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**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO: Rickie Golden, Alexandria Real Estate**

**FROM: Lawrence M. Beals,**  **Beals Associates, Inc.**

**SUBJECT: Methods for Control of the Oriental Bittersweet Plant Specie**

**DATE: September 8, 2022**

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The Andover Conservation Commission recently approved an Order of Conditions for work proposed in the northwest corner of the 3000 Minuteman Road property identified as the Phase I area for the redevelopment of a portion of the 3000 Minuteman Road property. During the public hearing the Commission discussed invasive plants within the Phase I area and the Commission acknowledged that Bittersweet is an invasive plant that is difficult to control. The Commission also acknowledged that the areas containing the invasive plants within the Phase 1 area are beyond the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission. The Commission specifically stated that the attempted reduction of Bittersweet should be done via mechanical methods and that chemical method shall not be used. Alexandria Real Estate responded that it would coordinate with its property managers and landscapers to implement a program in an effort to control or reduce the spread of Bittersweet. The Oriental Bittersweet plant is an aggressive species with high reproductive and growth rates as well as long-range dispersal of seeds.

Any mechanical removal of the invasive Oriental Bittersweet should only be done on property owned by Alexandria and the western property line is generally marked with a chain link fence. In this Phase 1 area, the abutting property comprises a portion of the Reytelle Reservation which contains some wetland resource areas and the associated buffer zones. By not working beyond the existing fence line, the work will avoid the potential problem of performing unauthorized work on the Reservation land or unauthorized work within the buffer zones of protected wetland resource areas.

Invasive plants are best controlled during the spring to delay growth and to prevent it from flowering and producing seeds. All existing Oriental Bittersweet along the fence line in the Phase I area should be cut at grade with either hand clippers or by use of power trimmers or brush cutters. Vines that have grown into trees should be clipped at the base with hand clippers to avoid damage to the tree. The vines that have grown around and into the tree should be left in place. Pulling the vines from the trees could cause additional harm to the trees. The vines left in

the trees will die and eventually drop from the trees without causing additional damage. Once the vines are clipped and die, the trees supporting the vines frequently recover because the trees are no longer stressed by the vines.

The goal throughout the growing season is to constantly clip, trim, or mow the vines as they emerge from the ground to prevent them from reproducing. New growth should be trimmed as it emerges and this can be done during the normal routine of cutting and maintaining the plant materials along the fence line in the northwest corner of the property.

Inhibiting the growth and spreading of this plant will allow for native American bittersweets and other native species to return and thrive within the locations previously overrun by the non-native species.

The information contained in this memorandum should be communicated to the property managers and landscapers. It is virtually impossible to completely eradicate Oriental Bittersweet (without chemicals) but consistent monitoring and cutting the invasive plant as described above will help control the plant and prevent spreading.

Shown below are some photographs of Oriental Bittersweet that should assist the landscapers in identifying the plants to be controlled.



Image of Oriental Bittersweet Foliage and Vines



Oriental Bittersweet Fruit