

THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT ARBORETUM
AND ARBORETUM COMMITTEE

This Committee was established several years ago to catalogue and help manage the most spectacular natural resource on the Storrs campus. Through a long history of involvement of students, faculty and staff (dating from George Safford Torrey and Albert E. Moss many decades ago, through former President Homer Babbidge, to many persons today) a collection of woody plants, trees, and shrubs that is very impressive indeed has been established on campus. One need look no further than the cover of the current application form for new UConn students to see the value and importance of the plants on and to the campus—four scenes of the campus depicting an oak as the symbol of the University, and other references to the wooded campus. In recognition of this great resource, two events about a decade ago crystallized more than a century of commitment by the administration, staff, and faculty. At that time, an Arboretum Committee was established. It was from their work, the woody plantings on the Storrs campus were formally recognized by the American Association of Arboreta and Botanical Gardens as an 'Arboretum'. Following closely on that was the production of an attractive map and guide to some of the notable trees in the University of Connecticut Arboretum. This guide has been widely acknowledged and cited as one of the highlights of campus visits by prospective students, their parents, and many other visitors.

Given the impressive commitment of the State through UCONN 2000, the physical facilities of University appropriate for the outstanding academic programs that it offers, we are now witnessing an unprecedented rate of change on the campus. Old structures are being removed and renovated and new ones are being built all over campus. Along with all of this, there has been an accompanying broad-based impact on the trees and shrubs in the Arboretum. As a consequence, many comments have been directed to members of the Arboretum committee regarding the woody plants. The Committee proposes a modification in its role that would allow it to serve as an interface and buffer in issues regarding the Arboretum.

There is widespread precedent across the United States, for the direct comments to campus planning of those most knowledgeable about the plant resources. Thus, we suggest that the time is right for formal involvement of the Arboretum Committee as advisory in preservation of the appropriate elements of the current Arboretum and suggestions for new planting. The Chancellor should appoint the Committee. The Landscaping Department within Facilities has done an excellent job with campus planting, but their assigned purview is much broader by virtue of the job. Thus, the focus of Facilities must be on maintenance and not on the Arboretum per se. Furthermore, the plantings are central elements—as a living laboratory—in the teaching programs of several academic departments on campus, an interest that obviously cannot be a central element within Facilities. This is however, the central focus of many on the Arboretum Committee. Finally, as indicated above, the members of the Arboretum Committee have been deluged with calls from the campus, the State, and local community regarding the widespread cutting of trees over the past year or so. However, to this point the Arboretum Committee has not had any formal or informal role in the decisions regarding the elimination or re-siting of some of the special alumni/class trees, the grand old trees, the unique specimens used with our undergraduates in teaching, etc.


We agree to make use of the expertise and commitment represented on the Arboretum Committee in the following ways. We believe it to be in the best interests of the University overall, to have the input from this group on significant issues of campus planning. As indicated, this is the precedent in most local communities and at universities and colleges across the country. In order to help maintain the diversity and improve the quality of trees and shrubs on campus, we propose the following:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING


September 1, 2000

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1. All landscape plans that are proposed for new structures or renovated portions of the campus should be submitted to the Arboretum Committee for comments and suggestions.
2. Any plan for construction, renovation or destruction of a structure on campus which has the potential of impacting existing trees or shrubs should be submitted well in advance of the project to the Arboretum Committee for comments. "Impact" may include but not be limited to soil compaction, change in soil grade (cut or fill), changes that affect soil moisture availability, and physical damage to the bark.
3. The Arboretum Committee shall be consulted for recommendations before any tree or shrub on campus is removed or relocated.
4. The Chancellor shall appoint the Arboretum Committee.

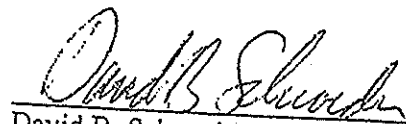


John D. Petersen
Chancellor & Provost

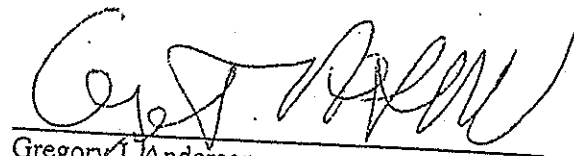


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FOR THE ARBORETUM COMMITTEE:



David B. Schroeder
Professor and Head



Gregory J. Anderson
Professor and Head