

Cape Fear Garden Club, Inc.



Civic Improvements Committee

104 Mullington Lane, Wilmington, NC 28409

April 28, 2015

Dear Honorable Mayor and Wilmington City Council members, New Hanover County Commissioners, NC-DOT officials, and North Carolina State Legislators:

The Cape Fear Garden Club shares a rich partnership with the City of Wilmington, New Hanover County, NC-DOT and, indeed, the entire state of North Carolina. Our partnership is focused on the beautification of our unique coastal community and the conservation of our natural resources, endeavors that have done much to attract visitors, businesses and new residents to our area.

The beautification grants we award to the community through the Azalea Garden Tour disbursements now total almost two million dollars, many of those dollars having been awarded to the city or county. In addition, the Cape Fear Garden Club's Civic Improvements Committee has worked with the city and county and collaborated with like-minded organizations to enhance our gateways, public buildings, medians and by-ways through landscaping and planting. Several of our committees focus exclusively on conservation and protection of wildlife habitat. These committees routinely sponsor projects for litter pick-up, installation of bluebird and butterfly paths, and provide intense funding and labor to protect other native plant and wildlife.

Having just hosted thousands of visitors to our fair city and county during the recent North Carolina Azalea Festival, it seems an appropriate time to urge you, our community leaders, to pay exceptional attention to the development plans of our city and county --especially to the preservation of our trees and to the landscaping our medians, by-ways and city/county entrances.

As a club, we want to go on record to say that several trends that have occurred within the past few years that have seemed to work against the vision that we hope you share in making Wilmington and New Hanover County among the most beautiful regions in our state.

- The recent demolition of the Sonic Oak tree, a magnificent 50 foot high and 240 inch girth Southern Live Oak (named the Heritage Tree by the Wilmington Tree Commission), was one example of trends that we wish to see avoided in the future. This tree was a landmark tree with its prominent 65 feet canopy spread along Market Street. Trees of this stature have earned a presence that must be protected and it was heartbreaking to see a tree of such magnitude be sacrificed for road "improvement" that amounted to just a few more feet of turning lane. There are just some instances when an alternative plan, even if more costly, should be considered to

preserve our natural resources and protect the legacy and beauty of our community. This seems especially important in light of our reputation as a Tree City USA for the past 11 years.

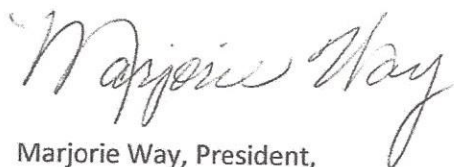
- Duke Power's clear cutting of trees along local distribution lines on public and residential by-ways has destroyed many of our hardwoods, including understory trees that could be pruned versus cut. This type of clear cutting, along with severe pruning, is unsightly and destroys the very thing that we are trying to promote: beauty along our by-ways. Canopy trees provide a service in addition to their aesthetic value; they help cool the climate, filter the air and water, help lower crime rates, and increase real estate values.
- Developers seem to routinely clear cut hundreds of trees with no regard for trying to save any of the large existing trees on the property being developed. While they re-plant trees and add landscaping, it takes years and years to regain the value of the large trees that benefit our environment by absorbing storm water runoff, protecting against erosion and providing a canopy that is aesthetically valuable and serves as a habitat for wildlife.
- Allowing concrete medians – this is unsightly and is not enhancing the beautification of our roads, plus it contributes to storm water run-off.

We strongly urge city, county, and state leaders to direct employees, contractors and others involved in planning and development, including highway projects, to pay increased attention to the preservation of trees. Our leaders must find ways to work with NC DOT to require advance steps to advise the public when their plans may negatively impact trees. Tree preservation must be part of the "merger" process that is intended to merge environmental and historic preservation mandates with highway construction policies.

Having worked closely with the city and county, we are aware that budget support from the city to the parks maintenance department has remained static, leaving the urban forestry mission unable to keep pace with normal maintenance such as pruning for health and longevity. The loss of the Laurel Oak trees on Market Street could have been prevented, or at least prolonged, with greater care and pruning over the years. We support a mission to prioritize green infrastructure in our city and county through rehabilitation and maintenance of existing trees as well as the planting of heritage type trees for the future. Budgetary support for this is essential and we urge our city and county leaders to make this a priority!

Thank you for considering these recommendations. As always, the Cape Fear Garden Club stands ready to work with and support our community leaders in any way needed to help achieve our joint goals.

Respectfully submitted by,



Marjorie Way, President,

Cape Fear Garden President

Respectfully prepared by,

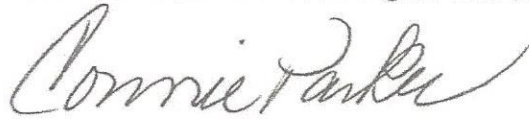


Cathy Poulos, Chair

Civic Improvements Committee

Endorsed by:

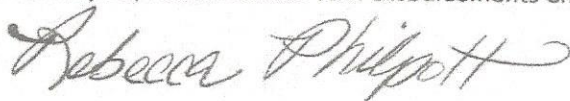
Connie Parker, Chair for Wilmington Tree Commission & CFGC Member



Sandra Kittinger, Azalea Garden Tour Committee Chair



Rebecca Philpott, Azalea Garden Tour Disbursements Chair



Linda Snider, Conservation Committee Chair



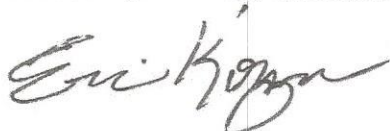
Joyce Galloway, Wildlife & Gardening Chair



Ann Grose, Birds and Butterfly Committee Chair



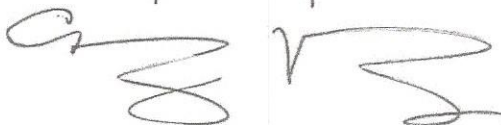
Eric Kozen, Arbor Day Committee Chair



Diane Smith, Battery Island Committee Chair



Sydney Penny, Beautification Endowment Co. chair



Carolyn B. Augustine, Parliamentarian,

CAPE FEAR GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS:

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Jenene Smith President, The Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc. 7,000 members

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J. D. H.

North Carolina Azalea Festival
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past president Cape Fear Garden Club
member Cape Fear Garden Club

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member of Cape Fear Garden Club

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Mary Alice Gluise

Member, Cape Fear Garden Club

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" " " "

Carol Marshall

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member of Cape Fear Garden Club

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member of Cape Fear Garden Club

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member of Cape Fear Garden Club

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Penelope Allison

Becky Phillips, former CFGC President & Year Chair

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Jan Dolgal / Birds & Butterflies Committee

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Sally Hauge
Dorinda Warden
Susan Nickman
Linda Inga
Marty Melton Co-chair garden tour hostess Committee
Rose K Bissette
Nancy McFey - Co Chair Flower arranging / Ribbon Cutting tour decorator
Susan Nickman - Past President / Past Garden Tour Chair
CFGC Long Range Planning Chair
Heda Waldrep Co Chair Ayala Belle / Flower arranging Ribbon Cutting
Janis Dickey
Shirley L. Humer RN @ Medac Health Services
Cathy Byrd
Caroline Butler - Garden Tour Chair 2017
Debbie Sheehan
Linda Benzaglio
Lillian Gardner
Lola S. Pumphrey
Dorinda Warden
Cheryl Meitrodt
Betty Broadwater
CC Hume
Celleen Birna
Penelope Kingston
Sandra de Holl
Joan Lynch

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Carolyn E. M. Carter member Cape Fear Garden Club

Suzanne Edwards member of Cape Fear Garden Club

Julie Ziska - Member of Cape Fear Garden Club

Anna Ina - Member of Cape Fear Garden Club

Mar Carson - Member of Cape Fear Garden Club

Denise H. Miller - Member of Cape Fear Garden Club

Brenda D. Vaughan Garrison - member Cape Fear Garden Club

Emma M. Smith - Member Cape Fear Garden Club

Nixie Munnick Peak - Member Cape Fear Garden Club

Lannie Kuhn - " " " " " "

Cheryl Hunts - Cape Fear Garden Club - Corresponding Secretary

Joyce J. Bradley - CFGC, Recording Secretary

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Sherry O'Riell

Jill Zaher

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Irene Kraus
Linda Russ
Joan Cunningham
Kathryn B. Huffman
Harlene Tyndall
Sandy Smith
Patricia Mc
Glen Mc
Beth Chadwick

Cathy Poulos

From: steve42@bellsouth.net
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 9:57 PM
To: cpoulos@ec.rr.com
Cc: connieparker88@gmail.com
Subject: HB 708 Preservation of Historic/Heritage Trees

Cathy,

This email references Connie Parker's note today about an endorsement from the OPG (Ogden Preservation Group) for the above bill, sponsored by Susi Hamilton. Our website, SaveOgden.com gives you some idea of our goals and concern for important trees in our region. The demise of the Sonic Oak was a tragedy and we are trying to save the prominent Ogden Oak which spreads its canopy near the Market St./Middle Sound intersection. In addition, we are trying to save many oaks at a new development site for the proposed Publix supermarket.

OPG is more than happy to lend support for this legislation and endorse this bill. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Steve Jaffe
102 South Branch Rd.
Wilmington, NC 28411

910-685-4287

Sent from Windows Mail

Cape Fear Group, Sierra Club

The Cape Fear Group of the Sierra Club strongly endorses the letter from the Cape Fear Garden Club relating to conservation of trees and beautification of the community.

Pauline Endo
Pauline Endo, Chairperson

4/25/15
Date