

## QUAIL FOREST 2020 TREE POLICY

Our Quail Forest (QF) community is fortunate to enjoy a landscape filled with hundreds of beautiful hardwood and palm trees. Some of these trees predate the 1981 origin of QF, others were planted by the developer and many more have been planted by homeowners in the intervening 40 years. Our covenants which pertain to trees, specifically sections 6.02 and section 2.14, still reflect the original term of developer and the QF HOA Board of Directors (Association) long ago assumed the governance of our community.

As our community has aged, so have our trees. As these older trees need increased care like trimming or removal, from time-to-time, owners have questioned whether a tree on their property had been planted by the developer and, therefore, is the responsibility of the Association to maintain as per wording in covenant section 6.02. All previous Associations have developed a policy in response to this issue over the years. Historically, the Associations have asserted that owners are responsible for the care of the trees on their own property because the actual planting date of trees is generally unknown.

As recently as 2018 the HOA Board of Directors engaged the services of a certified arborist to estimate the ages of a representative group of older trees of different species commonly found in QF. The finding of the report IS listed in the table, below. that report also included the following disclosure:

*"This report is submitted with the understanding that there is no way to determine the age of a standing and healthy tree with 100% accuracy...Environmental conditions, cultural conditions and nursery growing conditions all play a major role in the actual growth rate of the tree in question per year". Notwithstanding, the arborist was able to identify that 4 of the 8 trees that predate the existence of QF and range from 64-115 years in estimated age. These are called, "Site Protected Trees."*

The other 4 trees were estimated to be between 42-47 years of age. This age range might include trees planted by the developer, however any attempts at approximate aging may be inaccurate. This is evidenced by the fact that one of these trees, which the arborist estimated to be 47 years old, is inferred to have been planted by an owner in the early 1990s and not by the developer.

The Association therefore concludes that there is no definitive, highly accurate method to determine the age of a standing, healthy tree. Thus, we reiterate our past policy that trees on an owner's property, including "Site Protected Trees," are the financial responsibility of the owner for continued care and maintenance (in accordance with Pinellas County regulations).

Therefore, the Association will periodically inform a property owner of their responsibility to trim or remove their own tree especially if it is determined to be a potential current or future liability to our Association’s maintained roofs and carports. In addition, the Association will continue to periodically trim many of the trees on non-owner property located throughout QF as part of our preventative maintenance protocols and as funding permits. With sufficient funding, the trimming is generally done on a biannual basis.

None of the Association’s scheduled preventative maintenance services should ever negate the responsibility of the owner to maintain their own trees on a regular basis as needed.

**APPROXIMATE TREE AGE REPORT MATRIX**

<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>TREE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>APPROXIMATE AGE (YRS.)</b>
60 THOMAS LANE	LIVE OAK	FRONT	115
20 LAKE COURT	CAMPHOR	FRONT	46
60 JOANNE PLACE	LAUREL OAK	FRONT	42
50 JOANNE PLACE	CAMPHOR	FRONT	45
68o HICKORY NUT AVE.	LAUREL OAK	FRONT (KITCHEN)	47
71o HICKORY NUT AVE.	LIVE OAK	BACK	64
17o JAMES COURT	LIVE OAK	FRONT	75
13o GRETCHEN COURT	LIVE OAK	FRONT	92