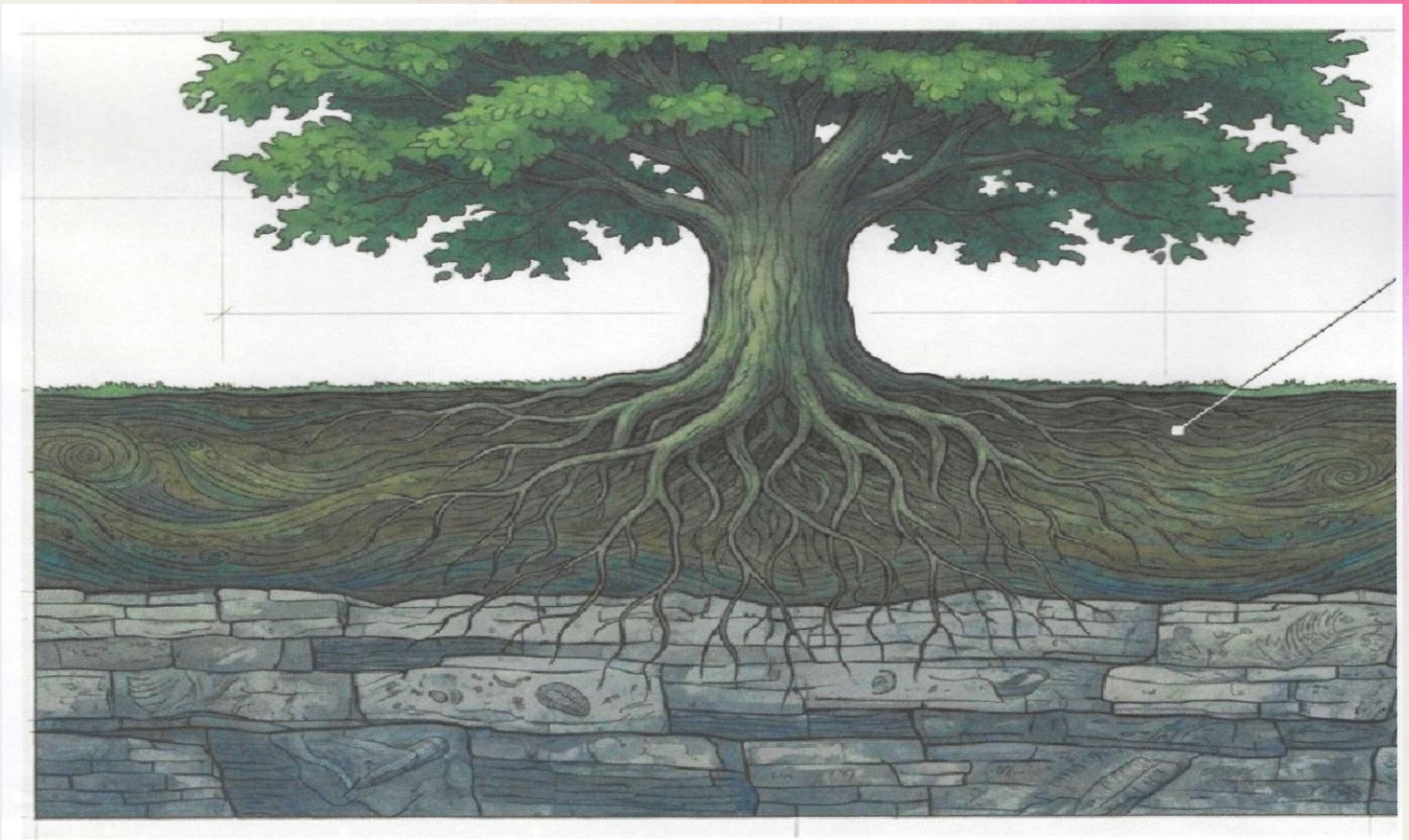
West Seneca Environmental Commission

Native Soils and Tree Planting



Native Soils

- West Seneca and Erie County ‘s most prevalent soils are classified as Silty Loam.
  - Loam is defined as a rich fertile soil made of a balanced (not necessarily equal) mix of sand, silt , and clay plus decaying organic matter.
  - The major specific soil types are Mardin, Volusia, Niagara, Odessa and Rhinebeck. Other minor types are also present in West Seneca.
  - Silty Loams are smooth like flour, fertile and hold moisture well.

Silty Loam Soil



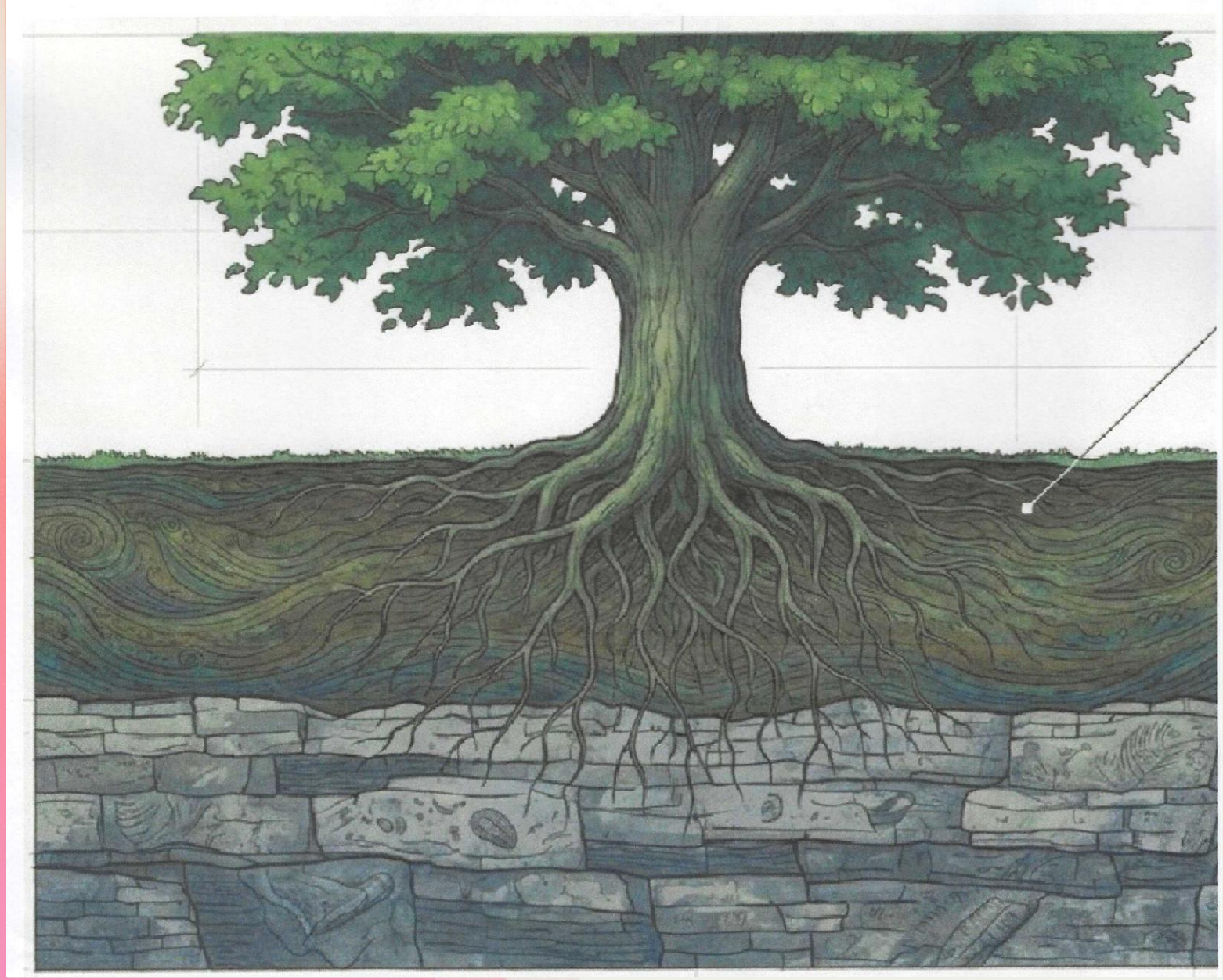
Native Soils

- Some areas of West Seneca are predominantly a Gravelly Loam. In this case the amount of gravel (small worn rock fragments and pebbles), is a significant but variable percentage of the total soil mass.
- Another small percentage of the Town may exhibit a Silty Clay soil type (defined as Orpark); it is characterized as smooth, sticky, holds water but is reasonably impermeable to water.
- Numerous locations in West Seneca also experience elevated amounts of clay or even lenses of plastic glacial lacustrine materials that generally are of low permeability and dependent on the size of said deposits. These lenses can retard moisture and nutrient absorption retarding tree growth.

Gravelly Silt



Limestone Bedrock



Bedrock

- In virtually all situations in West Seneca, these soils, with or without any clay lenses, are underlaid by Limestone bedrock.
  - The Limestone bedrock is highly fractured and accepts infiltration of water as well as maintaining and transporting freely groundwater within the system.
  - Only 10% of Erie County exhibits bedrock within 3 feet of the surface.
  - Bedrock generally does not hinder tree planning activities.

Planting and Caring for Trees

- Before you Plant
  - Consider time of year
  - Underground utilities/Overhead obstructions
  - Local restrictions
- When you Plant
  - Prepare seedings
  - Proper depth and packing
  - Water appropriately
- After you Plant
  - Proper mulching
  - Stabilize
  - Tree shelter
  - Water

Copy of NYSDEC Guidance available tonight

Erie County Care and Planting of Seedlings available tonight

Selecting Tree Species

1. The Selecting Tree Species Booklet published by Erie County provides an excellent resource for selection of trees native to the region. The trees found in the booklet are all trees available from Erie County' tree nursery.
2. Booklet available at: https://ww3.erie.gov/environmental/sites/www3.erie.gov.environmental/files/2026-4/accessible-final-tree-species-booklet-5.5-x-8.5- in.pdf

❑ *A single copy of the Selecting Tree Species Booklet is available*