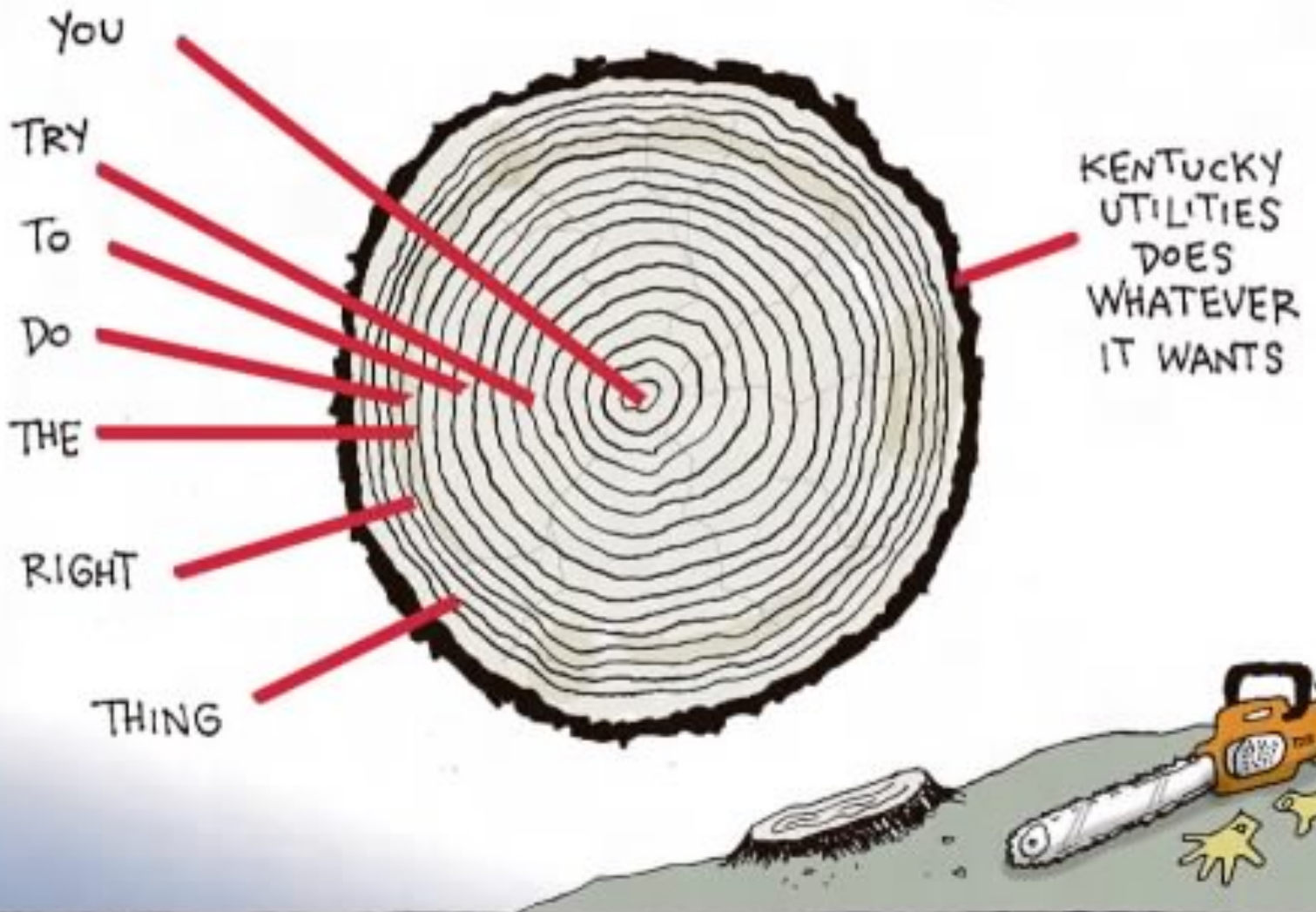


MEDIA PACKET

10/17/21 LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER/KENTUCKY.COM (HOMAGE TO JIM BORGSMAN!)

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**To: Interim Joint Committee
Utility Vegetation Management & Tree Clearance Project: Media Packet**

**Chronological Article Titles from the Lexington Herald Leader depicting the dispute to
achieve compromise between Lexington Fayette Urban County Government and
Kentucky Utilities**

July 23, 2020	KU Tree-Cutting Policy Near Line Draws Concern
June 22, 2021	Lexington ups pressure on Kentucky Utilities to stop clear-cutting trees.
October 13, 2021	Trees slated to be removed for utility line clearance.
October 14, 2021	Lexington is celebrating tree week. Why is KU planning to clear-cut hundreds of trees? KU should compromise on cutting trees.*
October 17, 2021	Kentucky Utilities does whatever it wants.*
October 18, 2021	Trees are 'utilities' that serve us like electricity.*
October 20, 2021	KU agrees to consider changes to tree cutting after outcry!
October 21, 2021	Scorched earth policy': KU blasted over tree cutting.*
October 28, 2021	Lexington wants to plant more trees. So why are we letting KU cut them down?
November 8, 2021	Readers have ideas for saving the trees from KU's clear cutting.
November 21, 2021	Despite pleas from Lexington leaders, KU won't stop cutting down trees under lines.*
November 30, 2021	Lexington Kentucky woman arrested at tree cutting protest*
December 1, 2021	Kentuckians must hold Kentucky Utilities accountable for actions.*
December 2, 2021	Lexington will sue KU over tree cutting.*
December 2, 2021	KU agrees to temporarily modify tree-cutting plans after renewed protests.*
December 4, 2021	Lexington sues KU over tree cutting policies, asks for damages.*
December 4, 2021	KU agrees to temporarily halt tree cutting until January as it negotiates with Lexington.*
December 5, 2021	Letters to the editor: Lexingtonians speak for the trees.*
January 31, 2022	KU tree cutting moratorium extended as talks between Lexington, utility giant continue.*
February 17, 2022	More rules around utility company tree cutting could be coming if this Kentucky bill passes.
April 15, 2022	Public Service Commission left with no quorum.

***articles included in the media packet**



RYAN C. HERMENS rhermens@herald-leader.com

Tree stumps in a median along Southpoint Drive near Nicholasville Road are shown Monday. Kentucky Utilities is cutting trees that grow taller than 10 feet near power transmission lines.

KU tree-cutting policy near lines draws concern

BY BETH MUSGRAVE
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Lexington city officials and tree professionals are questioning a recent push by Kentucky Utilities to cut down trees under power lines.

Trees that were once in the median under a transmission line on Southpoint Drive in the Southpoint neighborhood off of Nicholasville Road were

recently cut down. A line of stumps is all that remains.

Earlier this spring, the power company axed and trimmed trees in Pinnacle, Waterford and Belleau Woods neighborhoods under a distribution line that leads to a substation on Wilson Downing Road.

It is not known how many trees have been cut down in backyards and along streets.

Mike Mills owns a home in Pinnacle. KU cut down two

evergreen trees that were approximately 20 feet tall in his backyard. Mills and his neighbors, who also had trees cut, questioned why the power company was taking down trees when in prior years, those trees were trimmed. According to KU's website, trees under distribution lines should be no taller than 15 feet.

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TREES

"They were about 15 or 20 feet from the bottom of the lowest line. From the highest line, it was probably 30 feet in difference," said Mills. "Those trees had been there for 22 years. What has changed?"

Mills said KU told him the maximum height requirement has always been in place — KU was now enforcing it. When trees were cut on Southpoint, a well-traveled road in south Lexington, people became aware of KU's latest stance on tree heights under power lines.

"My mother-in-law lives off of Southpoint Drive," Mills said. "That drive now looks completely different. It's terrible."

Kentucky Utilities said the policy to cut trees that grow taller than 10 feet near transmission lines and 15 feet for distribution lines is not new. Keeping trees away from power lines is key to preventing power outages, the company has said.

"We routinely work to maintain areas around transmission infrastructure and rights of way to ensure trees cannot get near or fall into a high-voltage transmission line," said Daniel Lowry, a spokesman for KU.

The company performs tree maintenance on transmission lines like those on Southpoint on a rotating basis — typically every five years with "the exception of those lines demonstrating the need for more frequent trimming. As part of this approach, some trees will be removed from areas



A tree stump in a median along Southpoint Drive near Nicholasville Road is shown on Monday. Kentucky Utilities said the policy to cut trees is not new.

we have not cleared in the recent past."

But tree professionals say some of the trees that have been axed to stumps under transmission lines by KU are not species that typically grow taller than 10 feet. Some were trees that are on a KU list of acceptable species to plant under transmission lines.

Transmission lines carry electricity across great distances from generating stations to primary substations and are typically installed on larger towers.

"They are clear-cutting trees that are on the approved list," said Dan Stever, chairman of the city's Tree Board, which encourages more tree planting in public areas and advises the private sector on tree planting. Stever said he was speaking in his capacity as a volunteer on the board and not for the city.

Stever said the move by KU comes as the city

has been trying to improve its tree canopy coverage to the stated goal of 40 percent. A 2014 report showed trees cover just under 25 percent of the city's core. The city's tree canopy has eroded in recent years because of a variety of factors, including diseases such as emerald ash borer. Some estimates say more than 30 percent of the city's tree canopy has been wiped out over the past decade.

"A significant portion of our urban canopy was lost. We continue to lose trees," Stever said.

Moreover, the city has spent both time and money planting street trees, or trees in the city's easement.

Stever said he has heard more than \$50,000 in trees paid for by the city and other grant money have been cut down by the power company.

In response, Lowry said KU strives to only

remove trees that at maturity will grow taller than the maximum allowed height.

"KU reviews the species of each tree that is planned for removal to determine its expected mature height," Lowry said. "We make every effort to preserve those trees that, at maturity, will maintain an appropriate distance from lines and are not expected to pose a threat to the lines."

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Councilwoman Susan Lamb first heard about KU's trimming and cutting trees in March, when homeowners in Pinnacle, Waterford and Belleau Woods neighborhoods contacted her after KU started cutting trees under distribution lines in those neighborhoods.

On its website, KU says its easement, or the land it owns, around large transmission towers can vary between 50 to 500 feet on each side

of the tower. For distribution lines, which are lines that are typically found in back or front yards that deliver power to residents and businesses, that easement is between 30 and 50 feet on each side or as much as 100 feet around a pole.

"For some homeowners, that's their entire backyard," Lamb said. Lamb contacted officials at the Kentucky Public Service Commission, which regulates utilities in the state to determine if there was anything the city or homeowners could do. She was told the city and homeowners had little recourse.

"They have the right to cut down any trees that could negatively impact power lines," Lamb said she was told. The city is still researching the issue, officials said.

"As we continue to examine KU's authority to do this, Mayor Gorton asks them to save trees wherever possible," said Susan Straub, a spokeswoman for the city. "Trees make an enormous contribution to air quality and to the beauty of Lexington neighborhoods. While the mayor understands the importance of keeping power lines clear to minimize repairs, it's hard to imagine that all of these trees pose a real threat to these lines."

Trees that are in KU's easement will not necessarily be replaced. KU has a program that will give homeowners up to \$250 per tree for trees cut in backyards.

"We do have a mitigation program for yard trees that provides monetary compensation to

enable owners the opportunity to replant trees in an area outside our easement," Lowry said. "This applies to private residents as well as the city itself. The program is specific to transmission work in urban areas, so please understand that it's not applicable in every situation."

Lamb said she has asked KU to clarify what is a transmission line and what is a distribution line. The tree guidelines are different depending on the type of line, she said. That's created a lot of confusion, she said.

Lamb said home buyers should be aware when purchasing a house where utility easements are located.

"I wish it was required that real estate agents would have to disclose this," Lamb said. People may be aware there is a utility easement in their yards, but few realize how large that easement is, she said.

Meanwhile, Lowry said the tree maintenance in Lexington will continue this fall, including on Lansdowne Drive in Lexington.

"While this tree trimming and removal work is a critical part of maintaining the system, we are committed to enhancing the environment and landscape across the communities we serve," Lowry said. "That is why since 1981, we have donated more than

760,000 tree seedlings for planting across our service territories through our annual tree seedling giveaways."

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Trees near power lines are slated to be cut down in the Lansdowne Merrick Park in Lexington on Tuesday.

Why do we let one utility harm another?

BY MICHAEL POTAPOV



One way "utility" is defined by the Webster dictionary is as: "something useful or designed for use." From the Collins dictionary we can add: "something useful to the public" and "useful or used in a number of ways."

When most people hear the word "utility," they think of gas, water, sewer, internet, trash removal and, of course, electricity. We rely on utilities to keep our homes warm in the winter, cool in the summer, help cook our food, remove our waste, and provide connectivity to the rest of the world, so we can learn, work, and be entertained. One could argue that of all the utilities, electricity is the most important because it allows most other services to be provided.

How should we think of

a service providing air filtration, stormwater interception, oxygen production, carbon sequestration, cooling of homes and sidewalks, prevention of soil erosion, carbon storage, not to mention the intangible benefits trees provide? Perhaps it's not unreasonable to think of trees as a public utility "useful in a number of ways"? Could this multitude of benefits position trees to rival electricity as the most important?

Utilities should be considered in combination to evaluate their contribution to our quality of life. Having water service is good, things are better with the addition of sewer, and, I think most would agree, our quality of life is further improved by electricity, gas, and internet. We value trees because they provide numerous services and improve the quality of life for the entire community. When managed appropriately, they have a low relative lifetime cost to maintain, and their ability to provide benefits grows over time with few

inputs required. Every other utility service begins to deteriorate and lose effectiveness as soon as it is put into use.

Occasionally, utilities come in conflict. A water line has to be routed around a gas or a sewer line, an electrical line might cross an internet cable or, if hung too low, get in the way of a garbage truck. As a community, when utility conflicts occur, we think it is reasonable to adjust placement, so as to continue providing the same or better level or service. A decision to simply remove trees, a utility providing valuable service, is inconsistent with how we deal with any other utility conflict. Mature trees are difficult to move, but they can be pruned regularly, and, if pruning is done correctly, continue to thrive.

If a water line has to be moved because of a sewer or a gas line conflict, its size is not reduced. Unfortunately, under current practice, when mature trees are taken down when they pose a conflict

with electrical transmission lines, they are not replaced at the size equivalent to provide the same level of utility service. KU has been a good community partner, sponsoring Reforest the Bluegrass among other tree planting efforts. Replacing mature canopy removed with young saplings is akin to replacing a fibre optic internet connection with dial up. Growing young trees to the point of maturity takes many years, perhaps 20 — and I would guess few people would like to go back to the speed of dial up internet of the early 2000s.

As a community, we can and should make a determination to treat the tree canopy in the same way we treat other utilities. We should not treat trees as expendable because they are relatively easy to remove. We cannot forget the growing benefits we as a community receive from the utility provided to us by the canopy of trees. We must determine a way to move forward providing safe and reliable electricity service while not sacrificing the multiple benefits the utility of trees provides to our community.

Michael Potapov is a former investment manager turned tree and nature advocate in Lexington.



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Tree stumps in a median along Southpoint Drive near Nicholasville Road in Lexington are seen on July 20. Kentucky Utilities is cutting all trees that grow more than 10 feet under power transmission lines.

‘Scorched earth policy’: KU blasted over tree cutting

BY BETH MUSGRAVE
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Officials with Kentucky Utilities told the Lexington council Tuesday it would consider hitting pause on a controversial tree cutting policy that has razed dozens, if not hundreds, of trees under the utility’s transmission wires in Fayette County.

KU implemented a new policy in 2014 that called for the removal of trees taller than 10 feet under the utility’s larger transmission lines. That policy was largely implemented in more rural areas and started in 2019 in more urban areas, KU officials told the council during a work session.

But the practice has rankled Lexington city leaders, neighborhoods and tree enthusiasts for nearly two years. It’s a de-

parture from KU’s previous efforts to trim trees under major transmission lines.

During Tuesday’s meeting, dozens of residents who have had trees cut or will have trees cut under the new policy asked the utility to consider modifications. Trim rather than cut down trees that pose no threat to a power line, some said.

In the Lakeside area, more than 200 trees will be cut down under one of the power lines, said Rob Walker. “It’s going to denigrate our neighborhood.”

There are even shrubs under 15 feet tall that KU has said need to be cut, Walker said.

“They are proposing to cut down 200 trees for no real reason at all,” Walker said.

Bobbie Owens also lives in the area. Owens said KU redid the poles in 2007 and gave the neighborhood money to help replant some vegetation and

“that they now want to cut down.”

Matt Harrison is slated to lose 11 to 12 trees on his property on Norborne Drive.

“But I will only get \$250 per tree and will only be compensated for six trees,” Harrison said. “This seems to be a one-size-fits-all approach.”

Trees have extensive root systems — typically twice the size of a tree’s canopy. Those root systems help with stormwater runoff, said Rebecca Farris. The area, close to the reservoir, has extensive stormwater runoff issues, she said.

Lance Lawrence said he’s going to lose nine trees on his property on Norborne Drive but only two are near the power lines. KU’s clear-cutting was “scorched earth” policy, he said.

WILL KU HIT PAUSE ON TREE CUTTING POLICY?

Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton said she met with KU officials on Monday. She has asked them to consider the following:

- Consider changing and compromising on clear-cutting trees.
- Have a more robust re-vegetation plan on private and public property.
- Better notification to neighborhoods.
- Study Kentucky geological maps to do a sinkhole analysis
- To allow LFUCG input on the stormwater study in the Lakeside area to determine the impact of tree removal in that area
- Pause while considering all requests that have been made

“I personally believe that in most cases, we don’t have to cut down these trees,” Gorton said.

Lexington has worked hard to increase its tree canopy and has been named a Tree City for

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TREE CUTTING

more than 30 years.

"We don't have local authority or oversight over KU," Gorton said.

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council passed a resolution condemning KU's tree cutting policy in October 2020. City officials have been able to get some concessions, including a monthly meeting with KU to go over tree-cutting plans on public property and in public medians. In Lansdowne-Merrick park, KU has agreed to hire a landscape architect.

David Freibert, vice president of external relations for KU, stopped short of agreeing to a temporary moratorium during Tuesday's meeting.

"We have heard the request for flexibility and review," Freibert said. "We will be taking that back and looking at those programs."

SAFETY OR COST SAVINGS?

Kevin Montgomery, transmission right of way coordinator, said the company came up with the policy to reclaim its right of way under those transmission lines in 2014. A consultant recommended cutting trees that grow higher than 10 feet from under those lines and near those transmission lines.

Montgomery said there was no state of federal

requirement to clear-cut trees.

Tree trimming is not an efficient way to keep those power lines safe and operational, Montgomery said.

"Continual trimming of trees is really not an option for us," Montgomery said. "The growing season is longer. We have had wetter weather. We would go at different rates... We have 54 miles of lines to maintain."

Moreover, KU did not want to implement one policy for trees under transmission lines in Lexington and have a different policy in other parts of the state. That would be too cumbersome to maintain, KU officials told the council.

"We aren't Eastern Kentucky," said Councilman Richard Moloney. In more rural areas, it's more difficult to maintain tree and vegetation growth. There are also fewer houses in those areas. Lexington is dense with homeowners near those transmission and distribution lines.

Councilman David Kloiber agreed.

"We have a franchise agreement with you," Kloiber said. That franchise agreement is specific to Lexington, he said. Moreover, the tree-cutting policy saves KU money in the long run because it won't have to pay to con-

tinue to trim those trees.

Yet, KU continues to raise rates. Its last rate increase was approved earlier this year.

"This method that you have begun implementing will result in year-over-year cost savings to your company," Kloiber said. "But in your last rate case, you were not looking to pass those savings back on to us, the rates went up."

Councilwoman Susan Lamb represents the Lansdowne area. Lamb started raising questions about the tree cutting policy in March 2020. Trees will be cut along the Lansdowne Road median later this year. Those trees were KU-approved trees at the time they were planted.

On Tuesday, Lamb said she was furious that it took KU officials so long to address the council and residents' concerns. It was only when trees were proposed to be cut down in the wealthier areas of town that those concerns got traction, she said.

It was too late for her district and other areas of the city KU had already clear-cut. Those areas include an area around Wilson Downing Road in the Lansdowne area. One property owner there lost 20 trees to the program, she said.

"The properties that I represent have already been massacred," Lamb said.

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LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER

kentucky.com

Utility still cutting trees despite pleas from Lexington to stop

BY BETH MINGRAVE
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A long-simmering battle between Kentucky Utilities and Lexington city officials over the clear-cutting of trees under transmission lines appears to be at a stalemate.

Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton had asked the utility company to consider pausing the prac-

tice temporarily until the city could get more questions answered. The gutting of the city's tree canopy has rankled city officials, neighborhoods and tree enthusiasts for the past year.

During a Tuesday Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council work session, KU officials said they did not feel that a temporary moratorium was necessary. They are considering some

minor changes to their policy, including allowing some trees slightly taller than 15 feet to remain if they were under new power lines.

Kentucky Utilities implemented a new policy in 2014 that called for the removal of trees taller than 15 feet under the utility's larger transmission lines. That policy was largely implemented in more rural areas until 2019 when the prac-

tice spread to more urban areas, KU officials told the Lexington council in October.

At the Oct. 19 meeting, Gorton and the council asked KU to:

- Consider compromising on clear-cutting trees.
- Have a more robust re-vegetation plan on private and public property.
- Provide better notification to neighborhoods.

- Study Kentucky geological maps to do a sinkhole analysis.
- Allow LPUGG input on the stormwater study in the Lakeside area to determine the impact of tree removal on stormwater runoff.
- Pause while considering all requests that have been made.

There was little recourse if the company didn't respond favorably. The city has very little legal authority over KU and what the utility does in the right-of-way underneath transmission lines. The Public Service Commission and the Kentucky Attorney General's Office

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also have no say over KU's tree-trimming policies.

In one Lakeside area, more than 200 trees are scheduled to be axed by utility workers. The area's stormwater runoff issues could get worse if those trees are taken out, residents of Lakeside have repeatedly said.

Kyle Burns, KU director of transmission engineering and construction, said an environmental study, which will have input from city officials, is set to begin shortly after Thanksgiving. It will take several weeks to complete. No work will be done in the Lakeside and other areas until that study is completed.

Meanwhile, KU has upped its outreach to affected neighborhoods and is now notifying affected property owners eight weeks prior to when the trees will be cut, Burns said. It is also looking at using social media to make residents aware of the clear-cutting.

Furthermore, KU is working with the Lans-



WORKER C. HERBERT/S. HERBERT/HERALD-LEADER.COM

Workers removed sections of trees cut down near the Lansdowne neighborhood of Lexington on Oct. 12.

downe Neighborhood Association on a plan to immediately replant trees on the Lansdowne Road median after cutting begins there on Nov. 29, he said. The company will also go back and replant trees on the Southpoint Drive median, where utility crews cut trees last fall.

WHY NOT TRIM TREES INSTEAD OF CUTTING THEM DOWN?

During Tuesday's meeting, Gorton and Lexington council members urged KU to reconsider its tree-cutting policy and return to its previous practices that included trimming of trees

rather than clear-cutting.

Councilman David Kloiber said the Public Service Commission, which oversees public utilities, has not ordered the clear-cutting of trees as a safety measure. KU made that decision because axing trees is more cost-effective than trimming.

"KU has certain interests that are not aligned with the interests of the public," Kloiber said. "It's not going to make the most economic sense if this gets embroiled in a lot of lawsuits and a lot more community dissatisfaction."

Kloiber asked if any tree in Fayette County has

knocked out power on a transmission line.

Burns said the representatives did not have that number for Fayette County but the clear-cutting of trees has resulted in a 40 percent decrease in outages in the system. Maintaining the power grid is the utility's top concern, Burns said. Cost savings is not the only factor in KU's decisions.

Gorton asked if money saved from axing trees rather than cyclical trimming would be passed to ratepayers in a rate decrease.

David Freibert, vice president of external affairs for KU, said there are multiple factors that go into rate increases or decreases.

Councilman Preston Worley said KU has stepped up and tried to make some accommodations after hearing widespread complaints from Lexington residents. But the community is not asking for tweaks. KU needs to change its policy, he said.

"This is unquestionably a flawed plan," Worley said. "The only way this community is going to be happy is to have a plan for

this community."

KU officials have said that the utility cannot have one vegetation management plan for one area of its transmission line and another policy for other areas. That would be too difficult to implement.

Diane Atchison, of the Lansdowne Neighborhood Association, said 137 trees on the Lansdowne Road median will be clear-cut by the end of the month. Those trees were originally planted with KU's approval. Atchison has called the Public Service Commission, the Kentucky Attorney General's Office and other state and local agencies to try to figure out how to stop the clear-cutting.

Atchison told the council there has been little transparency in how KU is cutting trees and the justification.

"Have there been outages in Fayette County due to trees?" Atchison said. "We have never seen justifications for these heights and distances. What are the national standards?"

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LEXINGTON kentucky.com HERALD-LEADER

Lexington woman arrested at protest over tree-cutting



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Laura Zimmerman was arrested by police after she didn't move as instructed to allow Kentucky Utilities to clear-cut trees on Lansdowne Drive median.

BY CHRISTOPHER LEACH
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One woman was arrested at a protest against Kentucky Utilities as it started to cut down trees on a center median on Lansdowne Drive Monday morning.

Dozens of nearby residents gathered at the protest but only Laura Zimmerman, 64, was taken into custody. She was later charged with third-degree criminal trespassing and booked briefly into the Fayette County jail at 12:24 p.m.

When Zimmerman was taken away in a police cruiser, KU proceeded with its planned removal of the crab apple trees underneath a large power line.

When KU crews initially turned on tree-cutting equipment in preparation, several protesters were under a tree on Lansdowne at Tartan Drive. The protesters slowly left the



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Work crews removed trees after a protest and arrest over the practice in Lexington.

tree-shaded area over time as police threatened arrests.

Zimmerman was arrested roughly 30 minutes after the initial warning from police.

Only three officers were on

scene when the protest started, but by the time Zimmerman was arrested, the count of officers present at least doubled.

Many applauded Zimmerman for her actions as she was being

taken away. Some had tears in their eyes as crews got to work cutting the trees.

"We will stand here and cry — I can't even talk about it, I just can't even talk about it," said Roberta Erena, who grew up in the neighborhood. "These trees are absolutely gorgeous and they don't pose a threat, and we will stand here and we will watch them take these trees down."

KU representative Daniel Lowry said the company plans to go back to Lansdowne Drive next week to replant a compatible species of trees where the crab apples were removed Monday. The company also went back and replanted trees on the Southpoint Drive median previously, where utility crews cut trees last fall.

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council has pressed unsuccessfully to get KU to stop

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PROTEST

clear-cutting trees on private and public property. The utility has argued it has to remove the trees to prevent power outages. Its policy is to cut trees taller than 10 feet under transmission lines, but only in the last few years has the company enforced that in urban areas. Critics have said it's cheaper for KU to remove rather than trim the trees.

Mayor Linda Gorton issued a statement later Monday voicing her disapproval of KU's latest removals.

"I am very disappointed by the actions KU has taken today in cutting down trees that in no way threaten transmission lines," Gorton said in the

statement. "This does not reflect the compromise I requested that trees be trimmed rather than cut down or the 30-day moratorium I requested. It also directly contradicts the resolution council passed on Nov. 18."

The city has very little legal authority over KU and what the utility does in the right-of-way underneath transmission lines. The Public Service Commission and the Kentucky Attorney General's Office also have no say over KU's tree-trimming policies.

KU representative Daniel Lowry said the company plans to go back to Lansdowne Drive next week to replant a compatible species of trees where



A KU representative spoke with one of the protesters on Lansdowne Drive.

the crab apples were removed Monday. The company also went back and replanted trees on the Southpoint Drive median previously, where utility crews cut trees last fall.

Monday's cutting was a part of KU's vegetation management, which has

many more projects in the area, according to Lowry. Projects at Lakes Edge and Lakeview Estates have been temporarily paused while KU does an environmental study, according to letters KU sent to Gorton and city leaders on Nov. 23.

The Nov. 23 letter was in response to various demands — including a cutting moratorium — city officials made to KU. The utility giant has paused work at Lakes Edge but tree cutting in other areas will continue, the letter said. The company has agreed to some other measures, including stepping up outreach to affected areas and doing a geological survey to examine sinkholes. City officials and residents have raised concerns that cutting trees can affect stormwater runoff and create more sinkholes in some areas.

"Company data collected over the past six years shows one out of every six outages on the KU transmission system in the Lexington area were likely caused by vegetation-related issues," the letter said. "We also know that

our vegetation management work combined with other ongoing system hardening efforts across the LG&E and KU electric system have reduced the frequency and duration of power outages by 40 percent since 2011."

KU began the clear-cutting of trees over 10 feet under major transmission lines in 2014. Work did not begin in earnest in urban areas until 2019. The city, neighborhoods and environmentalists have tried in vain to get KU to rethink its tree-cutting policy for more than a year.

The letter was signed by John Crockett III, president of KU and LG&E.

Christopher Leach
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Kentuckians must hold Kentucky Utilities accountable

BY HERALD LEADER
EDITORIAL BOARD

If it weren't so outrageous, the situation would be farcical: Lexington Police arresting a 64-year-old woman who stood in front of a crabapple tree on Lansdowne Drive so Kentucky Utilities contractors couldn't cut it down as part of an absurd clear-cutting campaign under sky-high transmission lines. Hey, while they were at it, they could have also arrested former vice mayor Isabel Yates, who at the age of 97, was also at Monday's protest.

But KU, or its corporate overlords at the PPL Corporation headquartered in Philadelphia, have clearly decided that bad headlines are a small price to pay in order to clear every tree big or small from underneath those large lines. Instead of moratoriums and compromise — begged for by citizens and politicians alike — KU ignored its many Lexington ratepayers and continues on full speed ahead. Despite the fact that those crabapples would never in 100 years reach up to interfere with transmission lines, which is why KU approved their planting on Lansdowne a decade ago.

At issue is the Transmission System Improvement Plan which requires such clear-cutting as a way to avoid power outages and the federal fines that come with them. It doesn't matter if trees are too small to ever get within reach of the very tall transmission lines (as opposed to the shorter distribution lines in many neighborhoods). This is their corporate policy, and it doesn't matter if the trees are small or are being used as storm-water control. Compromise, such as considering the type of tree, or simply trimming, would cost more money, so everything must go.

According to local and state politicians, including the Public Service Commission, there is nothing they can do. KU owns the right of ways under the transmission lines, and

therefore company officials get to do whatever they want.

But there is something deeply wrong when a for-profit company has no accountability to the people it serves, whether they are shareholders or not. If our government is truly for the people, then the General Assembly should pass new laws that require KU to compromise with local governments, rather than use a blanket corporate policy to erase much needed tree canopy. Rep. Susan Westrom, D-Lexington, who was at Monday's protest, told the Herald-Leader she is planning to do just that — file legislation that requires all public utilities to communicate and compromise on local issues with the public, "instead of ignoring them as KU as done."

KU says it will replace the trees with shrubs and find other ways to be good corporate citizens. But there is no excuse for a company that holds a vital public utility to thumb its nose at a government elected by the people.

This situation is a cautionary tale for what happens when public utilities are owned by for-profit companies, and one this paper tried to correct in 2006 when it urged Lexington to buy our water system from Kentucky American Water. That effort failed, and our water rates continue to climb. KU's lobbyists may likewise be able to defeat any civic attempts to curb this absurd behavior because our government often appears to be held hostage to the highest corporate bidders. But the idea that there's nothing anyone can do against corporate behavior that has outraged so many citizens is absurd. Surely we can do better than this.

N

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HERALD-LEADER

Lexington sues KU over tree cutting policies

BY BETH MUSGRAVE
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The city of Lexington has sued Kentucky Utilities in state court and wants a Fayette Circuit Court judge to issue a temporary injunction, stopping the utility company from cutting trees under major transmission lines in Fayette County.

The lawsuit, filed late Wednesday, alleges KU has overstepped its easement by cutting down trees taller than 15 feet. The city is asking for un-

specified monetary damages and an immediate injunction that would stop the utility giant from cutting down trees while the case proceeds through the courts.

Lawyers for the city said in court documents that a 1982 state Supreme Court case regarding KU's easement says the company is limited to only what is "reasonable and is necessary to the natural and reasonable use of its primary easement."

KU's tree-cutting practices are not necessary or reasonable, city officials argued in court docu-

ments.

Lawyers for the city also argue trees provide economic and other benefits including improving stormwater run off.

"Kentucky Utilities' current mitigation practices are insufficient and do not adequately compensate LFUCG for the damage, economic or otherwise, caused by the company's clear-cutting of trees posing so immediate threat to electric service," the lawsuit says.

Kentucky Utilities said it will fight the temporary injunction. "We plan to oppose the mo-



PHOTO BY CHRIS WELCHER FOR THE HERALD-LEADER

People protest as workers prepare to cut trees underneath KU utility lines along Lansdowne Drive in Lexington on Wednesday.

tion, and I would stress again that our work is critical to the safety and reliability of the system," said Daniel Lowry, a

spokesman for KU. "We respect the mayor and city council

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members, and that is why we have met with them more than 20 times on this issue, and have agreed to modify our approach temporarily and focus only on trees that pose immediate risk."

The lawsuit was filed after more than a year of back-and-forth between the utility company and the city over KU's tree cutting policy. The utility gave no notice to the city when it clear-cut trees on Southpoint Drive in 2020, the lawsuit alleges.

"Kentucky Utilities' extreme and unilateral tree removal practice of clear-cutting trees within Lexington-Fayette County's urban forest and the right-of-way that pose no immediate threat to electric service results in economic damage to Lexington-Fayette County and its citizens," the lawsuit said.

Kentucky Utility officials have stressed they are replanting trees that have to be cut. Not all trees over 15 feet have been axed.

In addition to clearance between the tree and the line, there also needs to be enough clearance so KU crews can work on the line safely, KU officials have said.

Over the past six years, one in six outages in the Lexington area were a result of vegetation issues, KU officials have said. KU has also said that its more aggressive tree cutting policy has resulted in an overall 40 percent reduction in outages throughout its service area.

KU switched from cyclical trimming of trees to clear-cutting trees over 15 feet under transmission lines in 2014. However, that policy was not imple-

mented in urban areas until 2019.

Earlier on Wednesday, KU agreed to leave some trees that were scheduled to be chopped along the Lansdowne Drive median after Mayor Linda Gorton stepped in to negotiate an agreement between the utility company and protesters. Wednesday was the second day of protests along Lansdowne Drive.

In addition to the Lansdowne Drive median, KU crews are also cutting trees under a transmission line in the Fairways at Lakeside area.

In addition to the lawsuit, city officials said earlier this week that they also plan to file a complaint with the Public Service Commission, which oversees utility companies. That complaint will likely be filed early next week, city officials said.

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BY AN C. HERRICKS @herrickspost@lead4.com

Workers cut trees Tuesday underneath KU utility lines along Lansdowne Drive in Lexington.

KU agrees to temporarily modify tree-cutting plans

BY CHRISTOPHER LEACH
@clench@lex Herald-Leader.com

The voices of protesters who oppose KU's decision to cut down trees on Lansdowne Drive were heard Wednesday, as Kentucky Utilities agreed to a compromise with the residents and said it will modify its

cutting plan.

Mayor Linda Gorton, who negotiated with KU on behalf of the protesters, said KU agreed to cut down only the largest threatening trees. The protesters requested that smaller trees be left alone, which KU agreed to do for the next couple of days.

"This was a really important

gathering out here today on Lansdowne Drive about the tree cutting," Gorton said.

Gorton arrived at Lansdowne Drive near Westchester Drive just over an hour after the residents initially gathered to protest the continued tree cutting. After speaking with KU officials for nearly 30 minutes, she revealed the compromise to the

protesters, who called it a victory for today and a step in the right direction.

"KU is very interested in sitting at the table again," Gorton said. "That is really what the letter to the PSC and filing the injunction will help us with, is an opportunity to pause and get to the table to have more conversation."

On Tuesday, Gorton and the city said they would file complaint with the Public Service Commission, which oversees utilities, and file for an injunction to stop the controversial clear-cutting, Gorton

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said the city's law department is in the process of writing up the injunction so it's in proper legal terms for a judge.

"The chief judge downtown knows it's coming

and it will more than likely be filed this afternoon, when it's all legally proper, and then we'll wait to see what happens," Gorton said.

Multiple police officers

were on Lansdowne Drive on Wednesday in preparation to make arrests if necessary.

"I have eight officers working this sector today, I'm going to be honest with you, the whole side of the city, I don't have eight officers that's got all day to sit over here," Cmdr. Jesse Harris told protest-

ers before Gorton arrived. "That's eight officers that aren't responding to domestic violence calls, accidents, murders if they occur, whatever else."

One woman was arrested at a protest on Monday after refusing to leave the work site of the tree cutting job by KU. Laura Zimmerman, 64,

was charged with third-degree criminal trespassing and later released from jail.

"It was just disappointing," Gorton said about Monday's incident. "We all get that we need reliable electricity, that is not the question. The question is how we get there and what to do

about trees because we all know trees are important infrastructure, and it is definitely progress."

Zimmerman, along with many other protesters who were at Monday's gathering, were at Wednesday's protest.

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Lexington to sue Kentucky Utilities over tree cutting

BY BETH MUSGRAVE

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The city of Lexington is suing Kentucky Utilities over its practice of razing trees under major transmission lines after more than a year of trying to get the utility giant to reconsider its vegetation policy.

During a Tuesday Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council work session, the council voted unanimously to put a resolution on its meeting agenda to give the city's lawyers the green light to take legal action against KU.

In a press release, the city also said it will file a complaint with the Public Service Commission, which oversees utilities. The city said it will file a complaint in the courts for an immediate injunction to stop KU's tree cutting while its complaint is pending before the Public Service Commission.

Neither action has been filed yet, city officials said Tuesday.

"Over the past year we have been working with KU to try to find a way forward that protects our trees and our electric grid because clearly both are important," Mayor Linda Gorton said. "Sadly, the company has not shown our city respect in return. With few exceptions they have ignored our requests. Yesterday, the company again started cutting down trees indiscriminately. Trees that could not possibly interfere with transmission lines."

The move came one day after a woman was arrested by Lexington police at a protest on

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Lansdowne Drive over the cutting of trees in the median of the busy connector road in south Lexington. KU has said it will replant trees on the median next week. The trees axed yesterday were planted with KU's approval several years ago.

City officials, neighborhoods and environmentalists have pleaded with the utility for more than a year to consider rearing to trimming trees rather than cutting them down.

Daniel Lowry, a spokesman for KU, said not all trees over 15 feet are immediately cut down.

There are some trees that are over 25 feet under the transmission lines. It depends on the height of those transmission lines.

For example, some of

the crab apple trees on Lansdowne may not seem like they are a threat but they are, Lowry said.

"Those trees can grow another 10 feet," Lowry said. "But the power line is at 41 feet and can sag an additional four feet. For our crews to work on a line, they have to have 15 feet clearance between the tree and the line."

If the tree is in the way, those KU utility workers who have to work on those lines are too close, he said. It's dangerous for KU crews, he said.

"Lives matter to KU," Lowry said. "Trees matter to KU. Every place where we have cut trees we have replaced them with compatible trees."

Claims that KU's tree-cutting policy is driven by greed are inaccurate and



A protester talks with a representative of KU on Monday in a median with trees designated to be cut along Lansdowne Drive in Lexington.

just not true, Lowry said.

"That is an unfair statement. It has nothing to do with costs. It is not about us saving or making money. This is about the safety and reliability of the system," Lowry said.

In a Nov. 23 letter to Mayor Gorton, KU and LG&E President John Crockett III said the one

out of every six outages in the Lexington area are caused by vegetation issues. Moreover, it's more aggressive tree cutting policies has decreased outages by more than 40 percent, he said.

Councilman David Kloiber attended Monday's protest. Kloiber said KU has been unwilling to

consider trimming trees that can grow taller than 10 feet and instead has opted to clear-cut them.

That decision is not based on safety. It's based on profits, he said.

It's cheaper for the utility giant to chop trees down than continuously trim trees, he said, blasting the practice as "unchecked greed" from a "local monopoly."

Those profits will go to a private company that has no competition, Kloiber said.

The city does not have the power to stop KU from cutting down trees, Gorton said.

KU is cutting trees under transmission lines that are largely in the utility's right-of-way.

Lowry said the utility has met with city officials, neighborhood associations more than 19 times over the past year to address concerns. It is replanting trees that it cuts.

"There is a lot of misinformation out there," Lowry said. "We aren't hiding. We have been accessible to the mayor, to the council and to neighborhoods."

It's not clear what type of complaint the city plans to file with the Public Service Commission, which has previously said it has limited jurisdiction over the utility's tree-trimming policies.

Gorton said the city is also asking state lawmakers for some relief.

"We are talking to our legislators, asking them to pass new legislation that will force the utility to work with us," said Gorton. "In the meantime we are hoping to find some relief from the courts."

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LEXINGTON  kentucky.com
HERALD-LEADER

KU agrees to tree cutting moratorium until mid-January

BY BETH MUSGRAVE
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A day after the Lexington-Fayette Urban County government filed a lawsuit asking a Fayette Circuit Court judge to issue a temporary injunction barring Kentucky Utilities from clear-cutting trees under transmission lines, the two sides announced a truce.

Kentucky Utilities agreed to a temporary moratorium on all

tree cutting until mid-January. In exchange, the city has agreed not to pursue its temporary injunction in the courts so the two sides have time to negotiate, according to city officials.

KU also agreed Wednesday morning only to cut the tallest trees and those closest to the transmission lines on Lansdowne median. There have been two protests over the cutting of these trees this week.

"I appreciate KU for listening yesterday, for extending the

moratorium on cutting, and for agreeing to continue negotiations on an appropriate process that preserves our electrical grid and protects our trees going forward. I remain convinced that we can do both, and hope that this gives us an opportunity to find a new path," said Mayor Linda Gorton.

The city is not dismissing its lawsuit filed in Fayette Circuit Court, the city said.

"The motion to stop the tree-cutting will not be withdrawn,"



PHOTO BY BETH MUSGRAVE FOR HERALD-LEADER.COM

Tree stumps in a median along Southpoint Drive near Nicholasville Road in Lexington are photographed July 20, 2020. The city and KU have been at odds for more than a year over the utility's policy of axing trees taller than 15 feet under major transmission lines.

Gorton said. "We can proceed with court action if necessary, and so can KU."

In addition, KU and the city agreed that:

● KU will perform the replanting it has already agreed to in the Lansdowne median.

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● KU will continue its vegetative management work on Richmond Road, as planned, and based on prior agreements with private residents in the area.

● The city anticipates KU will honor previous commitments regarding replanting and beautification it has made in other neighborhoods.

The city and KU have been at odds for more than a year over the utility's policy of axing trees taller than 15 feet under

major transmission lines. KU says its necessary to maintain the electric grid. City officials and neighborhoods say the utility is cutting trees that are not near power lines. KU has said its new policy has resulted in fewer service disruptions and is necessary to maintain the city's power grid and for the safety of its employees.

Beth Musgrave:
 @HLCityhall

KU tree cutting moratorium extended as talks continue

BY BETH MUSGRAVE
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A moratorium on tree cutting under Lexington transmission lines by Kentucky Utilities will be extended as the city and utility giant continue discussions, city officials said.

KU and the city agreed to a

temporary moratorium on tree cutting in early December after the city filed a complaint with the Kentucky Public Service Commission and a civil lawsuit against the utility over its practice of clear-cutting trees over 15 feet under transmission lines. As part of the moratorium, the city agreed to temporarily pause its legal actions

against KU.

City officials said the moratorium on tree cutting, set to expire in mid-January, has been extended and talks continue.

"Nancy Albright has had some initial meetings with KU to discuss their cutting policy," said Susan Straub, a spokeswoman for the city. "The moratorium is still in place."

Albright is the city's commissioner of environmental quality and public works.

Officials with KU did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

KU had previously agreed to do a study of the Lakeside area after residents there raised concerns about a host of issues including how trees in that area help reduce stormwater runoff, an ongoing problem in the Lakeside area. That study began Jan. 17.

"KU is studying other possible 'carve-out' areas regard-

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ing their current policy," Straub said. "KU has said they will not be ready to meet with the city again until February."

The city and KU have been at odds over its tree cutting policy since 2020. The utility says it's necessary to cut trees under transmission lines to maintain power to the system. Over the past six years, one in six outages in the Lexington area were a result of vegetation issues, KU officials have said.

KU has also said that its more aggressive tree cutting policy has resulted in an overall 40 percent reduction in outages through-

out its service area.

The city and residents have argued that many trees KU has clear cut are too small to endanger the power line and KU should trim trees rather than ax them.

The issue came to a head when KU began cutting trees in Lansdowne, prompting protests and one protest-related arrest in early December. KU has agreed to cut only the tallest trees in that median and is still working with the city on a replanting program, Straub said.

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RYAN C. HERRING / rnherring@herald-leader.com

People protest as workers prepare to cut trees underneath KU utility lines along Lansdowne Drive in Lexington, Ky., on Dec. 1, 2021.

BY LINDA BLACKFORD
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Here in the land where Things Make No Sense, we are celebrating Lexington Tree Week (Oct. 9-16) with free sapling giveaways and forest bathing excursions while our utility company gets busy chopping our tree canopy down.

On Wednesday morning, Phillips Tree Experts, a contractor for Kentucky Utilities, whisked out 15 trees on one property off Montavesta Road. Although the arborvitae were nowhere near the big transmission line overhead, they were 10 feet high and sat within a 50-foot bubble around the line. So according to KU rules, they had to go. Every single one.

And much worse is coming. Nearly every single tree on the Lansdowne Drive median is scheduled for one massive clear-cut because that high-voltage transmission line runs directly over top of the drive. In the other direction, homeowners who back up to Lansdowne Merrick Park will lose a huge swathe of old and new trees. As the same transmission line travels across the Lakeshore neighborhood, homeowners are furious and sad and trying to figure out what to do next.

"I'm frustrated and devastated by what has happened and what is getting ready to happen," said Diane Atchison, a board member of the Lansdowne Neighborhood Association. "I don't know that we can stop it."

It's not clear they can stop it, or even improve it slightly. KU officials said they started "the cycle-based vegetation management program as a part of its Transmission System Improvement Plan in 2019" — it's "industry best practice for maintaining transmission infrastructure and is part of our proactive method for keeping trees a safe distance from transmission lines and structures," said spokesman Daniel Lowry.

People started complaining after they saw the clear-cutting on Southpoint Drive last year. Now Mayor Linda Geeton



Workers remove sections of trees cut down near the Lansdowne Neighborhood of Lexington on Tuesday.

COMMENTARY

KU should compromise on clear-cutting trees under power lines

is scheduled to meet with KU-LG&E President John R. Crockett III on Monday; company officials are supposed to appear before council on Oct. 19; neighborhood groups are having busy get-togethers with their council members to see what can be stopped. Right now, Districts 3 and 5 are getting the most work; District 5 Council member Liz Sheehan said that while "we need to protect our community from power outages, it should not come at the cost of our tree canopy and environment. I share the concerns of residents and will keep working to find a solution that minimizes tree clearing."

Legally, KU owns easements under distribution and transmission lines, which unfortunately, many homeowners don't figure out until well after they've bought a house and planted more trees.

And let's face it, we all want our electricity more than ever, what with working at home, and our

phones and devices and games. And leftover PTSD from the 2003 ice storm when some lost power for a week or more. Power companies have faced lawsuits and very hefty federal fines for long power outages. KU says it's had 40 percent fewer outages since 2011, thanks to new practices.

But what doesn't make sense is why KU is taking such a scorched-earth approach when compromises could be found, like trimming trees instead of removing them. Lowry said too many trees have grown too close to the wires, so that trimming is not an option, and they must be proactive to get rid of smaller trees.

But Peter Barber, an arborist who is working as a contractor for KU in Lansdowne, believes that because so many power companies are now part of big conglomerates, they're taking a page from companies out west that have been blamed for devastating forest fires when

they didn't control flammable material around power lines. Not, as he put it, "in our wet Eastern forest here," in Lexington, where forest fires are much less likely. KU is now owned by PPL Corporation, which started life as Pennsylvania Power and Light.

"You've got an accountant out there who thinks they'll save some money by not pruning trees anymore," Barber said. "It's a mess. I spend my days apologizing to people."

David and Donna O'Bryan would like to hear anything from KU. Their house on Old Crow Court backs up to Lansdowne Merrick Park, where they've planted big and small trees. Yes, they understand a large and old water maple near the line might have to go. What they don't understand is why their beautiful sweet bay magnolia, which is maybe 10 feet now and might get to 12 but not higher, has to be taken out.

"This is going to devastate our yard," David O'Bryan said. "And they've never talked to us. It's ridiculous."

Further toward Richmond Road, the transmission line travels near the old reservoir. Off Lakeshore Drive, Norborne Road slopes down to the lake, and every time it rains, the little valley where the backyards of Norborne and Manor meet turns into a river. Nonetheless, said homeowner Katherine Graham, KU is supposed to come any time to cut down all the ash and maple trees in the backyard. She and her husband even put in several small arborvitae against the fence to slow down the water. They are about three feet tall and they're scheduled to be taken out as well.

"This whole reservoir area has major water issues," Graham said. "People have planted trees to suck up the extra water, and we're concerned about what will happen once they're gone."

Which brings up another question in the Make No Sense department: Lexington is under a \$590 million consent decree with the EPA because its stormwater and sewer systems had gotten so bad they needed to be replaced. As the city rebuilds sewers, one of the best things that residents

can do to slow stormwater is, you guessed it, plant more trees.

Diane Layson has lived in the Lake's Edge neighborhood for more than 30 years. In 2007, KU took out a lot of trees to put in the bigger metal poles to support the transmission line. Burying the lines was too expensive. They gave the neighborhood \$30,000 to plant replacement trees with the only rule being that they not grow higher than 30 feet. The transmission line is about 60-65 feet above the neighborhood. So now KU is about to clear-cut \$30,000 worth of trees they paid for, which is an interesting strategy for a for-profit company.

"It's a really unbelievable, devastating situation," Layson said. "We have been very good stewards of our neighborhood, we've done so much to make our neighborhood as park-like and beautiful as we can, and they literally just want to mow everything down."

Layson's group is meeting with KU on Thursday, and if nothing is resolved, she said, they've got a lawyer in the wings.

Lawsuits seem extreme, but that may be what it takes. Everyone understands the need for electricity, everyone understands that some trees need to be cut down because they might interfere with said electricity. But there is absolutely no reason to use such a blanket approach on our many and varied types of trees. Numerous homeowners have offered to pay for pruning themselves, instead of losing the entire tree. Barbara Whitlock, who lives on Manor Road, adores an old and spreading elm tree that hardly comes near the lines. She offered to get it trimmed. The answer was no.

"This tree is a treasure," she said. "It's just ridiculous, there's no earthly reason why I can't trim this tree back."

As in most things, compromise is the answer. Homeowners are willing to do it. "Our energies go to serve you," KU says right there on its website. Well, serve us by compromising on the fate of our oxygen-producing, carbon-eating, water-absorbing, flood-preventing trees. It's the least a good corporate citizen can do.

Linda Blackford (859) 231-1359, @lblackford

NO VOICE

I spent a morning freezing on Lansdowne Drive in an effort to stop the totally useless and devastating tree removal. I wasn't alone; there were some well known Lexingtonians there with us. All to no avail. Kentucky Utilities can do whatever it wants. The trees they were taking down were probably 20 or 30 feet under the wires. They had been specifically planted under an agreement with previous KU owners because they were fruit trees which do not grow very tall. The tree cutters put their ugly red crosses on everything that lived, including low lying bushes, which just illustrates the scorched earth policy of this company (which is not owned in our state but is out of state). A representative from KU who was there said "a committee, including arborists" had decided on which trees to cut. When asked for specifics, or to meet with said arborist, he just turned and walked away. Then they called the police to arrest anyone who stood near the trees to prevent the cutting and arrested one of the organizers.

Why on earth is a "public utility" not owned by the public. If that is socialism then bring it on. At least we would have someone in our community with whom we could discuss these things. [N](#)

Judy Harvey, Lexington

REMOVAL POINTLESS

I regret that I was not standing with Laura Zimmerman during the ill advised cutting of trees by Kentucky Utilities in the Lansdowne median. If there had been 500 people standing in opposition, perhaps the outcome would have been different. I wonder if that is what it will take for KU to listen to local government officials who represent the people of Lexington when they make sound, reasonable recommendations regarding tree cutting.

Although KU has a responsibility for maintaining [N](#) transmission lines to avoid power outages, the Lansdowne debacle was totally unnecessary. The trees that were removed were appropriate for the location and would have never endangered the transmission lines. It will be interesting to see how the trees KU promised to provide as replacements will be an improvement. Our community needs to stand together as we continue the pressure on KU to make reasonable decisions about tree removal.

William Farnau, Lexington

CONTACT LEGISLATORS

I have sent emails to the editors of the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Philadelphia Daily News asking if Kentucky Utilities' parent company PPL Corp. has been conducting the clear-cutting campaign in Philly like they are here and to alert them to what's coming if it's not yet in force.

I have also sent emails to our local state representatives. They are: Killian.Timoney@lrc.ky.gov, Daniel.Fister@lrc.ky.gov, Phillip.Pratt@lrc.ky.gov, Kelly.Flood@lrc.ky.gov, Matthew.Koch@lrc.ky.gov, Ruth-Ann.Palumbo@lrc.ky.gov,, George.Brown@lrc.ky.gov, Cherlynn.Stevenson@lrc.ky.gov, Susan.Westrom@lrc.ky.gov.

Set up these names in a draft email once. Then the next time you think it's too hard to contact your representatives, open that draft, copy the names in the "TO" field into a new email . . . and have at it! Do the same with the names of our state senators. They respond quickly and with interest. It's our government. Don't complain if you haven't exercised the very easy contact option that we have at our fingertips.

Janet Piechowski, Lexington