

Additional Documents Amendment

October 25, 2022 NREC Meeting

ITEM 2

Tree Hearing- 1865 Hanscom Drive

ATTACHMENT 1

Email to NREC Commission

From: Betty Emirhanian
Sent: Monday, October 24, 2022 10:16 AM
To: nrecpubliccomment
Subject: NREC Commission meeting 10/25/22

To the NREC Commission:

Re: Tree Hearing- 1865 Hanscom Drive

I am very concerned about the wholesale destruction of trees on Hanscom Drive. I have lived on Hanscom for 41 years. Throughout that time, many new homes were built about which I have never complained. But never have I seen so many trees being cut down as in the last 3-4 years.

Developers are bulldozing existing homes, massively cutting into hillsides, and cutting down our urban forest. This is completely changing the character of our neighborhood.

In regards to 1865 Hanscom Drive, I believe that there is not sufficient evidence that the trees are a danger nor that they are no longer viable. We need to have a full arborist's report before the city can make the decision as to whether the trees should be removed.

This does not just affect the few people living within 100 feet of the property. Our hill has been and still is a place where many residents come to take their walks and enjoy the views and nature. We also have owls, coyotes, rabbits, and even bobcats living here. We are a city of trees, but it seems that for some reason the trees on Hanscom Drive are expendable.

Thank you for your consideration,

Elisabeth Emirhanian
1815 Hanscom Drive

ATTACHMENT 2

Comments regarding 1865 Hanscom Drive Tree Removal Permit
Application

Comments regarding 1865 Hanscom Drive Tree Removal Permit Application

October 25, 2022

The developer defined the project as "New Development" in his first application. This property was purchased for development use exclusively. No one has lived on this property for years and the trees are located 20-30 feet downslope from the roadway.

Despite this latest application and arborist report being submitted October 10 it was only made available to me yesterday, October 24. I was thus not able to form a complete response with direct quotes from my conversation with my arborist.

The latest arborist report describes little more than the original "disposition" that was never meant to be published.

The Chinese Elm is clearly failed. The other three trees should not be considered an imminent danger and should only be dealt with during the planning part of the new construction development process. Anything else would be a circumvention of the many rules we have in place to keep our community's urban forest in place and thriving.

Aleppo Pine

If this tree is unsafe extensive pruning could be done to make this tree safe. The developer stated in his second application "Determined by SCE as danger to power lines". If this tree were an immediate hazard Edison would have taken care of the entire process free of charge. See my original comments under section "Aleppo Pine".

Live Oak

The arborist I referenced in my original comments told me that the outer

cambium layer is not the "weak" part of the tree as stated by the developer's arborist. It's actually the stronger part. She also told me that they can withstand quite a bit of heartwood decay just fine and that pruning or cabling to reduce weight or movement on the trunks with cavities could be an alternative to removal.

Additionally the measurements provided are crude and incomplete. Calipers measuring the extent of hardwood decay on each stem would be a reasonable amount of effort for such an important decision to be made on a 90" protected species.

Italian Stone Pine

The most recent arborist states "severe dead wood in lower canopy". My arborist has told me that deadwood in the lower canopy is not a concern for overall tree health and safety and can simply be removed (doesn't require removal of the whole tree). The tree simply hasn't been pruned.

The most recent arborist states "roots exposed to air and sunlight heat drying & dying" as a reason for the tree being a hazard.

The developer removed the retaining wall exposing the roots. I discussed this with the developer the day I met him in late 2021. I explained clearly that I was aware of the failed wall and that the roots needed to be protected to keep the clearly healthy tree healthy.

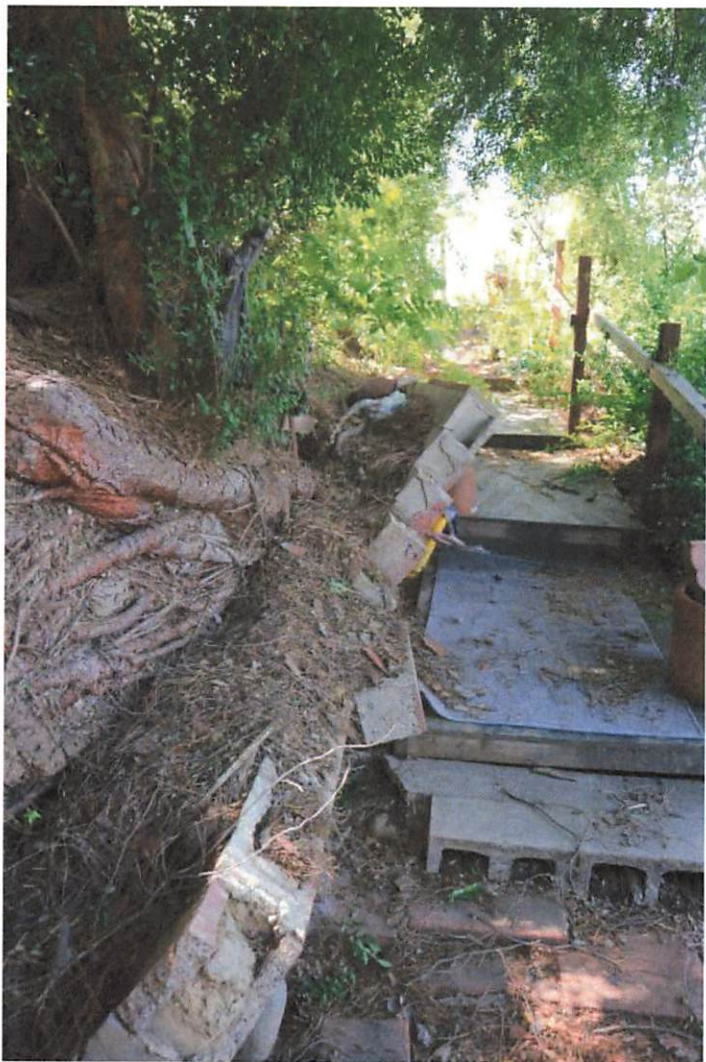
If indeed exposed roots are the cause of health issues for the tree then the hazardous condition was created by the developer himself.

South Pasadena Code Section 34.17 "Penalties"

(c) Penalties for an intentional violation in connection with development or anticipated future development on the property shall be the penalties described in subsections (a) and (b) of this section and, in addition, the city manager may, in his or her discretion, refer the violation to the city prosecutor for criminal charges or to the planning commission for public hearing. The burden of proof shall be on the city to demonstrate that there is clear and convincing evidence to a reasonable certainty that there is an intentional violation. The planning commission, after considering all of the evidence, may impose the additional penalty of prohibiting the issuance of building or construction-related permits for a period up to five years from the date of the violation for the property upon which the violation occurred.

The following photos were acquired from a public records request of the code enforcement activity on the property.

Code Enforcement April 2022





Code Enforcement May 2022



ITEM 3

Approval of Minutes – Meeting of September 27, 2022

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES – September 27, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. Present at the time of roll call were: Commissioner Ella Hushagen, Commissioner Rona Bortz, Commissioner Amy Davis Jones, Commissioner Michael Siegel, Commissioner Richard Tom, Chair Casey Law, and City Council Liaison Mayor Michael Cacciotti. Vice Chair Hammond had an excused absence. Staff present: Matt Chang: Planning Manager, Ted Gerber: Public Works Director, and Melanis Stepanian: Water Conservation and Sustainability Intern.

1) General Public Comment

There was one written public comment and one in-person public comment.

No other general public comments were received.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2) Review Current Parking Lot Codes- Matt Chang, Planning Manager

Matt Chang, Planning Manager, shared the current Municipal Code regarding parking lots in South Pasadena. ([Chapter 36, Article 3 Section 330.40- Landscape Location Requirements](#))

Commissioner Tom shared his comments regarding landscaping and the heat island effect. Commissioner Bortz discussed water infiltration as well as the need to reference a drought-tolerant tree and plant list. She also mentioned creating a master tree list for parking lots. Commissioner Hushagen recommended for the code to be more explicit, for example, no turf allowed in parking lots. Commissioner Siegel suggested more strict requirements to be used in the City regarding parking lots. He went on to refer to the large parking lots in South Pasadena and suggested a certain percentage of the landscape should be drought-tolerant plants. Chair Law echoed the Commission member comments and discussed the heat island effect as well as increased shade in City parking lots.

ACTION ITEMS:

3) Approval of Minutes – Meeting of August 23, 2022

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HUSHAGEN, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER SIEGEL, MOTION CARRIED 5-0, 1 ABSTAINING TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 23, 2022 NREC COMMISSION MEETING.

COMMUNICATIONS:

4) City Council Liaison Communications

Mayor Cacciotti shared updates on the Gold Line Project and the ban on gas-powered leaf blowers. Enforcement has been delayed as staff awaits updates from the state regarding incentives for the community. Mayor Cacciotti thanked Chair Law for speaking during the City Hall electrification discussion.

5) Commissioner Communications

New Commissioner, Richard Tom, introduced himself and shared his background. Commissioner Tom served the Culture and Heritage Commission and 2 terms on the Planning Commission prior to joining NREC.

Commissioner Siegel discussed the October 5th Bike to School Day in South Pasadena.

Chair Law attended the electrification of the City Hall discussion and is looking forward to seeing how this project will progress to meet goals in the Climate Action Plan. Chair Law would also like to see 100% of Commissioners walking, biking, or using transit to attend NREC meetings.

6) Staff Liaison Communications

Ted Gerber, Public Works Director, shared the City Hall Open House event on October 2nd from 10 am to 2 pm. This is a family-friendly event and there will be an electric lawn equipment raffle. Electric Lawn Equipment was kindly donated by AGZA and LA Galaxy. Several electrification projects have been approved by City Council during the last Council meeting.

Melanis Stepanian, Water Conservation and Sustainability Intern, encouraged residents and commercial businesses to continue applying for water conservation rebates. The Natural Resources and Environmental Commission is planning the Athens MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) Tour for Commissioners to attend.

7) Upcoming Events

- South Pasadena City Hall Open House- October 2, 2022: 10am-2pm (<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/government/departments/community-services/recreationyouth-services/special-events-and-programs>)
- Free Compost Giveaway- October 15, 2022: 10am-2pm (www.SouthPasadenaCA.gov/EnvironmentalPrograms)
- WaterFest 2022- October 29, 2022: 9am-12pm (<https://upperdistrict.org/waterfest/>)
- 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 8:16 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 August 23, 2022.

Casey Law, Chair