

November 12, 2007

Ms. Kathryn Evans, M.P.H.  
Tree Conservation Commission  
City of Atlanta  
Bureau of Buildings  
Arborist Division  
55 Trinity Avenue, S.W.  
Suite 3800  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-0309

VIA FACSIMILE  
404-658-6977

Dear Ms. Evans,

Members of the board and project team for Capital City Country Club have met with me and several neighbors to discuss their application for the removal of trees at the Capital City Country Club – Brookhaven (CCC). After our discussions I am satisfied that I understand clearly why the trees must come down.

The first design scenario in CCC's planning was to renovate the golf course on the existing holes, which would have resulted in far fewer trees being removed. For several reasons, including the need to remove one fairway for additional off street parking and the need to reorient the greens away from surrounding streets for safety reasons, the design team realized that it was not possible to retain the current golf course layout. It is obvious that the design team needed to shift the entire course around. In the process several out of play areas that are comprised of buffers of trees became centerlines of fairways.

In reviewing the CCC plans and discussing the tree removal plan the following facts became evident:

1. Trees marked for removal by the city arborist have 20% of their critical root zone in the development zone. After trees were marked by the city arborist, CCC's Director of Golf Courses and Grounds, and the designer went tree by tree on the golf course to see what trees marked might be saved. CCC plans to try to save some trees marked for removal for which they are calculating recompense. CCC will be working with 2 prominent arboriculture companies to save a few significant trees they could be cutting down.
2. In my appeal I estimated many of the trees including pines were perhaps 85 years old. In fact CCC has records that an extensive pine planting was done in the 1970s. After one large pine was removed recently it was calculated that the tree was approximately 40 years old. Mr. Mobley independently confirmed that based

on his experience with growing pines that I had overestimated the age of the trees. The quality of the tree growth points to the fact that the trees that will be replanted will be grown in optimal conditions promoting more rapid growth. Routine fertilization and watering by the golf course staff, the lack of plant competition, and the involvement of arboricultural consultants will most likely promote a faster rate of reestablishment of trees.

3. In my appeal I sited the historic nature of trees individually and collectively on the golf course. Two other historic golf courses in Atlanta, East Lake and Druid Hills, removed more trees in their renovations than are planned for removal here. From a practical standpoint, given these precedents, I don't believe my arguments would prevail through a likely Superior Court appeal. The delays would be costly for CCC and at the end of the process no constructive objective would have been achieved.
4. In the course of our discussions, we have gone over a species by species review of the trees to be removed. CCC upon the withdrawal of my appeal has agreed to coordinate the involvement of Trees Atlanta in adding native trees to the site. CCC plans on procuring and planting approximately 100 additional native trees. Several native trees to be incorporated such as hickories and loblolly pines are either not readily available commercially or do not transplant well when they are the caliper required by the city ordinance. Although CCC will receive no credit for the reintroduction of key native species under the recompense formula, they have committed to this planting. The end result will be out of play areas of the golf course with native canopy and under story planted.
5. Ironically, the replanting required under the city ordinance will increase the water requirements for the trees on site now by requiring the replanting of hardwoods over pines. It is my understanding that pines are better trees for golf courses because their deep taproots pull less water from the surface and it is easier to grow any other plant material under them for that reason. There will be a net increase of approximately 300 hardwoods on the site and a reduction of approximately 300 pines. Pines due to their fast growth would also speed the replacement of the loss of TCI on the site, and provide valuable mulch.
6. CCC (based on availability) has also agreed to test the introduction of mountain longleaf pines.
7. CCC upon the withdrawal of my appeal has agreed to reinstall 30 bluebird boxes from disturbed areas to undisturbed areas to minimize disruption to the bluebird population. CCC will also provide feeders in these areas to minimize food source disruption during construction.
8. The Garden Club of America has guidelines on developing environmentally managed golf courses. CCC has discussed with me several aspects of the new development that conform with the Garden Club of America criteria especially in the area of water usage. CCC has approximately 150 acres with 20 of these acres being a small pond. Central to the renovation of the golf course is the rebuilding

of the dam, the reservoir, and the irrigation system to conserve water on site enabling the water usage to be self-sufficient.

When all the facts and circumstances were examined I became resigned to the fact that although I am sorry to see the immediate loss of a great deal of stable habitat and tree canopy, measures were taken to try to avoid this massive cutting. I am encouraged by CCC's willingness to be sensitive to restoring native habitat, the competence of their Golf Course and Grounds staff, and the resources that they can bring to bear to restore the greenspace for humans and wildlife as quickly as possible. Therefore, I am withdrawing my appeal against the preliminary approval for the removal of trees filed on November 2, 2007. I appreciate the time you have taken to discuss this appeal and to share your knowledge of arboriculture with me.

Sincerely,