

WHEREAS, the Amur Cork Trees (*Phellodendron amurense*, *Phellodendron lavalleyi*, and *Phellodendron sachalinense*) are known to be invasive trees that can seriously overrun forests; and

WHEREAS, because of its invasive nature governmental units, as the problem has been moving westward, including the state of Wisconsin, have prohibited sale of these trees; and

WHEREAS, the limited number of these identified in Northfield makes this the time to act and stop their spread here before the state requires it and the task becomes an expensive one; and

WHEREAS, at least three of these trees have been identified on public property within the City of Northfield.

Therefore, the Environmental Quality Commission urges the Northfield City Council to:

1. Make this a prohibited tree in Northfield
2. Direct the city staff to identify and remove these trees from public locations in as timely a manner as feasible to prevent the propagation of more trees.
3. Request staff to notify the Park and Recreation Advisory Board, educate the public, inform area nurseries, and develop public relations means to help those affected by loss of the trees understand why they need to be removed.

Rationale:

Amur cork Trees have been found to be an invasive species capable of taking over forest lands. Nancy Braker, Director of the Carleton Arboretum, Carleton, has begun to witness this invasion, alerted the Environmental Quality Commission to it being a serious danger, and has seen to Carleton removing its original older, ornamental, fruit bearing examples from the campus proper along with hundreds of young trees the older ones propagated in the Arboretum. Wisconsin (<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/AmurCorkTree.html>) and some eastern states have designated it as a prohibited tree.

Over a century ago, many of the tree's features made it a welcomed ornamental tree in the U.S. Its popularity on boulevards spread from eastern states to midwestern ones before scientists recently became aware of how easily its seeds propagate resulting in it taking over forests. A male-only tree without seeds may not be a menace, so are allowed in some states. That complexity regarding the danger of seed-bearing trees has limited the prohibition of the tree in more states. At the recommendation of Nancy Braker, we urge the simple prohibition of the tree because its sex is hard to determine in young trees and the tree appears to be able to alter its sex. Prohibiting the tree in Northfield and working to eradicate it would be the best practice given that a single tree normally produces thousands of seeds each year.

Braker knows of 2 Amur Cork Trees in the boulevards along 4th and Oak (one of which may be an older male tree), and 1 in Central Park (likely an older male). There are likely more throughout the city. Tree surveys should be checked, and staff should be on the lookout for this

tree. Older, male trees are a lower priority; the other examples should be removed as soon as feasible.

City staff should work closely with people impacted by this. Staff should: 1) provide sound, sympathetic information well in advance of removal about why a tree will be taken down; 2) make suggestions for replacing the tree; 3) let them know what trees would be better ones (based on the city's urban forest goals and options serving residents' likely interests); 4) inform them how the size and good planting practices of a replacement tree matters; 5) inform them what initial care is good for a replacement tree; 6) etc. Good communication might also include putting a notice about the removal of a tree in a park. This could include the reasons for it being cut down, information on how people can donate for a replacement, or at least information that the tree will be replaced.