



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2014

ITEM NUMBER:

9A

SUBJECT: TREE REMOVAL REQUEST - 2928 ELLESMERE AVENUE

DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2014

FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT, MAINTENANCE SERVICES DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: BRUCE A. HARTLEY, MAINTENANCE SERVICES MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BRUCE A. HARTLEY (714) 754-5123

RECOMMENDATION

Deny the request for the removal of two (2) City-owned parkway trees located in the public right-of-way at 2928 Ellesmere Avenue.

BACKGROUND

The Maintenance Services Division was initially contacted by the Applicant on September 23, 2013, expressing concern that the parkway tree roots may be damaging private property. On January 21, 2014, the Applicant contacted the Division requesting removal of the parkway trees.

ANALYSIS

The City Arborist conducted a site inspection on January 29, 2014. The two parkway trees being considered for removal are American Sweet Gum, *Liquidambar styraciflua*, growing in the front of the property. The Arborist found them to be in fair condition. Tree #1 (F1) is approximately thirty-five feet (35') in height with a trunk diameter of eleven inches (11"). The F1 tree has cracked and lifted the sidewalk one quarter inch (1/4") and has cracked the curb and gutter. Root pruning will mitigate sidewalk issue only.

Tree #2 (F2) is approximately thirty-five feet (35') in height with a trunk diameter of twelve inches (12"), with a poor root system, as evidenced by circling/girdling roots. The F2 tree has cracked and lifted the sidewalk and damaged private block planter. Root pruning is not advisable, as it will impact the stability of the tree.

Both trees are growing in a five and one half foot (5 1/2') irrigated turf parkway adjacent to a four foot (4') wide sidewalk. The trees are pruned on a 3-4 year trimming cycle and were pruned last on November 8, 2010. See Attachment #2.

The trees do not meet the criteria for a staff level authorization for removal (Category 1 or 2 removal criteria), as stated in the Streetscape and Median Development Standards. The Applicant was informed of that decision and was provided the removal criteria. The City Arborist evaluated the trees for possible relocation, but believes that due to the size and cost of relocating the trees, relocation is not recommended.

The City received a letter from the Applicant dated January 22, 2014, requesting the City remove two trees. See Attachment #1. The Applicant's letter provided the following reasons for the removal request:

- The roots are having a significant and detrimental impact on the home.
- The sidewalk has been affected requiring a short term shaving to a long term reoccurring problem.
- An inspection of the sewer lateral documented invasive roots in the line in multiple locations; however, the location was outside of the City's responsibility.
- The roots are visible in multiple locations in two sections of our front lawn.

The Applicant is requesting that two American Sweetgum trees in front of the residence be removed and replaced with a more suitable tree species. The Applicant has been notified of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting and has been sent a copy of this staff report.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could authorize the removal of the trees as a Category 3 – Discretionary Removal, with the Applicant paying the cost for removal and the 3:1 replacement costs. One tree would be replanted at the location.
2. The Commission could authorize the removal of the trees as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal. The City would pay all removal and replacement costs.

FISCAL REVIEW

There would be no fiscal impact to the City if the request to remove the trees were either denied or approved as a Category 3 - Discretionary Removal, as the Applicant would pay all costs.

If approved as a Discretionary Removal, where the Applicant pays the removal and replacement costs, the costs for removing the trees (\$345) and the required three-to-one replacement (mitigation) trees (\$850) would total \$1,195. Costs are based on current City contract prices.

If approved as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal, the estimated costs to the City to remove and dispose of the two trees would be approximately \$345; a replacement 24" box-size tree would cost the City \$225, for a total cost of \$570.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION

The two City-owned street trees that are being requested to be removed are located within the public right-of-way in front of 2928 Ellesmere. The Applicant is requesting removal and replacement of the trees because the roots are having a negative impact on the property, including alleged damage to hardscape improvements and sewer lateral

intrusion. The trees are in fair condition and do not meet the criteria for removal as stated in the Streetscape and Median Development Standards (Standards). Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission deny the request to remove the trees.



BRUCE A. HARTLEY
Maintenance Services Manager



ERNESTO MUNOZ
Public Services Director

- ATTACHMENTS:
1. Letter from Applicant.
 2. Tree Information and Photographs.

C: Kirsten Casillas
2928 Ellesmere Avenue
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

January 22, 2014 ATTACHMENT #1

Dear Costa Mesa Parks + Rec Commission,

This letter is a request for a "category 3 - discretionary removal" of two trees affecting our property.

We closed escrow on our property at 2928 Ellesmere Ave on September 27, 2013. We love living on a tree lined street and everything about our new neighborhood. However, as we conducted inspections on the property and began creating proper drainage for the house, we noticed the roots are having a significant and detrimental impact on our home. The sidewalk has been affected, requiring a short term "shaving" to a long term, recurring problem. A main line sewer video showed invasive roots in the line, however the location was outside of the city's responsibility (as explained by Daniel Dominguez, city arborist, after viewing the video). The roots are visible in multiple locations in two sections of our front lawn.

It is our desire to retain a tree lined street but with trees that don't create a threat to our plumbing, concrete, foundation etc.

We have spoken to a landscape company which can remove the trees, but we will not proceed with removal without approval from the city.

Sincerely,

Roster Casillas
2928 Ellesmere Ave
704-260-4469

**City of Costa Mesa
Maintenance Services Division
FIELD INSPECTION – TREE INFORMATION**

Date Request Received: 1/23/2014

Name of Resident: Kirsten Casillas Requesting Party: _____

Address: 2928 Ellesmere Ave. Address: _____

Home Phone: [REDACTED] Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date Inspected: 1/29/14

Inspected By: Interim City Arborist Daniel Dominguez III

Parkway Maintenance Report:

Tree Species: Liquidambar styraciflua F1 Removal Cost: (DBH x \$15.00)= \$ 165.00

Height: 35 Feet Width of Sidewalk: 4 Feet

Trunk Diameter: 11 Inches Size of Right-of-Way: 10 Feet

Health: Good Fair Poor Date of Last Pruning: 11/8/2010

Is the Tree a good candidate for Relocation? Yes No

Likelihood of survival: Good Fair Poor

Comments: **Extensive impact to sidewalk, curb & gutter and street would be required for relocation.**

Concrete Damage: Yes No

If Yes, describe damage: **¼" rise in sidewalk panel, cracked curb & gutter.**

Can the Tree be Root Pruned: Yes No Date: _____

Root Pruning Comments: **Root pruning will mitigate sidewalk issue only.**

Date of Response to Resident: _____

Date Information Packet Mailed: _____

Photos Taken: Yes No Date Photos Taken: 1/29/14

Photo #1: **Street view looking east**

Photo #2: **Street view looking north**

Photo #3: **Base of tree**

Photo #4: _____







**City of Costa Mesa
Maintenance Services Division
FIELD INSPECTION – TREE INFORMATION**

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Name of Resident: Kirsten Casillas Requesting Party: _____
Address: 2928 Ellesmere Ave. Address: _____
Home Phone: [REDACTED] Home Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date Inspected: 1/29/14
Inspected By: Interim City Arborist Daniel Dominguez III
Parkway Maintenance Report:

Tree Species: Liquidambar styraciflua F2 Removal Cost: (DBH x \$15.00)= \$ 180.00
Height: 35 Feet Width of Sidewalk: 4 Feet
Trunk Diameter: 12 Inches Size of Right-of-Way: 10 Feet

Health: Good Fair Poor Date of Last Pruning: 11/8/2010

Is the Tree a good candidate for Relocation? Yes No

Likelihood of survival: Good Fair Poor

Comments: **The root system of the tree is in poor condition. Circling/girdling roots present with few surface roots.**

Concrete Damage: Yes No

If Yes, describe damage: **Lifted and cracked sidewalk panel, damage to private block planter.**

Can the Tree be Root Pruned: Yes No Date: _____

Root Pruning Comments: **Root pruning not advisable, will impact the stability of the tree.**

Date of Response to Resident: _____

Date Information Packet Mailed: _____

Photos Taken: Yes No Date Photos Taken: 1/29/14

Photo #1: **Street view looking east**

Photo #2: **Street view looking north**

Photo #3: **Base of tree**

Photo #4: **Sidewalk damage**







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