



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
COMMISSIONER NICOLE "NIKKI" FRIED

May 6, 2019

Hampstead Park Neighborhood Association

Dear Board of Directors,

This is in response to your request for written recommendations regarding the management of the live oak street trees in the Katelyn Lane neighborhood. I surveyed this area together with certain Board Members on April 17, 2019.

These live oak trees were planted too close together to grow to maturity. One of the attendees remarked that this was the intent of the landscaper, with the assumption that the neighborhood would remove approximately half the trees at some point in the future. My recommendation at this point would be to do exactly that, selecting the worst trees for removal. "Worst" primarily means those trees with poor form – two or more central leaders, particularly leaders with tight "V-shaped" forks that will result in possible hazardous situations in the future. A "U-shaped" or horizontal branch attachment is much stronger and a healthier situation for a tree. We discussed these principles during our reconnaissance, with a good understanding imparted to the Board Member present, in my opinion.

While removing the worst trees, the better half can be structurally pruned to promote their health and longevity. Hiring a Certified Arborist to oversee this work is of paramount importance, as well as contracting with a Tree Surgeon with Certified Arborist qualifications. As we discussed, removing no more than a third of the live crown, or top of the tree, should be the goal. Ideally, some trees may need to be pruned more than once over the next 10 years.

Spacing the best trees out, and proper pruning, will result in much healthier, long-lived and aesthetically pleasing trees. The neighborhood has the potential to be spectacularly attractive with these measures.

Please feel free to get in touch with any questions, comments or other correspondence.

Sincerely,

Dave Conser
Senior Forester, Serving Alachua County