

## Tree removal said to be part of larger plan for waterfront enhancement

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good shape. There's nothing wrong with the tree. It's a nice, aesthetic tree. We used to put Christmas lights on that tree around Christmas.

"On the downside of that, any spruce tree or evergreen tree like that, they're shallow-rooted. So, they only live for so long to begin with."

"But like I told the board, that's not my decision. If you guys want me to cut down a good, live tree, that's totally up to you guys."

"I take down trees on a regular basis, but that's when they're totally damaged or they're split, or they're a danger to the residents."

He added, "The crabapple tree, which was in really bad shape – the crabapple tree that sat in front of that tree – has already been taken down. That's been down since right around the holidays. That thing was in bad shape. That thing, it was cracking apart; it

was small; and it needed to come down."

"That one was close to the road, so the (DPW) was able to just cut that down by hand."

The wet weather, coupled with the cost of tree removal, has delayed the DPW in removing the evergreen spruce.

"This other tree is back in the grass and, if we go cut it down – that's why the guys didn't do that right away – because if you go back up in there with equipment, you're going to tear the grass all up because it's so soft," Wills said. "That's why it hasn't been taken down yet."

"I rent lifts to take trees down; and the smaller trees like that (crabapple) tree, we just do ourselves. I only rent lifts for like a day or maybe two days at a time, because I don't own them; I've got to rent them. So, what I'll do is, I'll gather up like three or four trees that size that I have to do throughout the vil-

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lage, or trim some dead branches off a tree. I'll have a list going just that I can do myself, to save the village money.

"I don't have enough right now on my list to rent a lift. And not only that, but if I drove the lift up in there, it's going to start tearing up the grass. Now I'm going to spend a bunch of money on topsoil...."

"If it can wait, I'll wait until the ground's a little harder to get in there."

Wills noted, "I have my own trees that we maintain and we take care of, but if somebody requests a tree taken down, they've got to go through the board if it's not dead."

He said, "Do evergreen or spruce trees last a really long time? No, because they're shallow-root-

ed. So, the taller and the more mature they get, the more chance for them to come over. Is that ready to do that right now? Eh, I don't really think so. But if the board says take it down, I take it down. I'm not an elected official."

Wills said the evergreen spruce tree would not be removed before the next Village Board meeting, which is Tuesday, Feb. 20.

Nicole Johnson, a member of the Beautification Commission, explained, "Any gardener can tell you that a garden is an ever-changing project. The Lewiston Landing is no different. One focus of the Lewiston Beautification Committee is to help enhance the Lewiston Landing and make it more inviting. It already boasts a gorgeous view

of the mighty Niagara, but part of that view is obstructed by the pine tree that seems to have caused an uproar on popular social media sites.

"This tree is one of around 20 trees at the Lewiston Landing. After much discussion, including that, in 2023, a homeless man had made a 'home' underneath the tree, the blocking of the river, and the odd placement of the tree, we as a group decided to suggest to the board to have it removed. These reasons convinced me, along with many other plant and tree-loving people, that this was a good idea.

"The torch and pitchfork ideology about the removal of the tree on social media is disheartening. I find it odd the uproar over one tree when I know, for a fact, over the years that Garden Club and the Beautification Committee have planted hundreds of trees, thousands of plants, and dedicated countless hours to beautifying our village and community.

"I ask the reader: How many real Christmas trees have you had in your home over the years, and how many trees have you replanted to replace the loss of life of that tree?

"How can a small government function or get anything done if the residents of this community want an opinion on every single item some random person brings up on social media? There are board meetings – go to them, make your opinions heard. It makes a difference.

"You can also make a huge impact by doing community service instead of only voicing your opinion behind a screen. Join Garden Club, join Beautification, donate money, donate time, pick up trash, adopt a garden, do something to keep the village beautiful.

"We are always looking for more residents to partake of giving your time to keep Lewiston a beautiful place to live and visit."

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