

City Council

Mayor Patrick Slayter

Vice Mayor Neysa Hinton

Michael Carnacchi

Sarah Glade Gurney

Mayor Una Glass



Planning Director

Kari Svanstrom

Assistant Planner

Dana Morrison

Administrative Assistant

Rebecca Mansour

City of Sebastopol Tree Board Staff Report

Meeting Date: December 19, 2018
Agenda Item: 8A
To: Tree Board
From: Dana Morrison, Assistant Planner
Subject: Tree Removal Permit: Coast Redwood
Recommendation: Approval with Conditions
Applicant/Owner: Tasha Krongard/ St Stephen's Episcopal Church
File Number: 2018-97
Address: 500 Robinson Road
CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption: Section 15301: Class 1
General Plan: High Density Residential
Zoning: R7: Multifamily Residential

Introduction:

This is a Tree Removal Permit application, requesting approval to remove one multi-trunk coast redwood from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church located at 500 Robinson Road. This application requires Tree Board approval because it involves the removal of a multi-trunk tree with a d.b.h that exceeds 10" from a commercial property.

Project Description:

The subject tree is a multi-trunk redwood with co-dominant leaders which is located on the western side of the church's property and is in good health. The primary reason why the applicant is requesting to remove the tree is due to a recommendation by their own Arborist, who is concerned that if the tree fails it could cause damage to the neighboring senior housing project (Burbank Heights). The applicant is proposing to replace the tree with various fruit trees. The City Arborist has reviewed the tree and has recommended that the tree could either be approved for removal or alternatively cabling could be done to maintain the tree.

Environmental Review:

The project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the following:

Section 15301: Existing Facilities: Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination.

The project is consistent with this categorical exemption in that it involves the removal of a multi-trunk Coast redwood, which will result in the minor alteration of landscape features in an existing parking lot.

City Departmental Comment:

Becky Duckles, an ISA Certified Arborist serving as the City Arborist, reviewed the application, conducted a site visit, and prepared an Arborist's Report on November 20, 2018. The report is attached and its findings are reflected in the following sections of this staff report: Tree Protection Ordinance Consistency, Analysis, Recommendation, and Findings.

Tree Protection Ordinance Consistency:

Requirements for Tree Removal Permit: Section 8.12.060.D of the Tree Protection Ordinance states that a Tree Removal Permit may be approved when an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist has verified at least one of the following conditions:

- 1. The tree is diseased or structurally unsound and, as a result, is likely to become a significant hazard to life or property within the next two (2) years.***

This criterion does not apply.

- 2. The tree poses a likely foreseeable threat to life or property, which cannot be reasonably mitigated through pruning, root barriers, or other management methods.***

The City Arborist found that the tree has a structural defect called co-dominant leaders with included bark. This is a common, naturally-occurring condition which can predispose a tree trunk to failure of the attachment point is acute and has a long 'seam' of included bark. The tree in question does have an acute attachment point and a long seam, which indicates that there is a limited amount of wood connecting the two stems.

There are two options presented by the City Arborist:

1. Remove the tree and replace with fruit trees, or
2. Have a qualified tree service install a cable between the two co-dominant leader stems to strengthen the attachment. The cable would need to be inspected by a climber every two years to ensure that the tension is adequate and the lag bolts attaching it are secure.

According to the City Arborist, either option would sufficiently reduce the level of hazard to nearby residents or cars.

- 3. The property owner can demonstrate that there are unreasonably onerous recurring maintenance issues, which are deemed necessary for safety or protection of property. The property owner is responsible for providing documentation to support such a claim.***

This criterion does not apply.

- 4. A situation exists or is proposed in which structures or improvements, including, but not limited to, building additions, second units, swimming pools, and solar energy***

systems, such as solar panels, cannot be reasonably designed or altered to avoid the need for tree removal.

This criterion does not apply.

5. The tree has matured to such an extent that it is determined to be out of scale with adjacent structures and utilities, or with other landscape features.

This criterion does not apply.

Public Comment:

Public Notification of Tree Removal: Section 8.12.060.F of the Tree Protection Ordinance states that trees proposed for removal shall be marked by City staff with a form prescribed by the City. Notice of a Tree Removal Permit application shall be posted on the subject parcel, and in at least two public places within 300 feet of the affected trees, at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the date of the Sebastopol Tree Board meeting at which the application will be considered.

Notice of the tree removal was provided at least ten (10) days before the Tree Board meeting with one notice posted on the subject parcel and two notices posted within three-hundred (300) feet of the subject parcel.

Analysis:

The request involves the removal of one multi-trunk coastal redwood, which is located on the western side of the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church property on Robinson Road. The Arborist has provided two possible routes of action; removal or cabling. The City Arborist concluded that either option is viable. If removal or cabling is not done the subject tree could possibly fall in the event of inclement weather, as a result of its weak attachment, and could potentially damage the cars parked along the edge of the Burbank Heights property, or injury a passerby. While the site will lose a large tree as a result of this removal, there will be an opportunity to plant various fruit trees. Creating a fruit orchard in the area of the property is a goal of the Church. After hearing from the applicant the Board should discuss which option appears most appropriate.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Board hear from the applicant, deliberate and either approve the removal of the tree based on the facts, findings and analysis set forth in this staff report, or deny the application and determine that cabling of the co-dominant leaders is more appropriate.

Staff further recommends that, if the Board is inclined to approve the removal, the replacement planting plan should include a minimum of two (2) Gravenstein apple tree, along with replacements selected from the City's recommended tree list (SMC 8.12.969.E(2)) thereby paying homage to the City's historic character while still fulfilling the applicant's desire to plant a food orchard.

Attachments:

- Tree Removal Permit Application
- Written Statement

- Location Map
- Site Plan
- Site Photographs
- City Arborist's Report

TREE REMOVAL PERMIT: 2018-97
Removal of one multi-trunk coastal redwood tree with a DBH of 20+ Inches
500 Robinson Road

Findings for Approval:

1. That the removal is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, in that it involves the removal of a multi-trunk locust tree, which will result in the minor alteration of landscape features on an existing Church property.
2. That the removal is consistent with the Tree Protection Ordinance in that it was properly noticed at least ten (10) days before the Tree Board made a determination with one notice being posted on the subject parcel and two notices being posted in public places within 300 feet.
3. That the City Arborist found that the subject tree has a structural defect called co-dominant leaders; a naturally occurring condition which can predispose a trunk to fail.
4. That the City Arborist found that the subject tree's attachment is acute and has a long seam of included bark, which indicates that there is very little wood connecting the seams.
5. That the City Arborist found that the subject tree merits removal per Criterion #2 of the Tree Ordinance, in that its acute attachment and long seam predispose it to fail, and if the tree were to fail in inclement weather it could potentially harm nearby cars or pose a hazard to pedestrians at Burbank Heights.

Findings for Denial:

1. That as discussed in this staff report, the Tree Board meeting of December 19, 2018, and in the November 20, 2018 arborist report from Becky Duckles, the Tree Board found that the subject tree do not merit removal under the City's Tree Ordinance.
2. That mitigation measures such cabling shall be utilized to retain the proposed coastal redwood.
3. That a climber shall inspect the cable attaching the two co-dominant leaders of the coastal redwood every two (2) years to ensure that the tension is adequate and that the lag bolts attaching the cable are secure.
4. As the Tree Board denied the proposed tree removal this means that the \$150.00 Replacement Tree Security Deposit is no longer applicable. As such, once the Appeal

Period has passed, a Refund Request will be submitted to the Finance Department requesting the issuance of a check for \$150.00 from the City's Tree Fund to the following:

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
500 Robinson Road
Sebastopol, Ca 95472

Recommended Conditions of Approval:

1. The Tree Removal Permit shall be valid for a period of three (3) years, except that the applicant may request a one (1) year extension of this approval from the Planning Director, pursuant to Section 17.250.050 of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. An Encroachment Permit may be required prior to the removal of the tree. Please contact the Engineering Department prior to removal if work will be performed, or materials placed, in the public right-of-way. The phone number for the Engineering Department is (707) 823-2151.
3. Tree removals shall only take place during the following hours: Monday to Friday, from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., and Saturday and Sunday, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Additionally, no tree shall be removed on any of the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Christmas Day, and Thanksgiving Day.
4. The applicant shall plant two (2) onsite replacement trees of a type approved by the City Arborist, or from the list recommended in the Tree Ordinance, within 365 days of this letter. A site plan indicating the replacement trees, and/or receipts of the trees shall be submitted to the Planning Department upon tree replacement approval and selection. Alternately, the applicant may opt to allow the City to retain the per-tree replacement deposit of \$150.00, which will be transferred into the City's Tree Fund.
5. Any replacement trees that will reach a height greater than 20 feet at maturity shall not be planted within 20 feet (measured horizontally) of any overhead utility lines.
6. At least 2 (two) of the fruit trees planted as replacements shall be Gravenstein apple trees, other trees may be selected from the City's recommended tree list.



City of Sebastopol

TREE REMOVAL PERMIT Application and Checklist

The submittal information shall be provided to the Planning Department. All submittal information shall be presented along with the related fees, and any additional information required by the Planning Department before the application can be accepted as complete.

Planning File #: 2018-97
Date Filed: 10.31.18
Total Fee Paid: \$ 465-
Received by: BA
Date Application Deemed Complete: _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

ADDRESS: 500 Robinson Road

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL #: _____

Applicant's Information

Name: Tasha Krongard
Address: 500 Robinson Rd
City, State, Zip: Sebastopol CA 95472
Phone #: 707-823-3281
Fax #: 707-291-1408
Email: office@ststephensebastopol.org
Signature: _____

Date: 10/25/18

Owner's Information

Name: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone #: _____
Fax #: _____
Email: _____
Signature: _____

I certify that this application is being made with my consent

Date: 10/25/18

Location Key	Species of Tree	Diameter at 4 1/2 feet	Heritage Tree?	Area where tree is to be removed from?	Reason for Removal	Proposed Replacement
A	Redwood		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Near NW corner	co-dominant	Fruit trees
B			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
C			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
D			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
E			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
F	EXAMPLES LISTED BELOW:		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Sample	(Q. lobata) Valley Oak	22.5"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Back Yard near existing house	Large areas of decay in main trunk	4-15 Gallon live oaks, 2 here and 2 in the front yard
Sample	(S. semiperv.)	Multi trunks	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Front Yard	Root-sprouted;	2-15 gallon

[Signature]

	Coast Redwood	5" – 9" diameter	[xx] No		weak; poor specimen/form.	redwoods @ rear property line
--	---------------	---------------------	----------	--	------------------------------	-------------------------------------

The submittal information shall be provided to the Planning Department. All submittal information shall be presented along with the Planning Application form, related fees, and any additional information required by the Planning Department before the application can be accepted as complete.

Upon receipt of this information the Planning Department has 30 days in which to determine if the application is complete. Once the application has been deemed complete, the project can be scheduled before the Tree Board. The Tree Board meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at Sebastopol City Hall, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, at 4:00 p.m.

The applicant and/or his representative must be present for any meetings. Failure to do so may result in the application being continued.

Size Limit: Plans should not be larger than 30" x 42" trimmed. All plans shall be folded into a 9" x 11" size. Unfolded plans will not be accepted.

Scale: The scale used on submittal plans shall generally be at a 1/8" = 1'0" for the architectural plans, 1" = 20' for site engineering plans. Include a north arrow, the scale and a bar scale on all plans.

- ☒ 1. **Application Form:**(1)
Completed and signed by applicant and property owner.
- ☒ 2. **Fee:** As defined on the fee schedule listed on the Master Planning Application. Checks should be made payable to the City of Sebastopol.
- ☒ 3. **Location Map:**(1)
Indicate the subject parcel(s) and adjacent streets on an 8 1/2" x 11" map.
- ☒ 4. **Written Statement:**(1)
Written Statement providing a description of tree(s) proposed to be removed.
- ☒ 5. **Site Plans:**(1 set)
Clearly show the location of the tree(s) proposed to be removed on the property.
- ☒ 6. **Site Photographs:**(1 set)
Clearly show the views of and from the project, including neighboring development. Include a key map indicating where the pictures were taken from and in what direction they were taken. Label the pictures accordingly. It is often desirable to provide the City with a series of overlapping photographs of the surrounding neighborhood that show a panoramic view. Polaroids or digital photos on a CD are acceptable.

INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

"As part of this application, applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, release and hold harmless the City, its agents, officers, attorneys, employees, boards and commissions from any claim, action or proceeding brought against any of the foregoing individuals or entities, the purpose of which is to attack, set aside, void or annul the approval of this application or the adoption of the environmental document which accompanies it or otherwise arises out of or in connection with the City's action on this application. This indemnification shall include, but not be limited to, damages, costs, expenses, attorney fees or expert witness fees that may be asserted by any person or entity, including the applicant, arising out of or in connection with the City's action on this application, whether or not there is concurrent passive or active negligence on the part of the City.

If, for any reason any portion of this indemnification agreement is held to be void or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of the agreement shall remain in full force and effect."

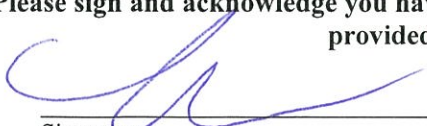
Applicant's Signature  Date Signed 10/25/18 Planning File No. 2018-97

NOTE: The purpose of the indemnification agreement is to allow the City to be held harmless in terms of potential legal costs and liabilities in conjunction with permit processing and approval.

NOTICE OF MAILING:

Effective immediately, email addresses or facsimiles will be used for sending out of staff reports and agendas to applicants, their representatives, property owners, and others to be notified if an email address or facsimile number is available.

Please sign and acknowledge you have been notified of the Notice of Mailing for applications and have provided an email address or fax number.



Signature



Printed Name

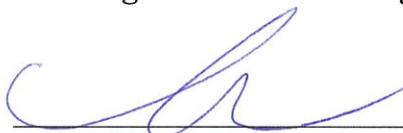
Public Notification of Tree Removal

Trees proposed for removal shall be marked by THE APPLICANT with a form prescribed by the City (attached). Notice of a Tree Removal Permit application shall be posted on the subject parcel on affected tree(s), and in at least two public places within 300 feet of the affected trees, at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the date of the Sebastopol Tree Board meeting at which the application will be considered.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, THE APPLICANT, AM RESPONSIBLE FOR POSTING THE TREE(S) PROPOSED FOR REMOVAL WITH THE ATTACHED FORM WITHIN 5 DAYS OF FILING THIS TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION. FAILURE TO POST THE PROPOSED TREE(S), AS REQUIRED, MAY RESULT IN THE APPLICATION BEING CONTINUED OR DENIED.

If you need help in posting the proposed tree(s), please contact the Planning Department at 707-823-6167

Please sign and acknowledge you have been notified of the Posting of Tree(s) Requirement



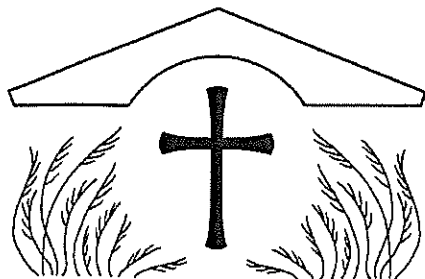
Signature



Printed Name

OCT 31 2018





ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

October 31, 2018

10-29-18

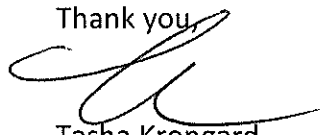
Redwood Removal Permit Application

Our arborist (Merlin Arborist Group) has recommended we remove this redwood due to a bifurcation of the trunk that makes the tree more likely to fail at a future date. As redwood trees are shallow rooted and have evolved to grow in clustered communities so their shallow roots engage with each other to provide support, and this is a single redwood tree, it is more likely to fall because of its solitary root structure. Redwood trees become enormous, so we are hoping to mitigate these problems before the tree is any bigger.

The redwood tree is on the western side of the property near the Burbank Heights Senior Housing. If it failed in the future it could detrimentally impact the housing project. Additionally, we are about to construct a sacred labyrinth near the tree that will attract both solitary walkers and groups for prayer, walking, and meditation. We are concerned about having an unsafe tree in close proximity to such usage.

In general, St. Stephen's is working to be good stewards of our land. We are encouraging the growth of an oak savannah, employing permaculture practices (with the support and guidance of Occidental Arts and Ecology), planting low-water natives, and planting a food forest of fruit trees. The fruit forest will be composed of approximately 15 trees and include persimmon, olive, fig, pomegranate, loquat, hazelnut, feijoa, prickly pear and shipova. As we do so, we are working to make sure that our property is safe for those who walk it and this tree represents a risk that makes us uncomfortable.

Thank you,



Tasha Krongard
Parish Administrator

OCT 31 2018



Bc

Robinson Rd

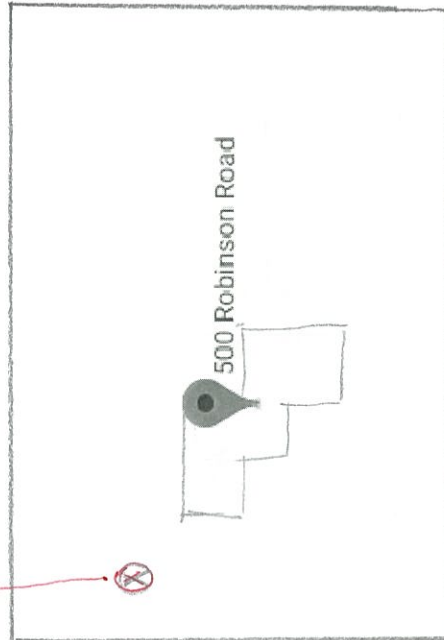
Robinson Rd

Robinson Rd

1 Rd

Bodega Ave
Bodega Ave

approx. location of tree



Gold Ridge Farm

Stefenoni Ct

Farm

1

Gold Ridge Farm

1

1

OCT 31 2018

Gold Ridge Farm

[Signature]



OCT 31 2018

→ Approximate location of tree



looking east

OCT 31 2018

[Handwritten signature]



30
OCT 31 2018
[Signature]



looking north

OCT 31 2013

[Handwritten signature]



looking west

OCT 31 2018

[Handwritten signature]

BECKY DUCKLES
CONSULTING ARBORIST & LANDSCAPE ADVISOR
SEBASTOPOL, CA.
707.829.0555 P

ARBORIST'S REPORT

St. Stephen's Church - 500 Robinson Rd - Sebastopol

November 20, 2018

I visited this site on November 19th to assess the status of a coast redwood proposed for removal. I met with the applicant for the church, Tasha Krongard as well as their tree service provider, Merlin Schlumberger who was on site. I inspected the tree and discussed its condition and options with Ms. Krongard as well as Merlin.

The tree is healthy, but has a structural defect called co-dominant leaders with included bark. This is a common, naturally-occurring condition which does predispose the tree to trunk failure if the attachment is acute and has a long 'seam' of included bark, as this one does. That indicates that there is a very limited amount of wood connecting the stems.

Since the tree is mature and both stems are almost equal, approximately 20" dbh, reducing the height of one to suppress it would be a shock to the tree, leaving a large topping cut. Sebastopol's tree ordinance prohibits topping or the removal of more than 25% of a tree's crown by pruning. In this case, it would be better for them to have a qualified tree service install a cable approximately 2/3 of the height of the stem above grade to strengthen the attachment, or remove the tree entirely. A cable would have to be inspected by a climber every two years to insure that the tension is adequate and the lag bolts attaching it are secure. Both (cabling or removal) would sufficiently reduce the level of hazard to nearby pedestrians and other targets, and are acceptable to the City in this situation. If the tree is removed, the tree replacement requirements would be necessary, as per ordinance, but if it is cabled, there would be none.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Duckles

Becky Duckles
City Arborist
ISA Certified Consulting Arborist #WE-0796A