# Richard Jones, Consulting Arborist

## *Arborist Narrative*

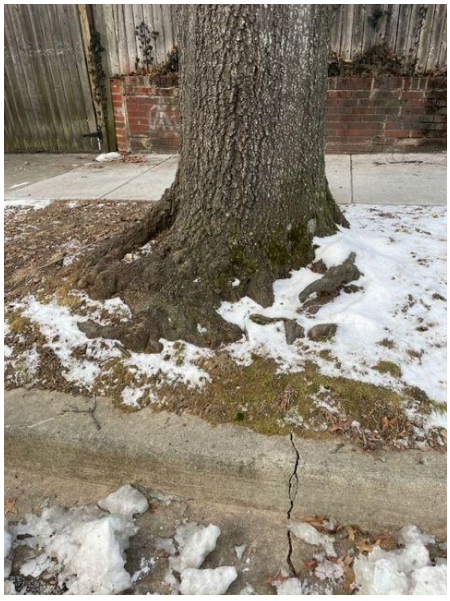
## *6629 Piney Branch Rd NW*

Proposed construction on this property is for a renovation and two-story addition to the existing structure. The construction will be restricted to the rear of the property. A site visit occurred on 1/22/2025. Trees that were inventoried near the proposed site were:

- 23” dbh *Quercus coccinea* (scarlet oak). This has a “special” designation by the city.
- 6” dbh *Cercis canadensis* (eastern redbud)
- 4” average dbh multistem *Betula nigra* (river birch)
- 25” dbh *Ulmus americana* (American elm). This tree has a “special” designation by the city

See attached tree inventory for locations and estimated CRZ’s

The critical root zone (CRZ) of the scarlet oak is calculated to be a radius of 23’. Given the proposed construction activities, the critical root zone of the scarlet oak could potentially be impacted by this work. The other nearby trees do not have a sufficient CRZ to be impacted by this work and will simply be maintained on the site. See attached tree inventory for locations and estimated CRZ.



*23” Scarlet oak. Notice cracking curb, recently repaired sidewalk, retaining wall, girdling roots and mounded root flares.*

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.21176
EXHIBIT NO.35

The scarlet oak is in fair condition. It is situated between the road and sidewalk in a planting space, and has it has very limited soil volume for the species and size of the tree. There is also a retaining wall close to the tree and a grade change of at least 3 feet. Additional signs of limited soil volume include cracked curbing, recently repaired sidewalk, girdling roots, and a significant amount of mounding in the root flares. When there is not sufficient soil volume for root development, root flares often become enlarged as structural roots concentrate there to stabilize the tree.

Because of these existing conditions, I do not believe that the scarlet oak's roots have extended beyond the planting space and sidewalk. The retaining wall does not show signs of any failure or cracking that would be expected from root intrusion, and the grade change would also discourage this.

The calculated CRZ ends at roughly 5' off the existing structure. There may be some limited excavation close to the existing building face. Excavation will occur with hand tools, any tree roots found will be cleanly cut, and if any roots over 2" in diameter are encountered, the UFA arborist will be contacted.

*Calculated CRZ boundary ends 5' from existing structure*

The soil compaction and root damage risks to this tree are primarily going to be in the roadside planting space. The project does not call for heavy equipment, and material delivery and staging will occur on the existing driveway.

To preserve this tree, we propose the following:

- The planting space will be fenced in to encompass the tree's calculated CRZ of 23'. This fencing will begin at the edge of the driveway apron, and continue down roughly 25' along the sidewalk and enclosed on all signs. DDOT approved signage will be placed at least every 20' on the fencing, and it will be maintained throughout the project.

- No entrance to this area will be allowed without permission from DC UFA arborist. No excavation, material stockpiling, fuel storage, equipment entry, other other construction activities may occur inside this fencing.
- DDOT specifications indicate this fencing should be sturdy. It should not be composed of a snow fence, or something else that is easily removed. Approved materials include welded-wire fence on t-posts or chain link fence.
- Some light pruning may be required to allow enough room for building of the two story addition without causing damage to the scarlet oak branches. Any pruning will be limited to under 20% of the living canopy, and will follow the applicable ANSI A300 standard.

Please see the attached tree protection plan for detailed components.

*Planting space will be enclosed with tree protection fence/signage. Limit of fencing indicated by tape measure/sidewalk seam location.*

Post care will depend on this fenced off area not being entered during construction, and that any pruning needed is done correctly. If post care is required, it may involve compaction relief/air spading, supplemental irrigation, or monitoring.

*Additional Notes: This tree may decline on its own due to very limited soil volume or the sidewalk replacement. Future decline should not necessarily be attributed to this proposed project. Also, I would recommend that this tree be periodically inspected for signs of root rot, as the loss of structural roots will potentially undermine tree stability.*

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