



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 25, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.
City Administration Building
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park

The meeting was called to order by Chair DeCardy at 6:44 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Allen Bedwell (Arrived at 6:58 pm), Chris DeCardy (Chair), Kristin Kuntz-Duriseti, ,
Scott Marshall, Christina Smolke

Absent: Mitchel Slomiak (Vice Chair)

A. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

B1. Approve August 28, 2013 Minutes ([Attachment](#))

ACTION: Motion and Second (Martin/Marshall) to approve August 28, 2013 minutes, passes (5-0-2), (Absent: Allan Bedwell and Mitchel Slomiak).

B2. Issue a Determination on Four Heritage Tree Appeals at 2140 Santa Cruz Ave.
([Attachment](#))

City Arborist presents staff recommendation to deny appeal and uphold staff's decision to deny removal of four heritage tree applications at 2140 Santa Cruz Ave.

Appellant, Evin Lambert from ArborWell and representative for the property owner, presents reasons the trees need to be removed, stating that the trees are too close to the building and would cause structural damages to the roof and foundation in the future. In addition, Ms. Lambert stated that the property owner had plans that were approved by the City 15 years ago that allow the removal of the trees. However, the records have not been found by the property owner or City staff.

Public Comment

Chuck Kinney, a resident of the property, spoke against the proposed tree removal initiated by the property owners. He provided a survey conducted by one of the board members of the Home Owners Association asking if residents on the property would like the trees removed or not. Of the one hundred residents that live on the property, 20 responded to the survey with the majority in favor of keeping the trees. Mr. Kinney believes that improved maintenance would preserve the trees and minimize debris and future building damages. ([Attachment](#))

Commission Discussion

Commission discussed that additional data is needed to provide evidence that the trees would cause future damages to the building. Based on the analysis presented by the City Arborist, it appears that damage and maintenance issues can be minimized with pruning, narrowing the canopy, and regular gutter cleaning. The commission also commented that heritage trees do require additional maintenance due their size in relation to leaf/needle droppings, and found it to be economically reasonable for the property owner to manage tree debris and potential building damages through regular maintenance.

Commission also discussed the issue brought up by the appellant regarding the missing city approved plans from 15 years ago that allowed removal of the trees. Since there is no record from the appellant or the city, the commission could not consider the criteria for the previous approval. In addition, the commission also clarified current practices with the City Arborist, and found that when a permit is issued for a heritage tree removal, it is valid for up to six months. If the permit holder fails to remove the tree within six months, they must reapply for a permit. The commission concluded that the approved plans from 15 years ago, even if found, would likely be invalid.

ACTION: Motion and Second (Kuntz-Duriseti, Bedwell) to deny appeal, and uphold staff decision to deny a permit to remove four trees at 2140 Santa Cruz Avenue, passes (6-0-1), (Absent: Mitchel Slomiak)

B3. Receive Informational (Biannual) Arborist Report

ACTION: No Action. Report was received by commission.

B4. Discuss Informational Quarterly Report to City Council

ACTION: Motion and Second (Bedwell, Marshall) to update City Council on the following topics: Heritage Tree Ordinance update and current development issues associated with heritage tree removals, Climate Action Plan status update, and continuing issues with the potential irrigation well project, passes (6-0-1) (Absent: Mitchel Slomiak)

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following updates were received by commission:

C1. Staff Update on Environmental Policies to be Considered by City Council

C2. Commission Subcommittee Reports and Announcements

C3. Discuss Future Agenda Items

Informational Presentation on San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority
Presentation on current climate action plan strategies over the next five years

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Rebecca Fotu, Environmental Programs Manager and Staff
Liaison