

MEMORANDUM



Date: August 14, 2025

To: Village of Croton-on-Hudson Planning Board
From: Matthew Hunt, PE
cc: Angelo Sgobbo, PE, Director of Design Coordination

Project: Quaker Bridge Replacement
Re: Response to Tree Size Variation Comment – Quaker Bridge Replacement Landscaping

At the August 5, 2025 Planning Board meeting, the Board reviewed Westchester County’s Tree Removal Permit application. This permit covers the removal of 56 trees to facilitate replacement of the Quaker Bridge. As mitigation, the County proposes planting approximately 35 new trees—each 2-inch caliper and 6–8 feet tall—on Village property and providing an additional 44 trees to plant elsewhere in the Village.

During the discussion, a Board member raised a valid concern: planting so many trees at identical sizes could give the area an “orchard-like” appearance for an extended period. To address this, our Landscape Architect has provided the attached species growth-rate chart. It shows that slower growers like White Ash and Eastern Hemlock increase in height by about 1–2 feet per year, while faster growers such as American Elm and American Sycamore can add 3–6 feet annually.

Thanks to these natural differences, a varied canopy will develop within just one to two years. If the Village prefers greater immediate variation, we can request taller nursery specimens of select species—particularly Tulip and Red Oak—at planting.

Westchester County remains committed to working closely with the Village and the design team throughout construction to ensure the new planting achieves a natural, diverse look without a lingering orchard appearance.

Growth Rates - Fast to Slow - Quaker Bridge

Recommended Larger Caliper Trees at Planting

Trees	Growth Rate	Mature Height	Quantity	Growth Notes
Ulmus americana - American Elm	4-6 feet per year	60-80'	4	Fast growth rate, they establish themselves quickly after planting
Platnus occidentalis - American Sycamore	3-6 feet per year	75-100'	1	Known for their rapid growth rate, one of the fastest growing shade trees
Liriodendron tulipifera - Tulip Tree	2-3 feet per year	60-90'	8	Fast growth especially in their early years, allows them to establish quickly
Quercus rubra - Red Oak	2-3 feet per year	50-75'	10	Fast growth rate compared to other Oak species, faster when young
Betula lenta - Black Birch	1.5-3 feet per year	40-75'	8	Moderate to Fast growing, especially at the sapling stage
Fraxinus americana - White Ash	1-2 feet per year	40-70'	2	Can grow moderately quickly, they also have a long lifespan (200-250 years)
Tsuga canadensis - Eastern Hemlock	1-2 feet per year	40-70'	4	Slow to Moderate growth rate, but can grow as little as 6" in heavily shaded areas
Acer saccharum - Sugar Maple	6-12 inches per year	40-80'	11	Long-lived trees that grow relatively slowly. (Somewhat faster in the first 35 years)
Salix nigra - Black Willow	3-4 feet per year	30-60'	300 live stakes	Rapid growth rate, establishing roots and foliage in first season thru live staking