HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND
Defining the past. Shaping the future.

Tree Care, Construction Protection

Trees and woody shrubs are an important part of the overall interpretation of Historic New England's historic sites. Construction activities and the use of heavy equipment can adversely affect the trees even if the work does not appear to interfere with the tree because tree roots can extend far beyond the basic perimeter of the tree. Preservation of trees during construction requires careful planning and communication between Historic New England staff and the contractor.

Remembering that any activity within the drip line of a tree can cause damage to the roots of the tree the three main construction activities that are most damaging are: cut roots, soil compaction, and grade changes. All three can be avoided by developing a proper plan and thinking through the project before trucks are in place.

Guidelines for the Protection of Trees During Construction:

Planning Stage:
- Walk the site and identify trees that need to be protected.
- Hold a pre-construction planning meeting between the landscape manager or certified arborist consultant, preservation manager or project manager, and a representative from the construction company to set guidelines for the project.

Construction Phase:
- Consider temporarily moving smaller trees and shrubs out of construction zone.
- Erect protective fencing around the tree's drip line prior construction.
- Eliminate or minimize foot traffic in the protected areas. Build temporary board walks if necessary.
- Prohibit the storage of building materials and soil in the protected areas.
- Keep heavy equipment out of the protected areas.
- Do not change the grade around trees.
- Control storm water runoff.
- Trees are sensitive to chemicals so do not allow equipment, tools, and vehicles to be washed off in protected areas.
- Report any tree damage to a landscape manager or certified arborist consultant so quick action can be taken to save tree.