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## Location, Location, Location...

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**J**n real estate considerations, location is the most important aspect of a property. The value and worth of a great location cannot be overstated. We strive to live in homes that maximize the location factor so that it is very pleasant to live in while we are there, and profitable when it comes time to sell.

Location is one of the most important qualities of a tree as well. If a tree happens to be in a yard on a property that serves as our home, location is all the more key. Consider the following points:

- **Trees near the building** – need to be in the best condition. They are the most visible from the doors and windows, and they are the most in view, framing or enhancing the home when it is being looked at. They must be both beautiful and trustworthy if they are to occupy these prominent positions. There can be no ugly deadwood or precarious branches threatening to strike the house or the frequently travelled areas around the building's footprint.
- **Shade trees for the patio, picnic table, gazebo, etc.** – also must look good in their setting. These are usually spreading and unencumbered by other trees. They also must be in excellent condition because people have activities beneath them. These are often specimen trees to be shown off.
- **Trees in the front yard** – help to create the “estate” feel and can come across as either stately or common, depending on their placement and condition. They should greatly contribute to the curb appeal.
- **Trees lining the drive** – need to be properly spaced, taking care to develop strong branching over the drive at the proper height. They should be made up of sturdy tree species in good condition and not placed too close to the paved surface so that their roots do not cause damage. Branches should not hinder vehicles or obstruct critical vision.
- **Trees near other trees** – can have branch conflicts among them. Sometimes choices need to be made to possibly remove one or more to favor the most desir-

able individuals, especially when future growth is considered. It is amazing how fast these conflicts can come up – trees often grow faster than we anticipate! Skilled pruning can often be the difference in how successfully trees can live close to one another in shade tree situations (not like wooded conditions where nature takes care of much of this).

- **Evergreen vs. deciduous conflicts** – usually it is the leafy, deciduous tree growing larger and shading one side of the evergreen, causing needle death, branch dieback and uneven appearance. Proper site selection during planting is required to avoid this, or pruning the deciduous trees can allow better preservation of evergreen trees.
- **Trees on the perimeter** – may be furthest from the home, but are often near outbuildings, neighbors, or may form critical screening from undesirable views, or provide needed privacy. These are all too often neglected, but the loss of one of them could open a gaping hole to the yard. Often volunteer trees grow up here in amongst the planted trees, or they themselves grow up to become the perimeter trees. If this is the case, there are usually more potential problems because of the lack of planning, spacing, care or species selection. Inappropriate spacings, combinations, or poor condition trees are sure to develop.
- **Understory trees** – must be able to thrive in shaded conditions, yet not outgrow and conflict with the trees above them. If used properly, however, some of the most beautiful landscapes can be achieved with their use.

This list could go on, but it can be seen that trees occupy important places at various positions. A Wachtel Certified Arborist has the knowledge and skill to help plan the best trees to be planted in the best locations (right tree in the right place), or can be the means by which your treescape is kept looking healthy and beautiful. He/she can help prioritize the effort to provide needed care, so that your trees are assets in doing their main job: being part of the location of your home setting!