

Dear Mayor Granatosky and members of the Town Council,

On behalf of Groton Conservation Advocates, I would like to bring your attention to the trees on the Pleasant Valley School property now that the Town is in negotiations with a potential developer.

From the maps on page 2, you can see that there are many trees on the property; in fact 52.2% of the town property is covered by trees. It would be wonderful if those trees could be protected from development.

Most of the trees in the small forest are located outside the fenced school perimeter on a hillside rising up to the Navy development west of the property. There are many tall native varieties of maple and oak growing there, and hickory and black cherry were spotted, too. Native grape vines, blackberry and raspberry are growing near the paved path that connects the school and the Navy housing development. Unfortunately, there is also heavy invasive bittersweet growing up the tree trunks along the path, and invasive barberry and winged euonymous (burning bush) have been spotted and will need removal.

There are several full-grown trees within the fenced school perimeter including white pines, blue spruce, pin oak and other oak varieties, black cherry, red cedar, hickory and even the sumac trees there provide food for wildlife. Norway maple trees, which are considered invasive because they out-compete the native trees, are found in the school area, too.

As you know, there are many excellent reasons for protecting trees:

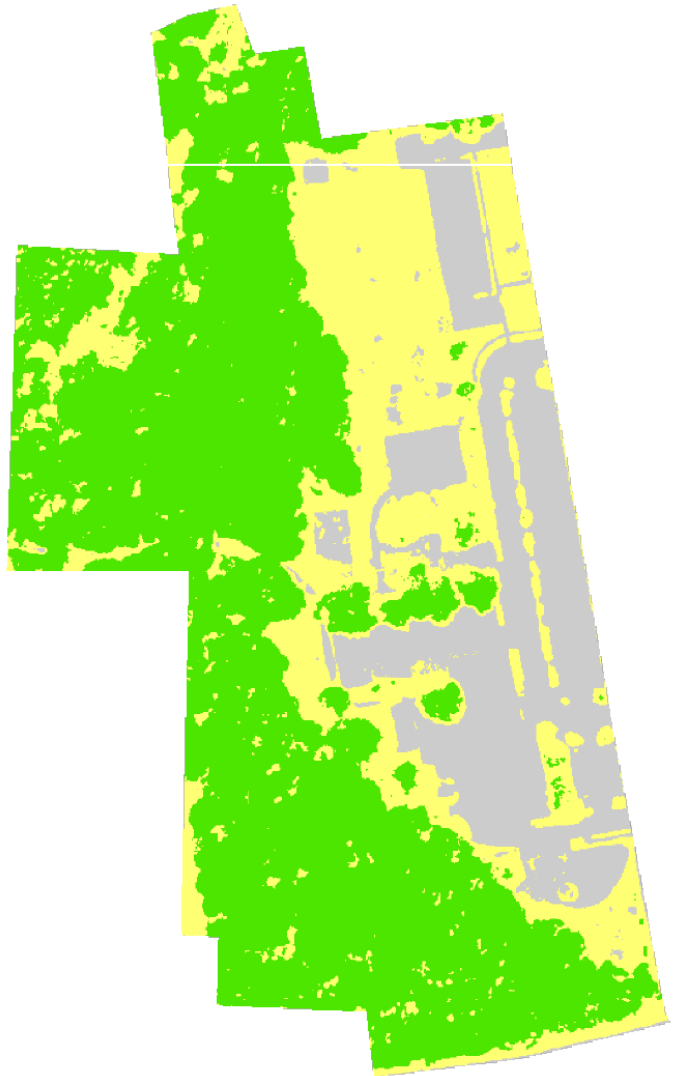
- They give us oxygen, store carbon, stabilize the soil and provide shelter and food to local and transient wildlife. They reduce wind speeds and cool the air as they lose moisture, and reflect heat upwards from their leaves. It's estimated that trees can reduce the temperature in an urban area by up to 12.5 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Trees absorb hundreds of gallons of stormwater, which helps prevent flooding and soil erosion
- One mature oak can be home to as many as 500 different species.
- People are attracted to live and work in green surroundings and benefit from them. Average house prices are 5-18% higher when properties are close to mature trees, and people surrounded by trees and green space generally have lower blood pressure, heart rates and stress levels.

If there is a plan to cut Pleasant Valley School trees down and then plant young trees elsewhere in Groton as compensation, as you know there are good reasons not to. Newly planted trees require many decades to a century before they sequester carbon dioxide in substantial quantities.

We hope that the town and the chosen developer will take these facts into serious consideration and opt to redevelop only those areas that are already developed. There are some beautiful trees within the boundaries of the school that could be preserved as well to make the development even more attractive and sustainable. Thank you!

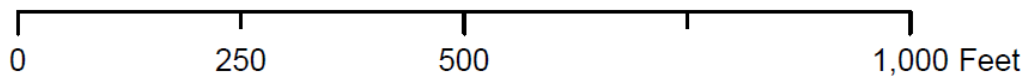


2020 Groton Orthophotography



2018 National Agriculture Image Program Reclassified

### 2018 NAIP Reclassified



- Non vegetation (3.32 ac)
- Lesser vegetation (4.67 ac)
- Tree (8.74 ac)

Total acreage for PIN 168906487644: 16.74 ac