

**TREE REMOVAL:** Less aggressive approach through compromise

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deer/child interaction could lead to injuries. He also wanted a large number of the junipers removed to improve sight lines, as there have been reports of non-school-related people frequenting that area.

Galecki and the UFB disagreed with the aggressive removal of the juniper and suggested possibly fencing the area to separate it from the playground. That would leave more screening material between the school property and the adjacent neighborhood as well as protect important wildlife habitat.

Everyone agreed to the necessary removal of five large ponderosas located in the bus parking lot east of the elementary school. They have “co-dominant leads” (two tops) which give rise to splitting and subsequent bug infestation/disease and falling hazard. One of the trees is perilously leaning, causing stem pressure, heaving, and danger of falling on a school portable or the area where children play basketball.

Several of the trees are

directly adjacent to the fuel storage tanks and the propane tank, creating the danger of falling limbs, explosion, and fire hazard. That area is also the only place at the elementary school for storing snow that is removed from the parking lot and sidewalks.

Following the tour, all parties met at City Hall and reached agreement on how to proceed. Rather than considering each individual tree as situations arise, Galecki encouraged “general methods and protocols” that will “guide decisions, taking into consideration esthetics, health and condition of the tree, proximity, and general safety.”

Wildlife trees and thickets will be left when possible, depending on risk and liability. For now, Bear Mountain Fire will proceed with a light thinning, particularly at the middle school, and a reassessment will be made when it is completed.

Factors affecting removal include: sidewalk heaving; diseased and damaged trees, crowding, and split tops. Vitelle indicated that current work will address safety hazards first and will be conducted on the weekends over the next several months, until completed.

## Does with fawns can be aggressive

Sisters’ urban deer population provides some adorable scenes — mothers with their fawns crossing the street in a crosswalk; a young buck lounging in the shade.

But it’s best to keep in mind that deer — especially a doe with fawns — can be aggressive, and their sharp hooves can be deadly.

Sisters resident Gabby Rodriguez learned this in a very sad fashion earlier this month. Her eight-year-old Chihuahua BabyGirl was in a small yard outside her apartment when a doe apparently attacked her.

Rodriguez did not see the incident unfold, but she found her dog mortally injured with a doe standing nearby.

“She was only three feet away from my sliding glass door, rolling around like she was having a seizure and was covered in blood when I found her,” Rodriguez said.

She took the dog to an emergency veterinarian, but she had a skull fracture and a severe brain injury and was beyond help.

Rodriguez said that she has seen the doe with fawns in nearby Clemens Park

on a regular basis. Though BabyGirl was not interested in the fawns, the doe was protective of her young.

Deer regularly wander through people’s yards in the city and Rodriguez is concerned that other incidents could occur.

“It’s not fair for her to not be able to hang out right outside her home, causing no

harm, without being killed by one of these over-populated deer roaming around people’s yards and around the city,” she said. “I do think it’s important to let others be aware of these things so they can prevent this from happening to their beloved pets. It could have been somebody’s child playing in their backyard.”

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