



This has been a trying year. The best way to get through this together is to stick together. I wish all of you well.

Next dinner with the mayor. Given current events, we are not going to set a date for a dinner quite yet. We will see how things work out with the Phase 2.5 reopening guidelines and schedule something as soon as it is possible to do so.

Upcoming tree trimming by our electric cooperative. Every three years Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

(CCEC) contracts to have work done to clear vegetation from the area of power lines. While they have full authority to do this, we try to ensure that this trimming is done responsibly and does not substantially alter the appearance of the town. In practice, this effort is always a sensitive time for homeowners and causes considerable friction.

Often in the past we have learned of the trimming the day that the contractors arrive to begin work. This is not ideal and has only added to problems in the past. This year CCEC reached out to us ahead of time to let us know they will be here in October. They are also agreeable to talking to us about how we approach this work. I see this as a net positive. In past years they have just shown up, and we had three weeks of unhappiness.

From a dimensional standpoint, the trimming will work out as follows. Vegetation will be removed six feet below the lowest visible power line. They will also remove vegetation 10 feet out laterally from the outboard lines. For those of you involved in the Highway 24 trimming of 2017, these are the same dimensions used then.

We are looking at this a little differently this time. We believe that rather than topping or butchering a tree so as to grossly misshape it, the better approach may be to remove the tree altogether and to plant a smaller tree of a different species. If the right species is selected, it would be a long time before vegetation reaches the power lines.

The town is going to work with our Community Appearance Commission (CAC), the town's tree board, to coordinate this. The CAC will monitor the work on the road, reach consensus on which trees it makes the most sense to remove entirely, and then make a recommendation as to what species to use as a replacement.

This work would be done only for trees in the public right of way. There are some trees that have vegetation near powerlines that are actually on private property. This would need to be worked out between the homeowner and the electric cooperative—but we need to keep in mind that CCEC has the authority to keep vegetation away from power lines.

Please note in this picture that this tree would be grossly misshaped if the trimming were to be done

today. Essentially one-third of the canopy would be removed altogether. This is a good candidate tree to be removed entirely and replaced.

It is never easy to remove a tree, and it goes against our ethos. With that said, power is a life safety issue for many. Keeping these lines clear means the difference between power restorations in days rather than weeks following storms. It will also help prevent more-frequent outages during simple storms. We have been advised by an arborist that a healthy forest is one made up of different species of different ages. We think replacing many of these aged trees with smaller ones of different species will, in the aggregate, be healthy for the town.

Environmental Enhancement Grant (EEG) for stormwater and coastal erosion. Last year, with help from the North Carolina Coastal Federation, we applied for a grant from the NC Attorney General's office to address three issues in town. We were awarded funds to address erosion on the point of Veterans Park on Bogue Sound. The Coastal Federation will be working with us to install a living shoreline there. Next, we will install a drainage line across Pine Knoll Boulevard to help mitigate flooding in the Live Oak Court area. Finally, we will rehabilitate Acorn Court to deal with flooding in that area as well. We expect to start the design on these projects this fall and construct them next spring.

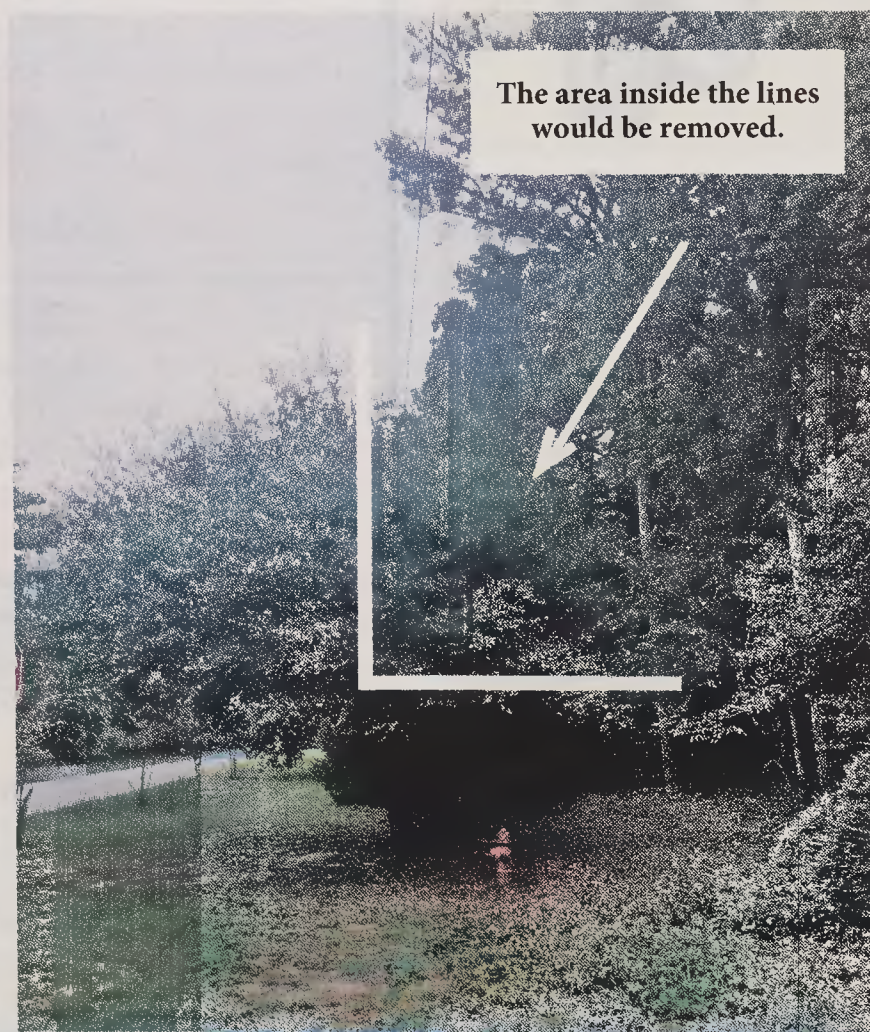
Pine Knoll Shores sign regulations. Please see "PKS Temporary and Political Sign Regulations" on page 1 in this issue for full information on this topic.

Phase 2 stormwater project. Last month in this column we told you that we were awaiting word from FEMA regarding the use of federal funds to cover our share of this project, and we have been authorized to use these funds in this way. We are still negotiating easements on the east end with certain property owners and are continuing discussions with the country club on the easement for the project on that property.

Audit of town finances. At the November 11 Board of Commissioners meeting, at 6 p.m., we will have our annual briefing by Martin Starnes and

Associates of Hickory regarding the status of our reserves and other key indicators of the town's financial position. If you are interested in this briefing and cannot attend the meeting at town hall in person, it will be broadcast via webinar, as all board meetings are. An agenda and information on how to connect to the webinar is sent via town email prior to all commissioner meetings. If you are not on the town's email list, sign up as shown below to be sure you have details on how to hear this report. Contact Town Clerk Charlie Rocci at clerk@townofpks.com if you have questions.

Sign up for town emails for storm alerts (and everything else). We send email alerts during all storm emergencies as well as all year on everything from lost pets to local events. This is a good way to keep apprised of all things town related. We have migrated to Constant Contact, a web-based email delivery service. Visit the town's website at townofpks.com and scroll down to "Town Information" on the homepage to click on a link to add yourself to this email list.



—Photo by Brian Kramer