



Tree Committee Minutes

October 28, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo

Tree Committee Members Present: Member Henry Bonifas, Member Daniel Canella, Member Brian Pineda, Member Emily Rosten, Vice Chair Ben Parker, Chair Elizabeth Lucas

Tree Committee Members Absent: Member Alan Bate

City Staff Present: Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault, Principal Planner Rachel Cohen, Deputy City Clerk Megan Wilbanks

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the San Luis Obispo Tree Committee was called to order on October 28, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, by Chair Lucas.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public Comment:

None

--End of Public Comment--

3. CONSENT

3.a CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES - AUGUST 26, 2024 TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Motion By Vice Chair Parker

Second By Member Rosten

To approve the Tree Committee Minutes of August 26, 2024.

Ayes (6): Member Bonifas, Member Canella, Member Pineda, Member Rosten, Vice Chair Parker, and Chair Lucas

Absent (1): Member Bate

CARRIED (6 to 0)

4. TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

- 4.a REVIEW A TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION TO REMOVE TWO (2) COAST LIVE OAK (QUERCUS AGRIFOLIA) TREES LOCATED AT 2675 JOHNSON AVE (TREE-0497-2024)

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault presented the staff report and responded to Committee inquiries.

Applicant representative, Ron Combs, provided an overview of the Tree Removal Application and responded to questions raised.

Public Comment:

None

--End of Public Comment--

Motion By Member Canella

Second By Member Pineda

Recommend the Community Development Director approve removal of the 12-inch DBH Oak tree and deny removal of the 18-inch DBH Oak tree, consistent with Municipal Code Section 12.24.90.G (4, 5 and 6) (Forestry Best Practice, Public Right-of-Way Obstruction or Displacement and additional Compensatory Plantings). The Committee recommends the applicant reduce the number of replacement trees from 13 to a range of 5-10, given constraints of the site, and work with the City Arborist to select a more suitable species to replant, preferably a native species from the City's Master Tree list.

Ayes (3): Member Bonifas, Member Canella, and Member Pineda

Noes (3): Member Rosten, Vice Chair Parker, and Chair Lucas

Absent (1): Member Bate

FAILED (3 to 3)

Motion By Vice Chair Parker

Second By Member Rosten

Recommend the Community Development Director approve removal of both trees consistent with Municipal Code Section 12.24.90.G (4, 5 and 6) (Forestry Best Practice, Public Right-of-Way Obstruction or Displacement and additional Compensatory Plantings) and require the applicant to reduce the number of replacement trees from 13 to a range of 7-10, given constraints of the site. The Committee recommends the applicant consult with the City Arborist to select a species that may be more appropriate for the site.

Ayes (5): Member Bonifas, Member Canella, Member Pineda, Member Rosten, and Vice Chair Parker

Noes (1): Chair Lucas

Absent (1): Member Bate

CARRIED (5 to 1)

5. COMMENT AND DISCUSSION

5.a 2025-27 TREE COMMITTEE GOAL SETTING AND THE FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET PROCESS

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault and Principal Planner Rachel Cohen discussed Tree Committee goals and work programs for the 2025-27 Financial Plan and responded to Committee inquiries.

Public Comment:

None

--End of Public Comment--

ACTION: The Tree Committee provided the following initial feedback, but continued development of the 2025-27 Tree Committee goals and work programs to the next meeting, December 2, 2024:

1. Update the Tree Regulations in the Municipal Code based on Ordinance review, Advisory Body Case Study Report, and recent California State Laws.
 - Consider requirements regarding completion of compensatory replanting within a specific timeframe and appropriate enforcement.
 - Consider a section on removals requested due to ADA compliance concerns and outline the Tree Committee's options for approving or denying such requests.
 - Consider requirements for development projects to consult with the City Arborist before finalizing their plans and requesting removal of trees.
2. Implement the Community Forest Plan.
 - Request that staff provide a summary of the Community Forest Plan at the next Tree Committee Meeting, December 2nd.
 - Continue to invest in contacting tree trimming services along public streets to maintain the vitality of the city's urban forest.
3. Advocate for tree planting in public spaces.
 - Promote and enhance the Heritage Tree Program as a benefit to the city's cultural vitality for both residents and visitors.

- Invest in informational signage for trees that are located downtown, heritage trees and other 'statement' trees in certain neighborhoods.

5.b ARBORIST REPORT

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault provided the following update of upcoming projects and activities in the Tree Division:

- Arbor Day celebration will be held on Saturday, November 2nd from 10am - 2pm at Sinshiemer Park (meet at the Boulevard Del Campo cul-de-sac). Staff anticipate planting 25-30 trees along the Safety Trail and an additional 200 1-gallon trees, grown by Cal Poly, will be given away to community members.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m. The Tree Committee will hold a **Special Meeting on Monday, December 2, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room** at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo. The Regular Meeting of November 25, 2024 will be cancelled due to the Thanksgiving Holiday.

APPROVED BY TREE COMMITTEE: XX/XX/2024