $85k cost to take down the designated ash trees, we will initially borrow against our Operating Account and potentially borrow against our Bank of Greene County credit line. The Board will work with the Finance Committee to optimize the actual source of funds. We will approach cottagers with a more comprehensive financing plan as well as with an update on ash trees next summer.

**Board Recommendation to Cottagers**

If you are interested in maintaining your trees that are marked with either a pink or blue ribbon, please have them treated. The optimal time to treat ash trees is either prior to October or in the April and May time frame. The trees need to be active to absorb the treatment and it takes about 6 weeks after injection for the biological agent to be circulated throughout the tree. If you are interested in tree treatment, contact Vern Rist of Healthy Trees, [vrist@hvc.com](mailto:vrist@hvc.com), 845 246 1859.

Ash trees that are not treated will eventually become infected and ultimately more difficult and expensive to remove.