

## Crews removing trees in Grand Island

### Residents want to know what's happening

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GRAND ISLAND, N.Y. (WIVB) - When heavy equipment rolled into Grand Island's business district and started clearing away trees and brush, people took notice and they wanted to know what was going on.

On Wednesday, News 4 went digging and found crews busy cutting down trees and clearing property next to the Tops.

Grand Island Supervisor Mary Cooke said, "Everybody wants to know what's going in there, and we don't know."

Cooke says the property is owned by Benderson Development. She says the company applied for and received a permit for grading.

"Certainly cutting the trees attracted a ton of attention, but they don't need a permit to do that. You don't need to have a permit to cut trees down on your property," Cooke noted.

Pat Reagan of Lewiston noticed the clearing work while shopping for sweet corn across the street.

"It makes the island different," Reagan said. "I was really sort of shocked to see they were taking down all the trees because Grand Island is such a beautiful place."

The site is located on Grand Island Boulevard, next to the Tops plaza. It falls within the island's central business district.

Cooke says the site could have retail, residential, entertainment and recreation uses among others things. But as of this moment, she doesn't know what the plans are.

"And that creates a lot of concern for people, quite honestly," Cooke explained. But ultimately, she said, "It's their property."

Town councilman Richard Crawford would also like to know what's going on.

"We know that over the years they've floated ideas by us on other businesses that they thought might go in there. But again, they're the developer. So we wait for them to come back to the town with their plans," Crawford said.

Our calls from Benderson Development were not returned, but we did find a diagram on their website showing the Tops plaza. The property now being cleared is listed as "future development."