Bennett Property

West Vincent Township, Chester Springs. Chester County, PA

Arborist Report: Woodland Assessment

Prepared For: Toll Brothers. Maximiliano Bustos
MBustos1@tollbrothers.com

Prepared By: Jim Paul. Certified Arborist – PD-2899A.
jpaul@shearondesign.com

Shearon Environmental Design
340 Boot Rd. 610-269-9110

Date of Report: 10/10/25

Date of Site Inspection: 9/30/25

Table of Contents:

Introduction:

The property situated on the corner of Chester Springs Rd and Conestoga Rd is currently comprised of a mix of residences, agricultural land, with a long swath of woodland along its eastern boundary. This woodland is the subject of this report, its composition as it relates to tree species, specimen trees, understory, and invasive species. This report addresses items listed in the township ordinance 315-51.D.2.

This report is designed to communicate findings of the property as it exists in its current state.

Methodology:

This report was developed with the use of satellite imagery, provided land development plans prepared by ESE Consultants, and physical in person findings. Potential specimen trees were observed and measured for DBH and their location pinned with geolocation.

Findings:

The property, though primarily used for agriculture, has some areas of established woodland. Only a few "old growth" trees exist on the property and the rest is comprised of younger (20-50 year old) trees. Primarily, the trees observed are as such; Black Walnut, Black Locust, Tulip Poplar, Red Oak, White Oak, Norway Maple, Black Cherry, Shagbark and Pignut Hickory, Hackberry, Siberian Elm, Slippery Elm, American Beech, Sassafras, White Pine, Norway Spruce, and Box Elder.

The understory consists of some native vegetation but is predominantly comprised of invasives; Amur Honeysuckle, Multiflora Rose, Autumn Olive, Porcelain Berry, Oriental Bittersweet, Mile-a-Minute plant, and Wineberry. Other understory vegetation includes small Norway Maples, Tulip Poplar, Spice Bush, Sassafras, and Hackberry.

All throughout the wooded portion of this property, the remnants of Ash trees can be seen. Much like most of the region, this area was affected by the Emerald Ash Borer beetle and unfortunately no healthy specimens were observed. What remains of the Ash trees is decayed and brittle.

Configuration and size:

2540 South Chester Springs Rd.
Approximately 21 of 185 acres of woodland sits within the Bennett property in West Vincent Township, Chester Springs, Chester County and makes up the majority of the eastern border.

Present conditions: Assessment of Woodland Sections 1-10 (See Figure 1)

1 – The roadway from the residences heads southeast along the corn field to the wooded portion of the property. On both sides of the road are Black Walnut, Box Elder, Shagbark and Pignut Hickory, Black Cherry, Sassafras, and a few declining Oak trees.

2- An open understory with a large diversity of trees; Tulip Poplar, Norway Maple, Black Cherry, Sassafras, and a variety of Elms and Hickory. Minimal presence of invasives. (Image 1)

3- A wide open understory with old growth Oaks and the majority of the canopy is made up of primarily Tulip Polars.

4- The upper portion of this section is dense with Black Walnut transitioning to Norway Maples, Locusts, and Black Cherry as you move down the slope.

5- The uphill portion is again mostly Black Walnut and below it is a dense stand of Norway Spruce of varying ages and sizes.

6- An increasing amount of invasives, however a thriving understory and mature Black Walnut and Norway Maples (Image 2)

7- A section matted in a thick layer of invasives; Honeysuckle, Wineberry, Mile-a-Minute, Grape vines. Oaks, Tulip Poplars, and Maples are covered nearly entirely with vines.

8- Predominantly hardwoods with an opening of the understory. Presence of mature Red Oaks, Maples, and Black Cherry.

9- A thin stretch of woods made up of almost entirely Norway Maple and a few declining Cherry trees.

10- The southern portion of this section is dense with Mile-a-Minute plant covering over Staghorn Sumac and Multiflora Rose. (Image 3)
The northern portion consists of mainly hardwoods of Cherry, Hickory, Maple, and young Red Oaks. Some mature trees are present including a large Pignut Hickory of 30” DBH.

Present conditions: Assessment of Woodland Sections 1-10
(Continued)

Fig 1

Present conditions: Assessment of Woodland Sections 1-10 (Continued)

Image 1

Image 2

Image 3

Site potential:

Due to the saturation of Black Walnut along the woodland, soil remediation would be necessary to ensure the successful planting of new vegetation. Juglone (a chemical leeched into the soil from the decaying leaves and roots of the Black Walnut tree) acts as a natural herbicide and inhibits the growth of other species. There are however species that are somewhat tolerant of the chemical. Trees such as Norway Maple, Locust, Cherry, Tulip Poplar, Hackberry, and some Oaks can still thrive in the presence of Black Walnut, which of course is what contributes to the significant population of those exact trees along this stretch of land. The land that has been remediated for agricultural use will most likely not have the presence of Juglone, at least enough to inhibit the growth of new vegetation.

Ecological functions:

Only a small portion of woodland is adjacent to a high quality stream. That hillside is well established with old growth Oaks, Tulip Poplars, and a thriving understory of Maples, Hackberry, and Beech trees. Cavities in trees, an established canopy, windfalls, brambles and other dense understory vegetation create myriad habitats for a diverse range of animal species.

Presence of specimen trees

Trees measured by DBH – Diameter at Breast Height (4.5 feet off the ground)

1- Zelkova – 60” (Image 4)
2- Sugar Maple – 43”
3- White Oak – 41”
4- White Oak – 41”
5- White Oak – 44” (Image 5)
6- Northern Red Oak – 53” (Image 6)
7- Pignut Hickory – 30”

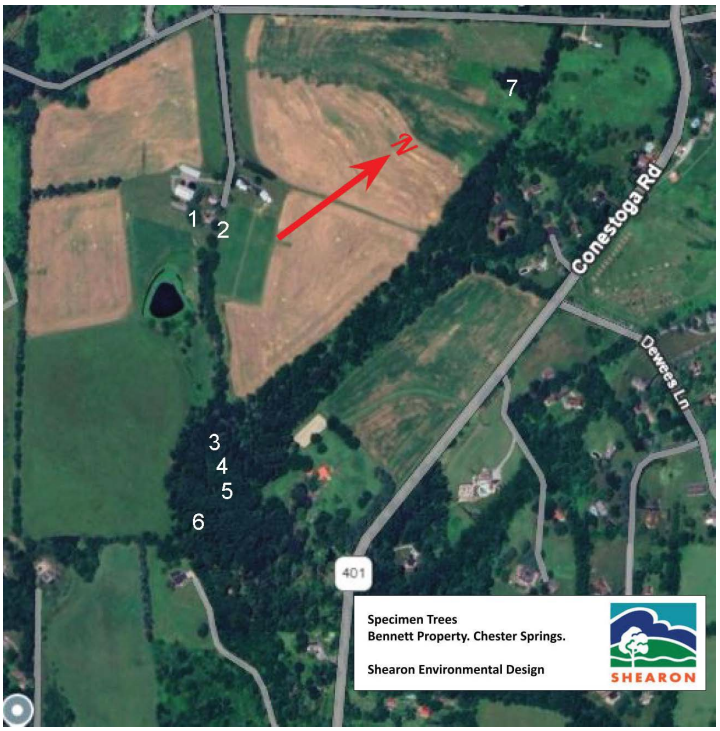

Image 4

Image 5

Image 6

About the Arborist:

Jim Paul is a certified Arborist by the Internation Society of Arboriculture and currently serves as the Director of Arboriculture for Shearon Environmental Design at their Downingtown branch. He has 20 years of experience in canopy access, tree care, land use management and 10 years of owner/operator experience with his own tree care company.

Disclaimer:

There are some inherent risks with trees that cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty, even by a skilled and experienced arborist. Arborists cannot predict acts of nature including, without limitation, storms of sufficient strength, which can cause even a healthy tree to fail. Any entity that develops land and builds structures with a tree in the vicinity should be aware of the inherent risks and inform future residents of the risks of living with trees.

Neither the author nor Shearon Environmental Design has assumed any responsibility for liability associated with the tree(s) on or adjacent to this project site, their future demise and/or any damage which may result from them.

Jim Paul
Director of Arboriculture
Shearon Environmental Design
340 Boot Road
Downingtown, PA 19335
610 269-9110 office
610-644-5530 fax
jpaul@shearondesign.com
www.shearondesign.com