

Leaves: sugar maple (l.), Norway maple (r.)

### Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)

The Norway maple is the first maple to put out its flowers in the spring. The flowers are relatively large and greenish-yellow. The leaves are similar to the sugar maple, but the tips of the lobes of the Norway reduce to a fine hair, while the tips of the lobes of the sugar maple are more rounded. A final distinction is that the Norway leaf stem releases a milky sap when broken from the twig. Leaves of the Norway maple often have tar spots, a tree fungus that is largely harmless.

Norway maples are now considered to be an invasive species and are no longer recommended for planting. Many of the Norway maples on our properties are probably descendants of the original street trees. Also, those pesky maple seedlings that you are constantly pulling out of your gardens and landscaping are most surely Norways.

### Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)

The sugar maple is most easily identified in the fall when it turns a bright yellow to orange color as opposed to the paler yellow of the Norway maple. The trunk of the sugar maple is generally shaggier than that of the Norway maple trunk which has smaller and often criss-crossing grooves.

Sugar maples are susceptible to air pollution and road salt and do not make good street trees. Many of the sugars that were planted on Lowell have been taken down, but a large one on the corner of Rugby and Stratford appears relatively healthy and is spectacular in the fall.

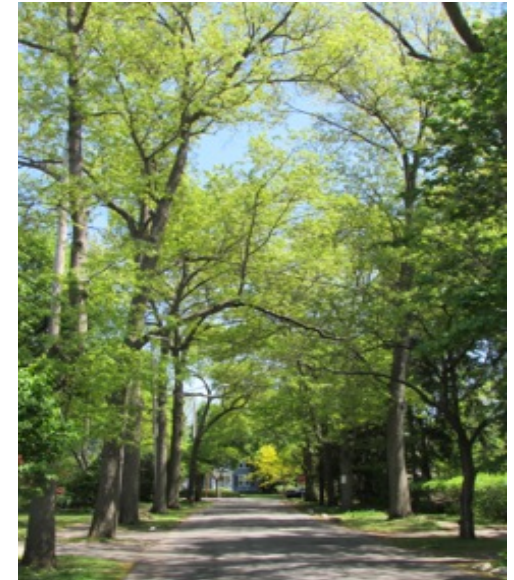


Trunks: Norway (l.), sugar (r.)

### More tree brochures

Our first brochure, Notable Trees of the Realty Plot, can be found on the Realty Plot website. Our next brochure will be on the trees that were here before our houses were built, including the red, white and black oak and white pine trees. We have calculated the ages of some of these trees to be over 200 years.

### Mature Street Trees of the Realty Plot



This brochure is the second of a series that we are developing to help readers learn more about the urban forest found in our neighborhood. In this brochure, we help you to identify the mature trees that are growing in the "street lawn" which is the generally unpaved area between the sidewalk and street. For purposes of this brochure, we identify mature trees as trees that have a tree trunk circumference greater than 60 inches.

### The Realty Plot Tree Committee

August 2016

*The Realty Plot Tree Committee is an ad hoc group of Realty Plot residents with a common interest in the trees that comprise the urban forest that is a distinguishing characteristic of this neighborhood. If you would like to join the Committee in this work, contact Ben Wiles at [ben.wiles.home@gmail.com](mailto:ben.wiles.home@gmail.com).*

## History of Street Tree Planting

We can find no record of when and what trees were planted in the street lawn. Using an online tree calculator we have determined that existing trees are anywhere from 60 to 135 years old. However, the calculation is based on the tree's circumference which can vary widely depending on growing conditions. For example, two Norway maples on Stratford which were recently removed were calculated to be 95 and 130 years based on their circumference, but counting their tree rings established their ages to be the same at around 95 years. We have also determined the age of the oak trees on Adams to be around 110 years by counting tree rings in a tree stump near Wendell. Based on photos in Bruce Maston's "Enclave of Elegance," trees were planted sometime between 1903 and 1910. Therefore, one can assume that the mature trees in the street lawn are the ones that were originally planted.

Many of the trees in the street lawn have been removed by the City, and it is likely that others will be taken down as they age and become a danger tree. If you are interested in replacing trees taken down in front of your house or if you have space in the street lawn and want to plant a new tree, please contact us for recommendations. We would welcome the opportunity to share with you the information we have gathered so far to help you select the best tree for your location.

## Tree Identification

Identification of our mature street trees is often difficult because of the variability of tree characteristics and the fact that leaves, having the most common identifying factors, are often out of reach. Also, as street trees, they are often pruned to a shape that is unnatural, particularly near utility lines. This brochure provides hints on how to distinguish the maples from each other given those limitations.

This brochure will help you to identify mature trees on the following streets: **Norway maples** on Rugby, Lowell, Stratford, Avon, and Douglas; **sugar maples** on Rugby and Lowell; **silver maples** on Avon and Lowell; and the **pin oak** trees on Adams.



**Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)**

The stately pin oaks on Adams Road are pictured on the front of this brochure. The pin oak can be distinguished from the oaks that were here before the Plot was developed by their leaves which have deep notches and sharply pointed lobes.



**Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)**

Silver maple trees usually have a wide and highly branched canopy, but two of the silver maples on Lowell have been severely pruned of their lower branches. Nonetheless, the leaves are easy to identify with their deep notches between five lobes and downy (silver) undersides. The flowers are in dense clusters and their seeds, or winged samaras, are the largest of any maple. These seeds develop and fall in the spring unlike those of the sugar and Norway maple which do not drop until autumn.