

SAUSALITO TREES & VIEWS COMMITTEE
Thursday, September 1, 2011
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

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

Present: Chair Grant Colfax, Vice Chair Mary Lee Bickford,
Committee Member Ronald Reich

Absent: Committee Member Betsy Elliott, Committee Member Wingham Liddell

Staff: Community Development Director Jeremy Graves, Assistant Planner
Alison Thornberry

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

Public Comments

None.

Approval of Minutes

August 4, 2011

Committee Member Reich moved and Vice Chair Bickford seconded a motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed 3-0.

Public Hearings

- 1. TRP 11-222, Tree Alteration Permit, Hicks, 118 Central Avenue.** Tree Alternation Permit to allow the alteration of one Coast Live Oak located at the northeast portion of the property at 118 Central Avenue (APN 065-202-22).

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

Presentation was made by Kent Julin, arborist, the applicant.

Committee questions to the applicant:

- Is there a way to windowpane or thin the canopy and reduce some of the weight? *Mr. Julin responded, most of the weight is in the main stem and main trunk. Windowpaning or thinning would not be enough to reduce the safety hazard.*
- Will the internal decay grow and remain on the tree? *Mr. Julin responded, there are small branches attached to the outside of the tree. As time goes by and the branches become large they will decay, but that will not be for ten to twenty years.*

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

Committee Member Reich moved and Vice Chair Bickford seconded a motion to approve a Tree Alteration Permit for 118 Central Avenue. The motion passed 3-0.

- 2. TRP 11-184, View Claim, Salkhi, 509 Litho Street.** View Claim regarding the obstruction of views from the Claimant's property at 509 Litho Street (APN 064-211-38) by a tree located on the Tree Owner's property at 93 Girard Street (APN 064-211-24). The Claimant seeks an advisory decision regarding the restoration of water views from the property at 509 Litho Street.

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

Committee question to staff:

- How much of the tree would the Claimant like removed? *Staff responded the Claimant wants more cut than is recommended in the arborist's report.*

Presentation was made by Stephen Fraser and Ed Gurka, attorney and arborist for the Claimant.

Committee questions to Mr. Gurka:

- Is this a healthy tree that has been well pruned? *Mr. Gurka responded yes.*
- How fast does this tree grow in a year? *Mr. Gurka responded 12 to 24 inches.*
- How much was the tree was trimmed in 2010? *Mr. Gurka responded it was pruned 2 feet off the top in 2010.*
- How much are you requesting be removed from this tree now? *Mr. Gurka responded 3 feet.*
- Does that 3 feet stay within the boundaries of the maximum 25% of canopy that can be removed without harming a tree? *Mr. Gurka responded that his recommended 3 feet would be pretty close to 25%.*
- Can that amount of pruning be done at one time without detriment to the tree? *Mr. Gurka responded yes.*

Presentation was made by Shelby Cox, Tree Owner, and Kent Julin, arborist.

- In 2010 the tree was reduced significantly. In the one year since then it has grown probably less than 6 inches, not the 2-3 feet claimed by the Claimant.
- Removing 3 feet from the tree would remove 30% of the overall canopy.

Committee question to Mr. Julin:

- Your report states if the upper 2-3 feet of the tree is removed it would create a 10-30% reduction in the canopy. Why is there such a large difference? *Mr. Julin responded because the shape of the tree is a dome. As one moves down incrementally the percentage becomes higher due to the shape. His numbers are based on a mathematical calculation based on it being a sphere, which conclude the tree would be reduced by 30% with a reduction of 3 feet.*

Committee questions to Ms. Cox:

- Would you be willing to have the tree reduced to the height to which it was cut in 2010? *Ms. Cox responded yes, and to keep the tree at that level.*
- If the 2010 pictures mean taking 3 feet off the tree, because it is an average, is that acceptable to you? *Ms. Cox responded 2 feet is what was cut in 2010 and they are okay with a 2-foot cut, but they are not saying another 2 feet below that.*

Committee questions to Mr. Salkhi:

- If the tree were trimmed to the same height as the 2010 trimming, is that acceptable. *Mr. Salkhi responded he is hoping the thickness of the sides can be cut so he can see through it.*
- Are you willing to compromise in thinking that the 2010 trimming is a compromise for both parties? *Mr. Salkhi responded he could accept something in between what Ms. Cox wants and what he has asked for.*

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

Staff comment:

- In order to make the tree height enforceable the Committee should establish a height above ground as opposed to taking a certain amount from the top of the tree, which is continuously growing.

Committee comments:

- The tree is attractively trimmed, and if large amounts are taken off the ends of the branches then there is risk of not leaving enough growth to replenish for the next year.
- If 3-4 feet are removed there is the concern that too much sunlight will be allowed into the tree.
- The Committee needs to know the height of the tree after it was trimmed in 2010.

The public hearing was re-opened.

Committee question to Mr. Gurka and Mr. Julin:

- Based on the photo of the tree after trimming in 2010 is there an objective way that both of you can come to agreement about what the tree height was at that time? *Mr. Julin responded there are many reference points in the background they can used to prune to the height that was created in 2010. Mr. Gurka responded the 2010 height could be established by looking at the old pruning cuts and where the new sprouting occurred. They can also use the height of the measured pruning poles used in the 2010 pruning, which are standard Jameson measuring poles. There are photographs available of the poles.*

The public hearing was closed.

1 Vice Chair Bickford moved and Committee Member Reich seconded a motion that
2 the Strawberry tree at 93 Girard Street be trimmed to the 2010 height to be
3 determined using the old trim cuts and the measurement sticks used in the 2010
4 trimming. The right side of the tree shall be trimmed per the line on page two of
5 three of the Gurka Two report, dated 10-14, page 62 of the packet, that goes from
6 the bottom of the smokestack and tapers upwards towards the top of the tree.
7 The left side of the tree shall be trimmed of the new growth extending out from
8 the canopy. Both the Tree Owner and the Claimant and shall be present with their
9 arborists during the trimming and the Tree Owner and Claimant be in agreement.
10 The tree shall then be trimmed annually with the cost paid by the Claimant.
11

12 Chair Colfax moved and Committee Member Reich seconded a motion to amend
13 the original motion to add that after the trimming a baseline height of the tree
14 shall be established so as to maintain the established height.
15

16 The maker of the motion and seconder agreed to the amendment of the original
17 motion.
18

19 The motion to amend the original motion passed 3-0.
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21 The amended motion passed 3-0.
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23 The Committee approved by consensus that the date of the trimming shall be
24 within 30 days from approval of the resolution on October 6, 2011.
25

26 Old Business 27

- 28
- 29 **3. 1 San Carlos Avenue.** Possible revenue generation to pay for costs of
30 replacement trees and possible locations for those trees.
31

32 Committee comments:

- 33 • The Committee should explore working with the Woman's Club of Sausalito,
34 which has dedicated protected oak trees in the past and has a history of being
35 involved in the horticultural issues in the community, on fund raising specifically
36 around the fact that the historical oaks are being removed or dying and how the
37 community can replace them as well as removing the stumps from trees
38 already removed, as there is no money in the City budget to do so.
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40 By consensus the Committee determined that Chair Colfax would contact the
41 Woman's Club of Sausalito regarding revenue generation to replace protected
42 trees and remove the stumps of those that have been removed.
43

44 New Business 45

- 46 **4. Enforcement and Penalties for the Trees & Views Ordinance.**
47

48 Staff comments: 49 50

- Copies of the Enforcement Ordinance were distributed to members of the Trees & Views Committee.
- Staff is reviewing potential illegal tree alterations and removals with the goal of issuing citations and having hearings before the Trees & Views Committee to determine if the violation was intentional and if a penalty shall be imposed.

Communications

Staff

- Department of Public Works Tree Maintenance Activities for August 2011: The report has been completed for the Committee's review.
- New Date for Presentation on Sudden Oak Death Syndrome: A new date has been set to occur during the Trees & Views Committee meeting on November 3, 2011 at 6:30pm. Committee members should send any specific questions they would like answered at the presentation to staff.
- Meeting Procedures that the Committee approved at their August 4, 2011 meeting: The procedures have been included in the Committee's packet.
- The Committee overlooked the time to end meetings in the Meeting Procedures.

Committee Member Reich moved and Vice Chair Bickford seconded a motion to end Trees & Views Committee meetings at 9:30pm unless voted by a majority of the Committee to extend the meeting time. The motion passed 3-0.

Committee

- The Committee would like to receive copies of the ANSI Standards.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by
Jeremy Graves, AICP
Community Development Director

Approved by
Grant Colfax
Chair

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