

SAUSALITO TREES & VIEWS COMMITTEE
Thursday, April 7, 2011
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

Vice Chair Bickford called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 420 Litho Street, Sausalito.

Present: Vice Chair Mary Lee Bickford, Committee Member Betsy Elliott,
Committee Member Wingham Liddell, Committee Member Ronald Reich

Absent: Chair Grant Colfax

Staff: Community Development Director Jeremy Graves
Assistant Planner Alison Thornberry

Vice Chair Bickford advised that as there were only four members of the Committee a tie vote is considered a denial and offered the applicants the opportunity to request their application be heard at a future meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Committee Member Reich moved and Committee Member Liddell seconded a motion to approve the agenda. The motion passed 4-0.

Public Comments

None.

Approval of Minutes

March 3, 2011

Committee Member Reich moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a motion to approve the minutes, as submitted. The motion passed 4-0.

Public Hearings

- 1. TRP 11-065, Tree Alteration Permit, Langsom Trust et al, 77 Bulkley Avenue.** Tree Alteration Permit to alter one Big Leaf Maple located on the front of the property at 77 Bulkley Avenue. Item is continued from the March 3, 2011 meeting.

The continued public hearing was re-opened. Assistant Planner Thornberry-Assef presented the Staff Report.

The public comment period was opened. Being none, the public comment period was closed.

1 Committee comment:

- 2 • The Committee Members have viewed the tree multiple times and the
3 application as recommended by staff should be approved. Any
4 recommendation to reduce the weight, height, and canopy is good.
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6 Committee questions to staff:

- 7 • How much is the suggested reduction to the canopy? *Staff responded there is*
8 *not a specific height listed in the arborist's report, but the arborist's photograph*
9 *show a suggested reduction of approximately 3 feet.*
10 • The canopy reduction is primarily a view consideration, correct? *Staff*
11 *responded yes, it is to restore the previous view at the residence.*
12 • Will an arborist manage the trimming of the tree? *Staff responded yes, an*
13 *arborist is required to be present during alteration of all protected trees.*
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15 Additional Condition of Approval:

- 16 • An arborist from Artistry in Trees shall supervise the trimming of the subject
17 tree.
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20 **Committee Member Reich moved and Committee Member Liddell seconded a**
21 **motion to approve a Tree Alteration Permit for 77 Bulkley Avenue subject to the**
22 **additional Condition of Approval. The motion passed 4-0.**
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- 24 **2. TRP 11-076, Tree Alteration Permit, Collette, 71 Central Avenue.** Tree
25 Alteration Permit to allow the alteration of two Coast Live Oaks and one
26 Pittosporum at 71 Central Avenue.
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28 The public hearing was opened. Assistant Planner Thornberry-Assef presented the Staff
29 Report.
30

31 Committee questions to staff:

- 32 • Staff mentioned there is a specific trimming protocol for this situation. What is
33 that protocol? *Staff responded the arborist has recommended reducing the*
34 *crowns using ISA standard pruning methods and cutting back to a leader at*
35 *least one-third the size of the limb that is being cut. The view pruning may need*
36 *to be done every 2-4 years depending on weather patterns. The arborist also*
37 *recommended pruning and drop-crotching methods for cutting taller leaders on*
38 *the Pittosporum.*
39 • Is the ivy growing on the oaks a concern? *Staff responded the arborist*
40 *recommended the ivy be removed to do a more thorough inspection for*
41 *Sudden Oak Death.*
42

43 Committee comments:

- 44 • The ivy growing on the oaks is bad for their health. It should be recommended
45 by the Committee that the ivy be completely removed so that it does not return.
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1 Comments by Ed Gurka, arborist:

- 2 • Ivy growing on oak trees creates a condition that drains the trees. As the ivy
3 gets thicker it can girdle and choke the trees as well as keep moisture in them,
4 which can cause disease.

5
6 Questions to Mr. Gurka:

- 7 • Is there is a certain amount of trimming that beyond that is not healthy for a
8 tree? *Mr. Gurka responded he would recommended removal of no more than*
9 *20% of the foliage and not making cuts large enough that they cannot heal*
10 *within a couple of years. The bigger the diameter of the cut the less likely it will*
11 *callous over and seal the opening, which prevents disease infection.*
- 12 • Would you characterize Live Oaks as slow-growing trees that take longer to
13 heal? *Mr. Gurka responded yes, oaks are slow growing because of their dense*
14 *wood.*

15
16 Presentation was made by Agnes Shapiro, the applicant.

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18 **Committee Member Elliott moved and Committee Member Reich seconded a**
19 **motion to approve a Tree Alteration Permit for 71 Central Avenue.**

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21 **Committee Member Reich moved and Committee Member Liddell seconded a**
22 **motion to amend the original motion to include a Condition of Approval that no**
23 **more than 25% of the trees' height shall be removed, the ivy and other plants**
24 **climbing on the trees shall be removed, and all work shall be done in accordance**
25 **with ANSI A300 and ISA standards.**

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28 **Committee Member Reich moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a**
29 **motion to amend the motion amending the original motion to state:**

- 30 • Tree 1, all the ivy and other plants climbing on it be removed, it be
31 reduced 3-5 feet, but no more than 25% of its height.
- 32 • Tree 2, all the ivy and other plants climbing on it be removed, it be
33 reduced 5-7 feet, but no more than 25% of its height.
- 34 • Tree 3, all the ivy and other plants climbing on it be removed, it be
35 reduced 3-4 feet, or 25% of its height, whichever is less.
- 36 • All trimming shall be done in accordance with ANSI A300 and ISA
37 standards.

38
39 **The original motion passed 4-0 as amended.**

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41 Comment by Ms. Shapiro:

- 42 • Her application is to restore her view. She has agreed to pay for the trees to be
43 trimmed in order for that to happen, but now the Committee has passed a
44 motion requiring her to pay to remove the ivy from the trees as well. The
45 additional cost of the removing the ivy would be financially impossible.

46
47 Committee comment to Ms. Shapiro:

- 48 • The applicant's point of view is understood, but the importance of having the
49 ivy removed is significant.

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2 Committee comments:

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- 4 • These are important trees, not only for the community, but also for how the
5 Trees & Views Committee looks. It overrides someone's view, at least to some
6 extent.
 - 7 • The Committee is talking about two different issues: the applicant's view, which
8 the applicant takes responsibility for by paying for the trimming, and the proper
9 maintenance of the trees, which is the owner's responsibility.
 - 10 • It costs just a little bit more to take a couple of pieces of ivy off the trees, and
11 so it should be paid for by the applicant since she is already paying for the
12 trimming.
 - 13 • The ivy should be removed, but the proper care of the trees does not fall to the
14 view applicant, but to the actual owner of the tree. Perhaps the Committee can
15 make a request, and then get an estimate from the arborist while he is at the
16 site as to the separate cost of removing the ivy, which can then be presented to
17 the owner of the tree.
- 18

19 **Vice Chair Bickford moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a motion to**
20 **amend the approved motion by adding that the tree owner is responsible for the**
21 **costs involved in removing the ivy and other climbing plants on the oak trees. If**
22 **the tree owner does not agree to the ivy removal, the trimming can proceed**
23 **without the ivy removal. The motion passed 3-1 (No – Liddell).**
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25 **Committee Member Elliott moved and Committee Member Reich seconded a**
26 **motion to amend the motion to include that the arborist shall provide**
27 **documentation to the tree owner as to why the ivy should be removed, stating**
28 **that the trees will eventually die if the ivy is not removed, in which case the tree**
29 **owner will to be required to bear the expense of removing the dead trees, which**
30 **is significantly more expensive than removing the ivy. The motion passed 4-0.**
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- 32 **3. TRP 11-091, Tree Alteration/Removal Permit, Keller and Eynon, 40 Vista**
33 **Clara Road and 45 Crecienta Drive.** Tree Alteration/Removal Permit to allow
34 the alteration of one Coast Live Oak at 40 Vista Clara Road and removal of two
35 Coast Live Oaks at 45 Crecienta Drive.
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37 The public hearing was opened. Assistant Planner Thornberry-Assef presented the Staff
38 Report.
39

40 Presentation was made by Ed Gurka, the project arborist, and David Keller, the owner:
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42 Committee questions to Mr. Gurka:

- 43
- 44 • You have recommended cutting the tree limb back in stages to ensure the
45 health of the tree. How long will the process take to get to the end result? *Mr.*
46 *Gurka responded longer than two years.*
 - 47 • How long between each stage until you can determine if this tree is still
48 healthy? *Mr. Gurka responded he hopes to assess this in one year once it has*
49 *gone through one growth cycle, and determine how much decay has entered*
50 *the tree.*

- How many oak trees are on the property? *Mr. Gurka responded there are two or three others.*
- Is the Coast Live Oak infected with Sudden Oak Death? *Mr. Gurka responded no, it is a healthy tree.*

Committee comments:

- The small two Live Oaks should not be removed until it has been determined over time that the large oak will maintain its health with the complete removal of its extended limb, so case the large oak is lost, there will still be the two oaks on the property.
- The issue then comes down to how long will it take, in cutting the extended limb off the large oak in segments, to determine whether it will remain healthy after losing its entire limb?

Committee questions to Mr. Gurka:

- What is the total amount of time needed after removal of the extended limb to determine the health of the large oak? *Mr. Gurka responded one growth cycle, however in doing a staged removal of the extended limb it may come to a point where that limb will not be completely removed.*
- Will the top foliage of the large oak be thinned? *Mr. Gurka responded no.*

Additional Condition of Approval:

- The smaller Oak Trees 1 and 2 shall not be removed until the health of the large oak has been assured, through the cutting of its extended limb in stages, and as determined by an arborist selected by mutual agreement between the applicant and the tree owner

Vice Chair Bickford moved and Committee Member Liddell seconded a motion to approve a Tree Alternation/Removal Permit for 40 Vista Clara Road and 45 Crecienta Drive subject to the additional Condition of Approval.

Vice Chair Bickford moved to amend the original motion to state that Oak Trees 1 and 2 may be removed after the complete removal of the extended limb of the large oak.

Committee questions to Mr. Gurka:

- What is the total time needed for the complete removal of the extended limb of the large oak? *Mr. Gurka responded the extended limb might not be removed completely. After the first stage, when the limb is cut to the point of the 5-inch cut, if it is determined that that limb provides support for the tree it may remain in place and not be removed. Factors such as support, resprouting, and decay will determine whether or not more of the limb can be removed. It will be an assessment made after the first stage of limb removal and one growth cycle of one year has taken place.*
- At what point in the gradual staged removal of the extended limb will you be fairly certain that the large oak will remain healthy? *Mr. Gurka responded one growth cycle after the first cut, which would be the spring/summer season, fall season, and then the tree dormancy period.*

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2 **Vice Chair Bickford withdrew her amendment to the original motion.**

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4 **The original motion passed 4-0.**

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6 **Old Business**

7 **4. Trees & Views Committee Procedures**

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9 **Vice Chair Bickford moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a motion to**
10 **postpone Old Business Item 4, Trees & Views Committee Procedures, until the**
11 **next meeting with attendance by the full Committee. The motion passed 4-0.**
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13 **New Business**

14 **5. Suggestions for FY 2011-12 Prioritized Project List**

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16 Community Development Director Graves presented the Staff Report.

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18 **6. Procedures for Trimming and Care of Trees**

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20 **Vice Chair Bickford moved to postpone New Business Item 6, Procedures for**
21 **Trimming and Caring of Trees, be postponed until the next meeting.**
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23 **Communications**

24 **Staff**

- 25
26
 - Included in the packet is an email from Director of Public Works Director Goldman addressing the Committee's questions from their last meeting, as well as information regarding Sudden Oak Death Guidelines for Arborists and a list of the March 2011 Public Works tree works and emergency removals for trees in the public right-of-way.
 - The City has received a Dedicated Tree Notebook assembled by Mary Ann Sears. It is available for review at the counter of the Community Development Department.
 - Director of Public Works Director Goldman stated he could find room in his budget for purchase and installation of a replacement tree for the oak removed at One San Carlos, but needs a location for its planting. He is looking to the Trees & Views Committee to contact interested property owners in the neighborhood.

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40 **Adjournment**

41 The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.
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46 Submitted by
47 Jeremy Graves, AICP
48 Community Development Director

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46 Approved by
47 Mary Lee Bickford
48 Vice-Chair

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