



## **The Greenwich Tree Conservancy**

### **Support for RB 6538: An Act Concerning Arborists and Tree Wardens**

CGA Environment Committee March 8, 2013 Public Hearing

Submitted by JoAnn Messina, Executive Director

The Greenwich Tree Conservancy is a 501© 3 nonprofit organization created in 2007 to preserve and enhance the tree and forest resources of Greenwich, Connecticut to benefit the community, its health and its quality of life. Among other goals, the GTC educates on the value and benefit of trees and advocates for policies that will integrate tree protection and stewardship into community planning. We urge your support for RB 6538, in particular Section 9 of the bill which focuses on establishing and requiring appropriate coursework for municipal tree wardens based upon the outstanding model built by the Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut.

In 2012, the Commissioner of the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection commissioned the State Vegetation Management Task Force “to develop standards for road side tree care in Connecticut, vegetation management practices and schedules for utility rights of way, right tree/right place standards, standards for tree wardens, municipal tree inventories and pruning schedules.” I served as a member of this Task Force which offered its final report on August 28, 2012.

The Greenwich Tree Conservancy supports RB 6538 and its goal to maintain the professionalism of Town Tree Wardens and their most important job of safety of our states’ citizens. Municipal Tree Wardens have extensive statutory jurisdiction (CGS Chapter 451, Section 23-59) that is integrally tied to the health and well-being of our town’s trees. Each Municipal Tree Warden has authority over “the care and control of all trees and shrubs in whole or in part within the limits of any public road or grounds and within the limits of his town ... “ Our citizens deserve the most qualified Tree Wardens for this important task.

Please vote yes in support of RB 6538.