

Northern and Western Perimeter of the North Woods subdivision

Below is a description of observed plant communities along the **Northern Perimeter** of the North Woods subdivision. For descriptive purposes, this is divided into three sections.

The first section is a 60' deep vegetated buffer begins where the northern perimeter fieldstone wall abuts the fieldstone wall that extends along South Road. It continues along Lot One until it reaches a fieldstone wall abutting the northern perimeter fieldstone wall from the Northwoods side of the wall between Lot One and Lot Twelve.

This area is densely populated with mature larch trees, which appear to be European larch. Many of these trees are 12" or more in diameter and quite tall. The shade cast by these trees on the forest floor is dense. It is worthy to note that along the remaining portion of the perimeter buffer, there is an abundance of vegetation, both understory and juvenile canopy plants. Within the larch portion of the vegetative buffer there is minimal vegetation along the forest floor. This is likely due to the dense shade provided by the larch trees. Otherwise this area would have an abundance of understory plant growth as well. The larch trees are generally healthy and can have a life expectancy of up to 250 years.

Any plantings introduced into this area as understory buffer plants would at best struggle to survive, and would likely not survive due to the dense shade.

The second section of the northern perimeter vegetative buffer is 50 feet deep and begins at the stone wall at the end of Lot One, continuing behind Lots Twelve and Eleven, until it reaches the point where a fieldstone wall abuts into the Northwoods northern perimeter stone wall from the neighbors side. In this second section there is an abundance of understory plant growth. The canopy layer primarily consists of red maple, and multiple species of oak. There are a number of eastern red cedar, which are in decline due to the lack of sunlight caused by shade cast from the maples and oaks and from being choked by invasive oriental bittersweet vines. Along the forest floor there is a vegetative mix of understory plants, forest floor plants, juvenile canopy level plants and a few invasive species plant specimens. The predominant forest floor plants consist of fern, bull briar, as well as huckleberry. The predominant understory plant species include numerous young American holly, highbush blueberry, and stands of bayberry. Juvenile canopy layer plant species in this section include: numerous young white pine, as well as young maples and oaks, and at least one larch which is about 6' tall. Invasive plants observed in this section include bittersweet.

The American holly and white pine will if left alone, become more visually dominant in coming years, both through increased size and increased number. Buffer plant selections recommended for this section are based upon plant species thriving there now including: white pine, American holly, and bayberry. Avoid planting within and/or otherwise impacting the existing colonies of Princess Pine located in this section and possibly extending partially into section three. This includes soil and leaf mold disturbance. Also recommended is the careful removal of all invasive plant species and their respective root systems with minimal disturbance to the surrounding plant communities.

The third and last section of the northern perimeter vegetative buffer has the option of being 60 feet deep, with no clearing, or 50 feet deep, augmented with infill plantings appropriate for the site. This third section extends from the aforementioned neighboring abutting fieldstone wall, continuing to the end of Lot Ten, slightly beyond the corner of the next intersecting fieldstone wall. This section of the northern perimeter vegetative buffer includes

much of the same plant species as mentioned in section two. The predominant canopy tree species in this section is red maple. There are several single and multiple-trunk red maple trees in this area in the 8" to 12" diameter range. There are notable understory plant specimens in this area including a 6' tall American Holly about 21 linear feet into this section from section two, four American hollies ranging from 2' tall to 6' tall at about 190 linear feet west of section two, a 2' tall American holly at 213 linear feet, west, and again at 263 linear feet west from section two. There are also several tall highbush blueberry shrubs exceeding 6' in height as well as bayberry. Invasive plant species in this section of the north perimeter vegetative buffer include Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, and the aforementioned oriental bittersweet.

Similar to section two, the American holly and white pine will, if left alone, will become more visually dominant in coming years, because of increased size and increased number of plants. Buffer plant selections recommended for this section are based upon plant species thriving there now, including: white pine, American holly, and bayberry. In addition to being selected due to their adaptations and growth rate, these plant selections are in keeping with the natural character of the area. Also recommended is the careful removal of all invasive plant species and their respective root systems with minimal disturbance to the surrounding plant communities.

Below is a description of observed plant communities along the **Western Perimeter** of the North Woods subdivision.

Along the western perimeter of the property, there is a freshwater wetland with a healthy canopy of mature canopy tree species and mature understory plant populations. The canopy species include red maple in the wetland itself and in the higher elevations of this area, a mixture of red maple, white oak, scarlet oak, with some tupelo and hickory. These are mature trees, with several noted trunk diameters exceeding 15 inches and one noted trunk diameter of 27 inches.

There is a concern about additional plantings needed in this existing vegetative buffer area in order to provide a visual buffer between the proposed homes on Lots Ten, Nine, Eight, and Seven. However from my own visual observations as I walked along the fieldstone wall that runs along the back of these properties, I could not see any homes through the woods until I saw a white house which was located directly on Curtis Corner Road. The houses located through the woods are a considerable distance from Lots Ten, Nine, Eight, and Seven. Any plantings added to this buffer would have at best a negligible visual impact.

Respectfully submitted by,

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