



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: JUNE 25, 2015

ITEM NUMBER: 9d

SUBJECT: TREE REMOVAL REQUEST - 879 PROSPECT PLACE

DATE: JUNE 15, 2015

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

Approve the request to remove one (1) City owned tree (Tree S-8) as a Category 1 – 'Health and Safety' removal with all removal costs paid for by the City; determine the number and size of the replacement/mitigation trees, if any, to be planted and deny the request to remove one (1) City owned tree (Tree S-7) growing in the landscaped set-back on Yukon Avenue, immediately to the rear of 879 Prospect Place.

BACKGROUND

The City of Costa Mesa owns three 'lettered lots' as defined by the tract map associated with the development of the homes in the Yukon-Klondike-Prospect neighborhoods. See Attachment 1. The lots were landscaped and granted to the City by the developer for landscape purposes (landscape set-back) when the tract map was recorded. The landscape, including the trees, was installed by the builder and has been maintained continuously by the City to present day.

The area receives monthly landscape maintenance and the trees are trimmed on a three to five (3-5) year pruning cycle. In addition to the lettered lots, there are parkways along Yukon Avenue that contain landscape and trees. These areas are maintained at the same time and in the same manner as the lettered lots. The entire area is currently under renovation, with new electrical service, irrigation controller, wiring, sprinklers and plants being installed. The trees associated with the removal request are located in the Yukon Avenue landscape set-back immediately to the rear of 879 Prospect Place and are identified in the City's tree inventory at trees S-7 and S-8.

Over the past eighteen months and four separate meetings, several tree removal requests regarding individual trees and the entire inventory of twenty-eight trees that were growing along Yukon Avenue have been heard by the Commission. The result of the Commission actions on those requests resulted in the approval of the removal of three (3) trees associated with 3081 Klondike Avenue at the Applicant's expense; five (5) trees associated with 883 Prospect Place at City expense; and one (1) tree associated with 875 Prospect Place at the Applicant's expense.

On April 21, 2014, West Coast Arborist, Inc. (WCA), the City's tree maintenance contractor performed root pruning of the S-13 tree and installed a 12" deep root barrier

on the sidewalk side of the tree. City crews ground the raised concrete area associated with that tree prior to the root pruning. WCA completed an extensive root pruning and root barrier (12") installation on March 20, 2015, along one hundred fifty (150) linear feet of block wall starting at the corner of Klondike Avenue and proceeding east along the private property walls directly behind the Prospect Place homes. However, there were some locations where specific roots were not cut due to their large size and the likelihood of the roots being critical to the stability of the affected tree. The root barriers were placed adjacent to the S-13, S-12, S-10, S-9, S-8 and S-7 trees.

Additionally, trenching that was completed for the installation of low voltage irrigation wiring and sprinkler pipe effectively performed 'root pruning' to a depth of eighteen inches (18") the entire length of the private property wall along the north boundary of the landscape setback; affecting the S-6, S-5, S-4, S-3, S-2 and S-1 trees. As with the root pruning conducted by WCA, there were several locations where roots were excavated around or underneath due to their large size and the potential for negative impacts on the trees if they were cut. No root barriers were placed in the irrigation trenches.

ANALYSIS

The two trees (S-7 and S-8) being requested for removal are Canary Island Pine trees, *Pinus canariensis*. They are both approximately fifty-five feet (55') in height with trunk diameters of fourteen to fifteen inches (14-15"). They are in good condition, with no visible structural defects or signs of disease. Tree S-7 has an angled trunk in the lower four feet (4') with several mild undulations in the trunk as it rises towards the top. The trees have been continuously maintained by the City, with the most recent pruning taking place on April 25, 2014. As stated above, these trees were root pruned in March 2015, with a twelve inch (12") linear root barrier installed. See Attachment 2. The S-8 tree was observed to have roots growing above and below ground that appeared to impact the adjacent slump stone block wall. Some of the roots were cut by the pruning process, while some large roots were intentionally left uncut during the root pruning process due to concerns for the stability of the trees. The roots of Tree S-8 appear to correlate to the initiation point of the observable damage to the private property wall. The damage, in the form of grout cracking and expanding separation of the block, extends fifteen feet (15') to the west and twelve feet (12') to the east from the point of origin. This tree is four feet (4') from the block wall. Although the crack in the wall extends past the location of Tree S-7, there was no visual evidence that there was any damage to the wall attributable to roots from that tree. Tree S-7 is located five and one-half feet (5.5') from the wall.

The Applicants requested the trees be removed due to the observable damage to the private property wall that appears to have been caused by the roots of the City trees growing in the landscape set-back immediately adjacent to the origins of the damage. See Attachment 3. The Applicants observed the excavation, root pruning and installation of the twelve-inch root barriers. During the installation, the Applicants observed large roots that were not cut by the root pruning machine. It was explained to the Applicants that these large roots were of such a size that there would be concerns for the stability of the tree if they were removed. See Attachment 4.

In previous actions taken by the Commission regarding trees growing in the landscape set-back behind Prospect Place, the Commission approved requests for removal when actual damage was observed and could be definitively attributed to the City tree. In this instance, it is apparent that one of the two trees in question is causing damage to the

private property wall. The Maintenance Services Manager, a Certified Arborist, examined the walls, roots and trees associated with the removal request and confirmed that there is early stages of uplifting present and that the cracking of the wall correlates to root locations of Tree S-8. It was this determination that supported the recommendation to the Commission to remove one tree (S-8) at City expense as it may 'present a foreseeable risk of liability to the public', meeting the criteria for a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal as stated in Section 4.0.1 of the City's Streetscape and Median Development Standards, the guiding authority on tree removal determinations. The lack of physical damage to the wall that could be attributed to Tree S-7 resulted in a recommendation to deny the request to remove that tree.

The Applicant was mailed a copy of the Agenda and the Staff Report. A Public Notice of the meeting was mailed to 132 homes within the tracts that are accessed by Yukon Avenue. See Attachment 5.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could authorize the removal and replacement of one or both of the trees requested to be removed, per the Streetscape and Median Development Standards, Section 4.0.1 – Health and Safety Removals, which would be at no cost to the Applicant and/or Section 4.0.3 Category 3 – Discretionary Removals, which would require the replacement of each tree with one (1) twenty-four inch box-size tree and two (2) fifteen gallon-size trees to be planted elsewhere on City property. The Applicant would pay all removal and replacement costs.

If approved by the Commission, the trees must be removed and mitigation trees provided to the City within one year from the date of final approval, after which the approval expires.

2. The Commission could deny the requests.

FISCAL REVIEW

If the Commission were to approve the removal of one tree (S-8) as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal, as recommended by staff, and deny the removal of the second tree (S-7), the total cost to the City for removal would be \$320, with an additional \$200 in cost if the Commission directs staff to replant a tree.

If the Commission were to approve the request to remove both of the trees as Category 1 - Health and Safety Removals, with the City paying removal and replacement costs, the cost for the removal of the trees would be as shown below, with a cost of replanting 1 – 24” box size tree of \$200, for each tree removed, if the Commission determined that a replacement tree was needed.

Tree S-7: \$280 removal and \$200 replacement, for a total of \$480
Tree S-8: \$300 removal and \$200 replacement, for a total of \$500

If the Commission were to approve the request to remove the tree(s) as a Section 4.0.3 Category 3 – Discretionary Removal, there would be no fiscal impact to the City, as the Applicant would pay all costs.

The costs for the mitigation trees (1 – 24” box size and 2 – 15 gallon size) would be \$425 for each tree removed. Removal Costs are based on current City contract prices, which is \$20 per inch of diameter of the tree to be removed. Total cost to the Applicant for the removal and replacement would vary depending on the number of trees removed, as shown below:

Tree S-7: \$280 removal and \$425 replacement, for a total of \$705
Tree S-8: \$300 removal and \$425 replacement, for a total of \$725

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION

The two (2) City-owned Canary Island Pine trees that are being requested to be removed are located within the City-owned landscape set-back on Yukon Avenue to the rear of 879 Prospect Place. One of the trees is causing observable damage to the private property of the Applicant and although measures have been taken to reduce the likelihood of future damage to private property from the roots of the trees, it was determined that not all of the potentially damaging roots could be safely removed. It is therefore recommended that the Commission approve the request to remove the tree causing damage and deny the request for the removal of the second tree, determined by the City Arborist not to be causing any property damage at this time.


BRUCE A. HARTLEY
Maintenance Services Manager


ERNESTO MUNOZ
Public Services Director

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Tract Map – Tract No. 10513
2. Tree Maintenance Information
3. Applicant Request for Tree Removal via electronic mail May 4, 2015
4. Photographs
5. Resident Notice of Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting dated June 12, 2015

C: Claire and Steve Li
879 Prospect Place
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

SHEET 3 OF 3 SHEETS
GROSS AREA 9.46 ACRES
41 LOTS AND LOTS A, B, C AND D
(ALL OF TENTATIVE TRACT NO 10513)

DUPLICATE
TRACT NO. 10513

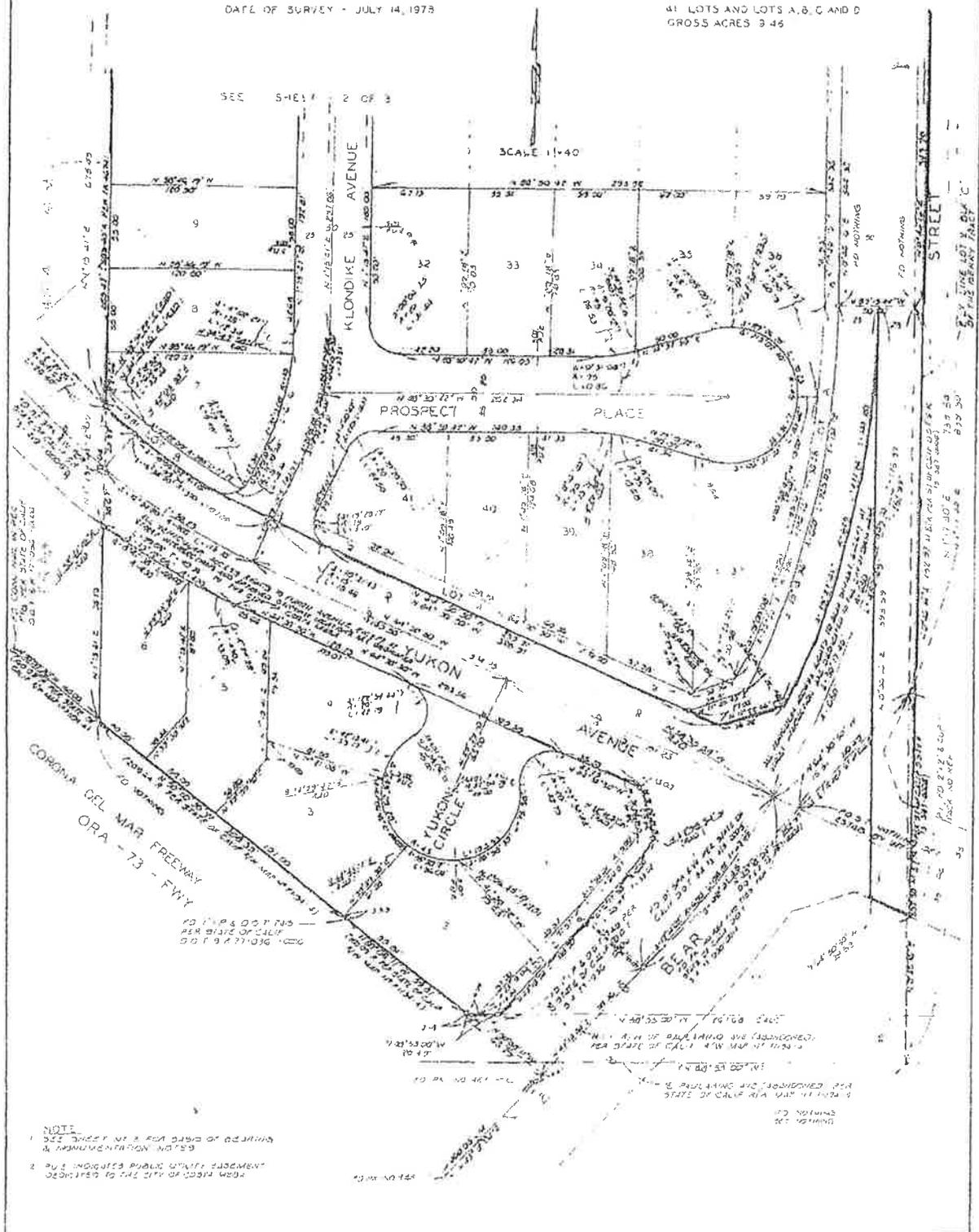
IN THE CITY OF COSTA MESA, COUNTY OF ORANGE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

BEING A SUBDIVISION OF A PORTION OF LOT 2, OF BLOCK 'C' OF THE BERRY TRACT, AS
SHOWN ON A MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 9, PAGE 6 OF MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS IN THE
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

JULY, 1978 JAMES J BRENNAN - R.C.E. 20801
JAMES J BRENNAN - CONSULTING CIVIL ENGINEERS
DATE OF SURVEY - JULY 14, 1978

41 LOTS AND LOTS A, B, C AND D
GROSS ACRES 9.46

FEB 28 1979 11:40 AM
AT 20801 - 19
FIRST AMERICAN TITLE INS CO
SANTA ANA COUNTY REC'D
COSTA MESA, CALIF 92626
1978



443 47

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

ATTACHMENT #2

Date Request Received: 5/04/15
Name of Resident: Claire Li Requesting Party: _____
Address: 879 Prospect Place Address: _____
Home Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date Inspected: 6/10/15
Inspected By: Bruce Hartley
Parkway Maintenance Report:

Tree Species: Pinus canariensis (Tree S7) Removal Cost: (DBH) = \$280.00
Height: 55 Feet Width of Sidewalk: 4 Feet
Trunk Diameter: 14 Inches Size of Right-of-Way: 10 Feet

Health: Good Fair Poor Date of Last Pruning: 4/25/14

Is the Tree a good candidate for Relocation? Yes No

Likelihood of survival: Good Fair Poor

Comments: Estimated value in Arbor Access is \$4,890

Concrete Damage: Yes No

If Yes, describe damage: ½" lift at joint.

Can the Tree be Root Pruned: Yes No Date: Completed March 2015

Root Pruning Comments:

Date of Response to Resident: _____

Date Information Packet Mailed: _____

Photos Taken: Yes No Date Photos Taken: 6/10/15

Photo #1: Distance from wall

Photo #2: Wall damage

Photo #3: Wall damage

Photo #4: _____

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

Date Request Received: 5/04/15
Name of Resident: Claire Li Requesting Party: _____
Address: 879 Prospect Place Address: _____
Home Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date Inspected: 6/10/15
Inspected By: Bruce Hartley
Parkway Maintenance Report:

Tree Species: Pinus canariensis (Tree S8) Removal Cost: (DBH) = \$300.00
Height: 55 Feet Width of Sidewalk: 4 Feet
Trunk Diameter: 15 Inches Size of Right-of-Way: 10 Feet

Health: Good Fair Poor Date of Last Pruning: 4/25/14

Is the Tree a good candidate for Relocation? Yes No

Likelihood of survival: Good Fair Poor

Comments: Estimated value in Arbor Access is \$4,890

Concrete Damage: Yes No

If Yes, describe damage: Minor sidewalk crack. Significant wall damage.

Can the Tree be Root Pruned: Yes No Date: Completed March 2015

Root Pruning Comments:

Date of Response to Resident: _____

Date Information Packet Mailed: _____

Photos Taken: Yes No Date Photos Taken: 6/10/15

Photo #1: Distance from wall

Photo #2: _____

Photo #3: _____

Photo #4: _____

HARTLEY, BRUCE

From: Claire Li <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 8:29 PM
To: HARTLEY, BRUCE
Subject: Request for removal 2 Pine trees on Yukon slope

Hi Bruce,

My husband (Steve Li) and I live on 879 Prospect Place where our back yard fence faces Yukon, and we are the original owners of this home (34+ years). We are requesting the removal of 2 damaging pine trees on the slope of our back wall. As you know, there have been ongoing requests by our immediate neighbors to remove some of these trees from the slope because of damage developing on the block walls. As we are currently doing some re-landscaping along our backyard fence, we have come to notice that cracks are developing on several places of our wall as well.

When the city workers were digging trenches a few weeks back, we saw that there were a great amount of roots butting up to our wall. While the smaller roots were cut and root barriers were placed, nothing was done on the the very massive and deep "roots" on the trees behind our fence because the arborist said it would affect the stability of the tree. Furthermore, knowing the potential size of this specie, I can't imagine how the thin little barriers could go up against the future roots which could grow big and create more damage. We therefore request that the 2 pines be removed before things get worse and more costly.

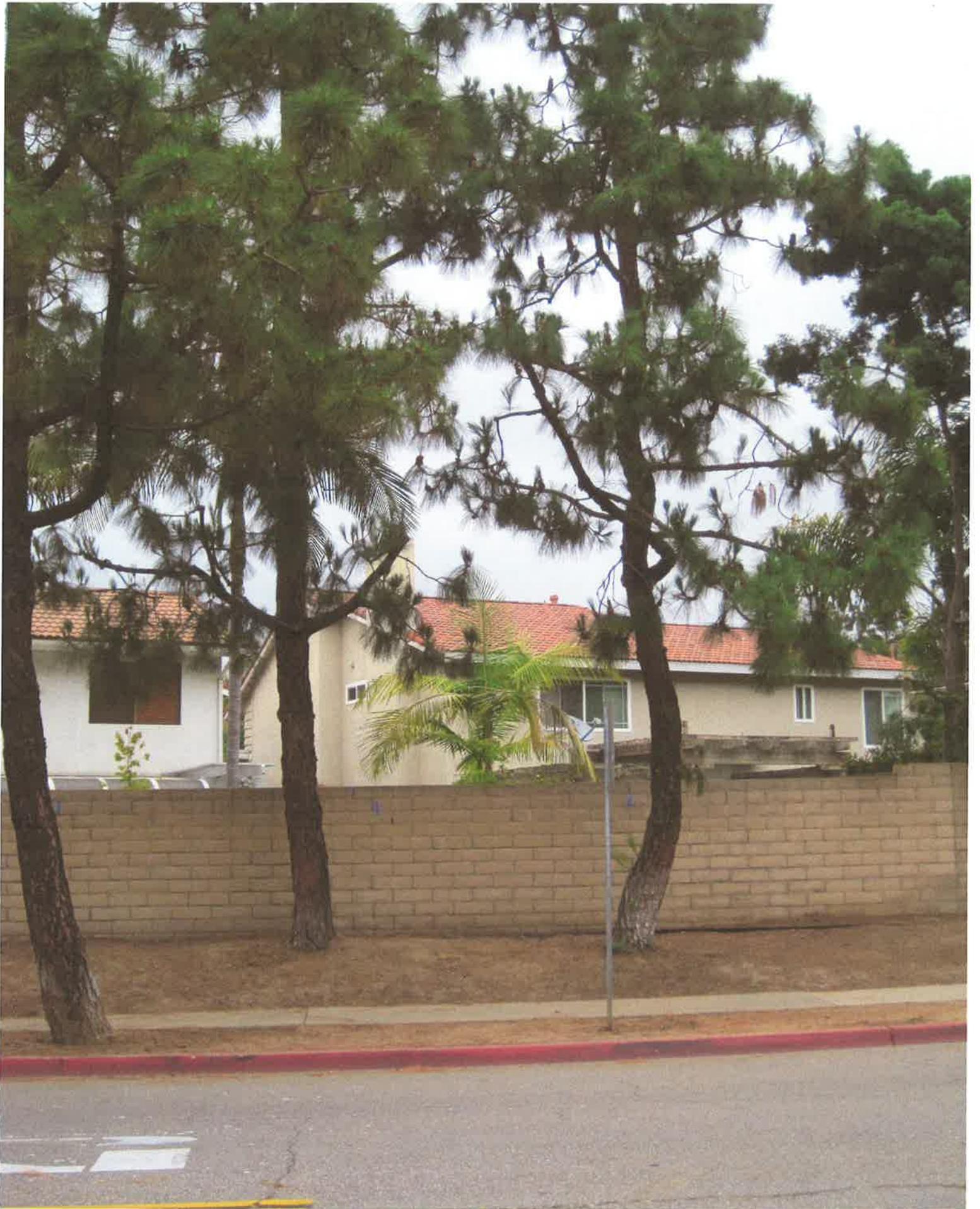
I agree with the commission members who have commented that it was such a bad idea for the city to place these trees there in the first place, so I sincerely hope we can get this done.

Thank you so much for your efforts on this matter.

Sincerely,
Claire Li and Steve Li
879 Prospect Pl
Costa Mesa CA 92626

Home phone [REDACTED]
Cell phone Steve L [REDACTED]









05.1











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CITY OF COSTA MESA

ATTACHMENT #5

P.O. BOX 1200 • 77 FAIR DRIVE • CALIFORNIA 92628-1200

FROM THE OFFICE OF MAINTENANCE SERVICES

June 12, 2015

Notice of Public Meeting - Yukon Avenue Tree Removal

Dear Resident:

You are receiving this letter to inform you of a formal request received from two (2) property owners in the Yukon Avenue corridor requesting the removal of four (4) City-owned trees located in the landscape set-back on the north side of Yukon Avenue between Klondike Avenue and Bear Street.

The requests have been agendized for the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 25, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. You are invited to attend the meeting, which will be held in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 77 Fair Drive. The agenda report relating to this request can be found on the City's website at www.costamesaca.gov approximately one week prior to the meeting. The agenda has other very important issues being considered and may be lengthy. The City Council has empowered the Parks and Recreation Commission to make determinations on requests for the removal of City-owned trees.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me at (714) 754-5164. Should you wish to provide written comments for the Parks and Recreation Commission regarding this topic, you may do so by mailing them to "Parks & Recreation Commission, City of Costa Mesa, P.O. Box 1200, Costa Mesa, CA 92628 or by electronic mail to ParksCommission@costamesaca.gov. All comments become public record and will be provided to the Commission prior to the meeting.

Sincerely,

Bruce A. Hartley

Bruce A. Hartley
Maintenance Services Manager