May 10, 2012

TO: Board of Managers
Chevy Chase Village

FROM: Michael L. Denger
Chair, Tree Committee

RE: Establishing Policy for Planting Trees in Village Rights of Way

The Village has approximately 2,200 trees in publicly owned rights of way and parks. They are an important part of maintaining the Village's tree canopy and its urban forest initiatives. Every year a number of the trees need to be replaced. Village residents have been given notice (as a courtesy and not a right) in the Crier and on the Village website of the trees to be planted and their locations prior to each planting cycle.

From time to time, residents have objected to the Village planting trees on the rights of way in front of or on the side of their property (often after the tree has been purchased). The Tree Committee is willing to discuss with the resident involved the species of the tree and modifying the location. There is a need to regularize the procedures and to make clear under what circumstances the Village would honor a resident's request not to plant a tree (as opposed to changing its location somewhat or planting an alternative specie).

Since rights of way are Village property to be used for the benefit of the public and planting of trees on rights of way serve important public interests, it seems appropriate to establish a policy that provides only very limited

circumstances under which a tree would not be planted, as well as a procedure for allowing residents to be heard if they object to planting a tree on the right of way. A policy providing that a tree would be planted absent "compelling circumstances" or something along those lines seems appropriate. Now that the Tree Committee is able to propose plantings several months ahead of the planting cycle, it would also seem feasible to provide a hearing for any residents if they object to a tree a couple of months before the trees are purchased.

Accordingly, I propose that we calendar the subject of formalizing Board policy for trees in the rights of way and procedures for notice and handling resident objections for the next Board meeting. This would allow us to establish a policy several months prior to the next tree planting cycle.