



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

**South Pasadena Natural Resources and Environmental Commission
Statement of Civility**

As your appointed governing board, we will treat each other, members of the public, and city employees with patience, civility and courtesy as a model of the same behavior we wish to reflect in South Pasadena for the conduct of all city business and community participation. The decisions made today will be for the benefit of the South Pasadena community and not for personal gain.

NOTICE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & ACCESSIBILITY

The South Pasadena Natural Resources and Environmental Commission Meeting will be conducted in-person from the Council Chambers, Amedee O. "Dick" Richards, Jr., located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena.

The Meeting will be available:

- In Person: City Council Chambers, 1424 Mission Street
- Via Zoom: **Webinar ID: 889 0298 4203**
Passcode: 844464

To maximize public safety while still maintaining transparency and public access, members of the public can observe the meeting via Zoom in one of the three methods below.

1. Go to the Zoom website, <https://zoom.us/join> and enter the Zoom Meeting information; or
2. Click on the following unique Zoom meeting link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88902984203?pwd=STVmdVlhMmEzZFZzRXBOL1dDMWZRZz09>; or
3. You may listen to the meeting by calling: +1-669-900-6833 and entering the Zoom Meeting ID and Passcode when prompted to do so.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ella Hushagen

ROLL CALL

Chair Ella Hushagen
Vice-Chair Michael Siegel
Commissioner Rona Bortz
Commissioner Michelle Hammond
Commissioner Amy Davis Jones
Commissioner Casey Law
Commissioner Richard Tom

COUNCIL LIAISON:

Councilmember Michael A Cacciotti

STAFF PRESENT:

Ted Gerber, Public Works Director
Arpy Kasparian, Environmental Services & Sustainability
Manager
Melanis Stepanian, Water Conservation & Sustainability
Intern

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Ella Hushagen

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES (*Public Comments are limited to 3 minutes*)

The City welcomes public input. If you would like to comment on non-agenda items and an agenda item, members of the public may participate **by means of one of the following options:**

Option 1:

Participants will be able to “raise their hand” using the Zoom icon during the meeting, and they will have their microphone un-muted during comment portions of the agenda to speak for up to 3 minutes per item.

Option 2:

Email public comment(s) to nrecpubliccomment@southpasadenaca.gov.

Public Comments received in writing will not be read aloud at the meeting, but will be part of the meeting record. Written public comments will be uploaded online for public viewing under Additional Documents and available at the City Clerk’s Counter for viewing. There is no word limit on emailed Public Comment(s). Please make sure to indicate:

- 1) Agenda item you are submitting public comment on.
- 2) Submit by no later than **12:00p.m., April 25, 2023**

NOTE: Pursuant to State law, the Commission may not discuss or take action on issues not on the meeting agenda, except that members of the Commission or staff may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising public testimony rights (Government Code Section 54954.2). Staff may be asked to follow up on such items.

1. Public Comment

TREE HEARING:

2. Continued Tree Hearing: 1865 Hanscom Drive

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission (NREC) approve the tree removal replacement plan for 1865 Hanscom Drive.

3. Tree Hearing: 2054 Fremont Avenue

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission (NREC) review a property owner’s appeal of the decision of the Public Works Director for required replacement trees.

PRESENTATION:

4. Review of FY 22-23 Water Conservation Program

ACTION ITEMS:

5. Approval of Minutes of March 28, 2023 NREC Meeting

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Commission review and approve the March 28, 2023, Meeting Minutes.

6. Selection of Officers

COMMUNICATIONS:

7. City Council Liaison Communications

8. Commissioner Communications

9. Staff Liaison Communications

10. Upcoming Events

- Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project – Community Open House: Thursday, April 27, 6pm-8pm, South Pasadena Library Community Room
- LA County Smart Gardening Webinars- Various dates (<https://www.ladpw.org/epd/sg/webinars.cfm>)


- MWD Turf Removal + CA Native Landscape Webinars- Various dates
(<https://greengardensgroup.com/turf-transformation/>)

ADJOURNMENT

PUBLIC ACCESS TO AGENDA DOCUMENTS

The complete agenda packet may be viewed on the City’s website, www.southpasadenaca.gov. Meeting recordings will be available for public viewing after the meeting. Recordings will be uploaded to the City’s YouTube Channel no later than the next business day after the meeting. The City’s YouTube Channel may be accessed at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnR169ohzi1AlewD_6sfwDA/featured

ACCOMMODATIONS

 The City of South Pasadena wishes to make all of its public meetings accessible to the public. If special assistance is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Division at (626) 403-7230 or CityClerk@southpasadenaca.gov. Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING

*I declare under penalty of perjury that I posted this notice of agenda for the meeting to be held on **April 25, 2023**, on the bulletin board in the courtyard of City Hall at 1414 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030, and on the City’s, website as required by law, on the date listed below.*

4/20/2023



Date

Arpy Kasparian, Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager

ITEM 2

Continued Tree Hearing: 1865 Hanscom Drive



Natural Resources & Environmental Commission Agenda Report

ITEM NO. 2

DATE: April 25, 2023
FROM: H. Ted Gerber, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: **Conditional Approval of Tree Removals at 1865 Hanscom Drive**

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission (NREC) approve the tree removal replacement plan for 1865 Hanscom Drive.

Background

At the Special NREC meeting, on December 5, 2023, the NREC conditionally approved the tree removals at 1865 Hanscom Drive pending the submittal of a tree removal replacement plan.

Discussion/Analysis

Attached is the tree removal replacement plan (Attachment 1) submitted by the applicant. Staff discussed the proposed replacement plan with the City Arborist, and after receiving additional information from the applicant, determined that the replacement plan is feasible. The applicant is proposing to plant 39 avocado trees and two sago palm trees on the slope of the property, 10-15 feet apart. The applicant has requested a variance to accommodate smaller replacement trees than the 24-inch box requirement. The property will not be terraced, and trees will be planted on the existing slope manually carried from the driveway to their planting location, hence the variance request (Attachment 2). The applicant will install a chain linked fence at the edge of the lot to protect the properties below on Peterson Avenue. .

Fiscal Impact

The applicant has paid the required tree removal inspection fee and will be required to pay any permit fees for the permit, as well as a deposit associated with any tree replacement requirements.

Public Notification of Agenda Item

The public was made aware that this item was to be considered this evening by virtue of its inclusion on the legally publicly noticed agenda, posting of the same agenda and reports on the City's website.

Attachments

1. Tree Removal Replacement Plan
2. Variance Request Letter

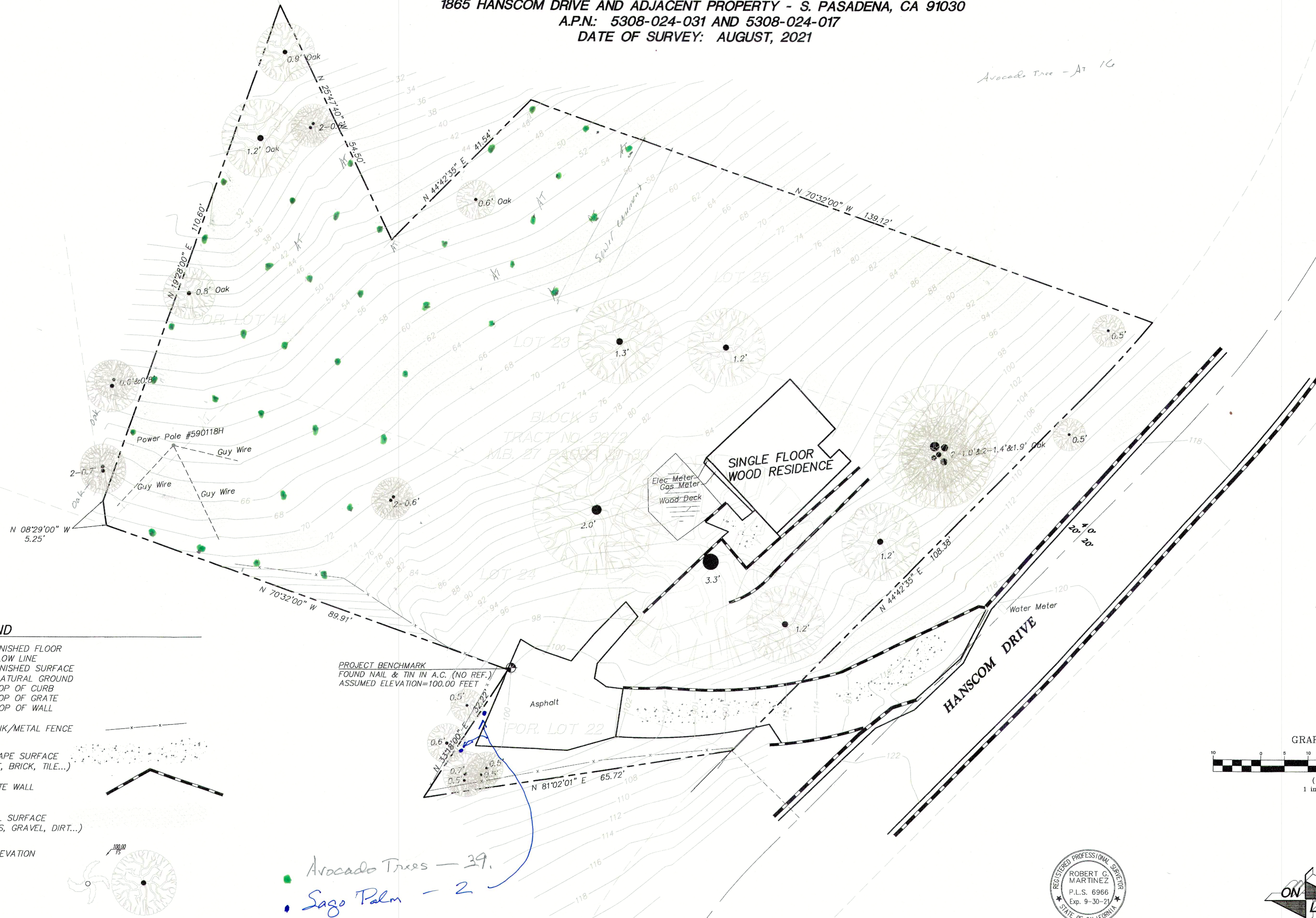
ITEM 2

Attachment 1: Replacement Plan

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1865 HANSCOM DRIVE AND ADJACENT PROPERTY - S. PASADENA, CA 91030
 A.P.N.: 5308-024-031 AND 5308-024-017
 DATE OF SURVEY: AUGUST, 2021

Avocado Tree - A7 10



LEGEND

- FFFINISHED FLOOR
- FLFLOW LINE
- FSFINISHED SURFACE
- NGNATURAL GROUND
- TCTOP OF CURB
- TGTOP OF GRATE
- TWTOP OF WALL

CHAINLINK/METAL FENCE

HARDSCAPE SURFACE
(CONCRETE, BRICK, TILE...)

CONCRETE WALL

NATURAL SURFACE
(GRASS, PLANTS, GRAVEL, DIRT...)

SPOT ELEVATION

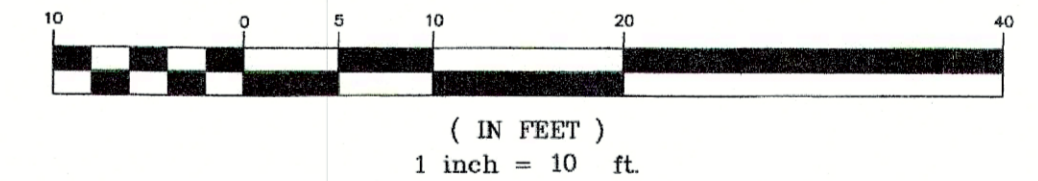
TREE

PROJECT BENCHMARK
 FOUND NAIL & TIN IN A.C. (NO REF.)
 ASSUMED ELEVATION=100.00 FEET

Avocado Trees - 39
Sago Palm - 2

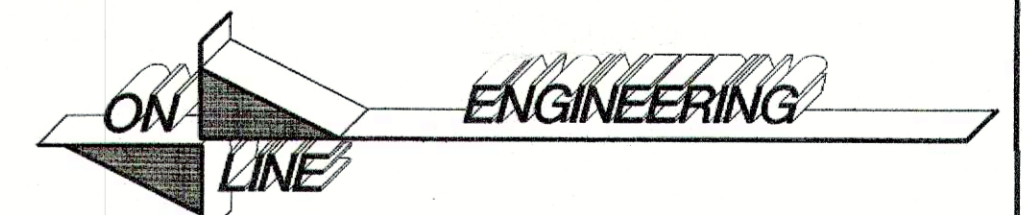


GRAPHIC SCALE



THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION
 OF THE BELOW SIGNED LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR:

Robert Martinez 9-10-21
 ROBERT G. MARTINEZ, L.S. 6966 DATE



PROFESSIONAL CIVIL ENGINEERING & LAND SURVEYING

908 WAVERLY PLACE
 WEST COVINA, CA 91790
 (626)791-3980

EMAIL: olngr@earthlink.net

ITEM 2

Attachment 2: Variance Request Letter

Dear Mr. Gerber,

December 10,2022

Enclosed please find a plan for "tree replacement" at 1865 Hanscom St.

I have long nurtured thoughts of an avocado grove. This has some benefits:

These trees are actually useful and productive. They have shallow roots which mitigate soil erosion. While the trees can be up to 40 feet, they produce better if regularly trimmed. I would anticipate keeping them at 10 feet or less. They will therefore not interfere with views or electrical wires. When the lot is eventually built out, gray water will be available to maintain them.

I would like to replace the Trees of Heaven at the base or the driveway with two nice Sago Palms I have at home in pots.

I need to request two variances. The lot is quite steep and carrying down large 24x24 pots would be quite onerous. The drop from the bottom of the driveway to the "groove" will be about 60 feet. Please allow me to use plants we can carry down. Avocados like to be planted in the Spring, so you may allow me some extension on the 60 day requirement.

I am sorry to deprive the neighborhood of the quality trees they have grown to love but maybe I can substitute quantity for quality.

Thank you for your continued help on this project.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles Imbus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Imbus".

Charles Imbus

ITEM 3

Tree Hearing: 2054 Fremont Avenue



Natural Resources & Environmental Commission Agenda Report

ITEM NO.

DATE: April 25, 2023

FROM: H. Ted Gerber, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: **Appeal of a Decision of the Public Works Director for the Required Replacement Trees**

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission (NREC) review a property owner's appeal of the decision of the Public Works Director for required replacement trees.

Background

On September 12, 2022, the City was notified of possible illegal tree removals at 2054 Fremont Avenue. City staff conducted an inspection and reported unpermitted tree removals.

Discussion/Analysis

Per South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) Chapter 34.3a it is unlawful for any person to remove or transplant any significant or mature heritage tree, a significant, or a mature native species tree, or a significant mature Oak tree from any property within the City unless a tree removal permit is first obtained from the City. It was determined during the inspection, that 13 palm trees were removed from the property.

Per SPMC Section, 34.12a penalties for any person who unintentionally violates the provisions of this chapter shall be as follows:

- the standard inspection fee
- double the required tree removal or trimming permit fee
- planting double the number of replacement trees required pursuant to section 34.12-5 -

The property owner submitted a written response (Attachment) explaining the reason for the tree removals and has requested an appeal to reduce the number of required replacement trees.

Fiscal Impact

The penalties assessed for the illegal removals total \$826 (Inspection fee and double permit fee). The required number of replacement trees are 22. Per SPMC 34.11(b) (2) if the subject property cannot accommodate multiple trees, alternative location within the city (public right-of-way, park, etc.) may be designated.

Appeal of a Decision – 2054 Fremont
April 25, 2023
Page 2 of 2

Public Notification of Agenda Item

The public was made aware that this item was to be considered this evening by virtue of its inclusion on the legally publicly noticed agenda, posting of the same agenda and reports on the City's website.

Attachment: Letter from Property Owner

ITEM 3

Attachment: Letter from Property Owner

From: [chong kim](#)
To: [Leaonna Dewitt](#)
Subject: 2054 Fremont Ave. hearing
Date: Tuesday, November 8, 2022 9:05:39 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of South Pasadena. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mrs Ldewitt

This is the owner of property address 2054 Fremont Ave. My name is Larry Kim. The reason why I'm writing this letter is to have a hearing and to explain why I had 13 palm trees removed. Before purchasing the property I realized that there was a lot of mouse/rat problems on top of these palm trees Because not only are the droppings on the ground but I've actually seen the mouse come out of one of the trees especially the big but short palm tree that was in the middle of the backyard. That's when I decided to remove the palm trees. My wife has a fear of mouse Ever since when she was a child she begged me to have the palm trees removed. That's when I called 3D tree removal Services. 3-D Tree Services Inc.

When they came out to give me a quote and not that it matters but it was very expensive I asked them exactly is it OK to remove these palm trees without a permit and the guy that gave me the quote told me that they work in South Pasadena that you don't need a permit to remove these palm trees. So without hesitation taking his word because the company seem very reputable I decided to have all palm trees removed except four tall palm trees.(two in the front of the house and two in the back). Recently I decided to put an ADU in the back of the house and my architect told me that he went to the city and I had a problem with the city because I moved these palm trees without a permit. I was shocked and I immediately called the 3D tree removal services and they told me that they understand and they would help me solve this problem. I was very disappointed at them but what can I do after the fact. I am writing you this letter to explain to you that it was On honest mistake on my part by listening to the Contractor and not doing my own do diligence but I hope you can understand that many people like my self would have listened to the contractor that's been in business over 22 years. I hope you understand that it was really a honest mistake that I would never have done this Without a permit if I knew. Only mistake that I made was listening to this Contractor. I hope you can understand my situation. Thank you very much and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely Larry Kim
Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

ITEM 5

Approval of Minutes – Meeting of March 28, 2023

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES – March 28, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. Present at the time of roll call were: Chair Casey Law, Vice Chair Hammond, Commissioner Amy Davis Jones, and Commissioner Richard Tom. City Council Liaison Councilmember Michael Cacciotti was absent from the meeting. Commissioner Rona Bortz, Commissioner Ella Hushagen, and Commissioner Michael Siegel had excused absences. Staff present: Ted Gerber: Public Works Director, Arpy Kasparian: Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager, Melanis Stepanian: Water Conservation & Sustainability Intern, and Domenica Megerdichian: Deputy City Manager.

1) General Public Comment

There were no general public comments.

PRESENTATIONS:

2) Updates from City Manager’s Office – Domenica Megerdichian, Deputy City Manager

Deputy City Manager, Domenica Megerdichian, shared updates within the City with the Commission members including South Pasadena’s 135th birthday celebrations and the upcoming Commission Congress.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

3) Efficient San Gabriel Valley – Johanna Read, SGV COG

Johanna Read shared the no-cost home energy assessments (eSGV - Efficient San Gabriel Valley) provided through the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments. Appointments can be made online at <https://www.sgvkog.org/esgv> for online or in-person assessments. Residents will receive a tailored report with long-term and short-term priority recommendations and will include a detailed list of applicable rebates, incentives, and savings programs. South Pasadena residents can receive a free Conservation Kit for participating in this program, while supplies last.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

4) Building Electrification Policy Updates - Michael Rochmes, Climate Reality

Michael Rochmes, a climate activist with Climate Reality Project Los Angeles, shared an update regarding building electrification policies in California. He also discussed how buildings contribute to climate change and what other cities are working on in terms of electrification. Michael provided suggestions for the City of South Pasadena.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING:

5) Tree Hearing – 702 Fremont Ave. - Ted Gerber, Public Works Director

This application is requesting the removal of 11 trees on the property located at 702 Fremont Avenue. Of the 11 trees, one mature jacaranda tree and one oak tree are included on this list. The applicant has made efforts to replace the trees with native and drought-tolerant trees.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HAMMOND, MOTION CARRIED 4-0, TO APPROVE THE TREE REMOVAL AT 702 FREMONT AVENUE

ACTION ITEMS:

6) Approval of Minutes of December 5, 2022 NREC Special Meeting

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TOM, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HAMMOND, MOTION CARRIED 4-0, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 5, 2022 NREC COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING.

7) Approval of Minutes of January 24, 2023 NREC Meeting

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TOM, MOTION CARRIED 4-0, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 24, 2023 NREC COMMISSION MEETING.

8) Selection of Officers

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HAMMOND, MOTION CARRIED 4-0, TO APPOINT COMMISSIONER ELLA HUSHAGEN AS THE CHAIR AND COMMISSIONER MICHAEL SIEGEL AS THE VICE CHAIR OF THE NREC.

COMMUNICATIONS:

9) City Council Liaison Communications

Councilmember Cacciotti was not present at this meeting.

10) Commissioner Communications

Commissioner Tom had no communications. Commissioner Hammond shared that she and Chair Law participated in the South Pasadena Beautiful Garden Tour, provided a bike valet and chaperone, and will continue at other City events. Commissioner Jones had no communications. Chair Law shared climate goals and findings and suggested focusing on emissions reduction associated with buildings and transportation.

11) Staff Liaison Communications

Arpy Kasparian, Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager, updated the commission on upcoming events including Earth Day events. Ted Gerber, Public Works Director, provided an update on stormwater projects in the City and encouraged participating in the April 27 community meeting.

12) Upcoming Events

- Electric Leaf Blower Demonstration and Raffle: Thursday, April 6, 9am-1pm, Garfield Park (<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/10223/716?curm=4&cury=2023>)
- Spring Bulky Item Pick-Up: Saturday, April 15, 7am-1pm, Arroyo Drive (<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/10217/716?curm=4&cury=2023>)
- Spring Compost & Mulch Giveaway: Saturday, April 22, 9am-1pm, Arroyo Golf Course Parking Lot
- Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project – Community Open House: Thursday, April 27, 6pm-8pm, South Pasadena Library Community Room (<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/10219/716?curm=4&cury=2023>)
- LA County Smart Gardening Webinars- Various dates (<https://www.ladpw.org/epd/sg/webinars.cfm>)
- MWD Turf Removal + CA Native Landscape Webinars- Various dates (<https://greengardensgroup.com/turf-transformation/>)

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Casey Law adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission of the City of South Pasadena at a meeting held on March 28, 2023.

Ella Hushagen, Chair