



City of Sebastopol Design Review Board/Tree Board Staff Report

Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Agenda Item: 6A
To: Design Review & Tree Board
From: Victoria Henkel, Permit Technician
Subject: Tree Removal
Recommendation: Approval with Conditions
Applicant/Owner: Fine Tree Care/Iris Stuart
File Number: 2025-062
Address: 8196 Bodega Ave (APN 004-580-001)
CEQA Status: Exempt
General Plan: Commercial Office (CO)
Zoning: Office Commercial (CO)

Introduction:

The project applicant is seeking approval from the Design Review/Tree Board for the removal of three (3) Coast Redwoods at 8196 Bodega Ave. The trees vary in diameter at breast height, but are all larger than 10" in diameter breast height. Per Sebastopol Municipal Code section 8.12.060, protected native trees measuring more than 10" in diameter breast height (DBH) in multifamily and commercial zones require the review and approval of the Design Review/Tree Board.

Project Description:

The applicant has applied for a tree removal permit for the three Coast Redwood trees due to repeated damage to the slab foundation and interior floors caused by tree roots.

Environmental Review:

The proposed tree removal is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, pursuant to Section 15304, Class 4, which includes minor alterations to existing topographical features, such as the removal of a tree.

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.
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.
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.



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.
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.

Public Comment:

As of writing this report, the Planning Department has not received any public comments regarding the removal of this tree.

City Departmental Comment:

The proposal was routed out to the various City Departments, and no comments were provided.

Analysis:

Ben Anderson, an ISA Certified Arborist serving as the City Arborist, reviewed the application, conducted a site visit, and prepared an Arborist's Report dated December 17, 2025, attached. In summary, the report stated that the three subject trees are located between the building and Ragle Road. In the report, the trees are referred to as Tree 1 through Tree 3. The largest, northernmost tree is Tree 1. The trunk diameters are measured approximately at 40.5 inches, 34 inches, and 23 inches.

The report mentions that Tree 1 has not been topped for line clearance and is very tall. However, Trees 2 and 3 have been maintained below overhead utility lines. A covered walkway separates the trees from the building's interior. A raised floor appears to have been installed over the slab foundation inside the building. The report also mentions that Tree 3 is the smallest of the three and is located closest to the building. Its trunk appears to be approximately one foot from the building eave, and the trunk base is nearly in contact with the cement walkway surrounding the exterior of the structure. As well as the canopies of Trees 2 and 3 being in contact with the building. Additionally, the cement walkway adjacent to the building has been lifted in multiple locations in a manner consistent with root-related displacement beneath the concrete.

According to the Arborist, all three trees display normal canopy color and density and appear healthy and structurally stable at the time of inspection. He observed cracks in the building's stucco exterior that appear consistent with structural movement. According to publicly available information, the building was constructed in approximately 1948, which predates modern building standards that better accommodate expansive tree root systems.

The report states that, given the proximity of the trees to the building and walkway, installation of root barriers would require cutting into structural roots at distances inconsistent with root management best management practices published by the International Society of Arboriculture. Pruning the trees to achieve the degree of clearance commonly required by insurance carriers in this area would not be practical or sustainable, given the size and growth characteristics of coast redwoods.



Finally, the report mentions the number and size of replacement trees shall be determined by the Tree Board or the City Arborist. Replacement trees are not discussed in the permit application. The City Arborist recommends at least one 15-gallon replacement tree for each tree planted on site. A lower spreading tree like an Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*) would be appropriate, but another reasonably large species could be considered. A small tree, like a crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia sp.*), is not an acceptable replacement. The \$75 fee would not cover the purchase or installation of new trees off-site if no trees are planted. The trees to be removed are quite substantial, justifying more than one replacement tree fee. The City Arborist recommends requiring four in-lieu fees to better cover the cost of off-site replacement trees, and to encourage the applicant to replant on-site.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Board review the staff report, hear from the applicant, public, deliberate, and approve the removal of the tree based on the facts, findings, and analysis set forth in this staff report. If the board determines that they want to increase the in lieu fee, then staff requests that the board direct staff on the appropriate amount to pay.

Attachments:

Exhibit A: Recommended Findings for Approval
Exhibit B: Recommended Conditions of Approval
Application Documents
City Arborist Report



ATTACHMENT 1
RECOMMENDED FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

TREE REMOVAL PERMIT
Application (2025-062)
8196 Bodega Ave (APN 004-580-001)

1. The application is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, pursuant to Section 15304, Class 4, which includes minor alterations to existing topographical features, such as the removal of a tree.
2. The City Arborist found that the three trees in question display normal canopy color and density and appear healthy and structurally stable at the time of inspection. Tree 1 has not been topped for line clearance and is very tall. However, Trees 2 and 3 have been maintained below overhead utility lines. Tree 3 is located approximately one foot from the building eave. He observed cracks in the building's stucco exterior that appear consistent with structural movement, as well as the cement walkway adjacent to the building, which has been lifted in multiple locations in a manner consistent with root-related displacement beneath the concrete.
3. **Tree Removal Criteria D.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 years. In that, the subject trees appear healthy and structurally stable at the time of inspection. This criterion does not apply to the removal request.
4. **Tree Removal Criteria D.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. In that, the application mentioned concerns with the roots disturbing the interior and exterior of the foundation and slab. The City Arborist's report notes that the trees are located extremely close to the building and associated hardscape. Tree 3 is nearly in contact with the cement walkway and within approximately one foot of the building eave, while the canopies of Trees 2 and 3 are in contact with the structure. The City Arborist confirmed that root-related displacement of the walkway is already evident, and given the proximity of the trunks to the building, installation of root barriers would require cutting into structural roots at distances inconsistent with accepted arboricultural best management practices. Additionally, pruning sufficiently to eliminate building contact and meet common insurance clearance requirements would not be practical or sustainable in this situation. Based on these constraints, the City Arborist has found that the foreseeable impacts to the structure cannot be reasonably mitigated through available management methods and thus meet the criteria of this finding.
5. **Tree Removal Criteria D.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. In that, the application cites repeated damage to the building's slab foundation and interior floors caused by the tree roots. The site visit



from the City Arborist confirmed the lifting of exterior hardscape, which further supports the ongoing maintenance concerns stated in the application and to the continued root growth. With the trees' proximity to the structure, these conditions will continue to cause recurring maintenance issues and thus meet the criteria of this finding.

6. **Tree Removal Criteria D.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. In that, the building predates modern construction practices and appears not to have been designed to accommodate the expansive root systems of mature coast redwoods at such close distances. The City Arborist found that, given the age of the structure, the presence of cracks in the stucco exterior, and the limited space between the building and trees, redesign or alteration of the structure to avoid continued impacts from these trees does not appear reasonable. Therefore, meets the criteria of this finding.
7. **Tree Removal Criteria D.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. In that, coast redwood is a very large tree species that is not well-suited to confined spaces immediately adjacent to buildings and utilities. During the City Arborist's site visit, he confirmed that the size of these trees relative to the building, walkway, and overhead utilities indicates that they have matured beyond what the narrow planting site can reasonably accommodate. Therefore, meets the criteria of this finding.



ATTACHMENT 2
RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

TREE REMOVAL PERMIT
Application (2025-062)
8196 Bodega Ave (APN 004-580-001)

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 17.400.100 of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. An Encroachment Permit shall be required if any public right-of-way is required for tree removal. 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. Any replacement trees that will reach a height greater than 20 feet at maturity shall not be planted within 20 feet (measured horizontally) of overhead utility lines.
5. The City Arborist recommends at least one 15-gallon replacement tree for each tree planted on site. A lower spreading tree like an Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*) would be appropriate, but another reasonably large species could be considered. A small tree, like a crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia sp.*), is not an acceptable replacement. The \$75 fee would not cover the purchase or installation of new trees off-site if no trees are planted. The trees to be removed are quite substantial, justifying more than one replacement tree fee. The City Arborist recommends requiring four in-lieu fees to better cover the cost of off-site replacement trees, and to encourage the applicant to replant on-site.



City of Sebastopol

Planning Department
7120 Bodega Avenue
Sebastopol, CA 95472
(707) 823-6167

Received
12/01/2025 9:33:29 AM

MASTER PLANNING APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION TYPE

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Permit Review | <input type="checkbox"/> Lot Line Adjustment/Merger | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Use Permit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol Use Permit/ABC Transfer | <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication Conference | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tree Removal Permit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conditional Use Permit | <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Review | <input type="checkbox"/> Variance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Design Review | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Permit | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

This application includes the checklist(s) or supplement form(s) for the type of permit requested: ☒ Yes ☐ No

REVIEW/HEARING BODIES

- ☐ Staff/Admin ☒ Design Review/Tree Board ☐ Planning Commission ☐ City Council ☐ Other _____

APPLICATION FOR

Street Address: 8196 Bodega Ave

Assessor's Parcel No(s): 004-580-001-000

Present Use of Property: MISC MULTIPLE USE/NONE DOMINAT

Zoning/General Plan Designation: 81 FORM 4-381-01 NOW COUNTRY PARK BK 4 PG 58 & 59

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Property Owner Name: Devan Paddock

Mailing Address: 1513 Wimbledon Place

Phone: 707-548-9826

City/State/ZIP: Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Email: devpaddock@gmail.com

Signature: 

Date: 11/21/25

Authorized Agent/Applicant Name: Fine Tree Care/Iris Stuart

Mailing Address: 321 S. Main Street, PMB #3

Phone: 707-874-2018

City/State/ZIP: Sebastopol, CA 95472

Email: office@sonomatree.com

Signature: 

Date: 11/21/25

Contact Name (If different from above):

Phone/Email:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PERMITS REQUESTED (ATTACH ADDITIONAL PAGES IF NECESSARY)

All 3 trees have roots disturbing the interior and exterior of the foundation and slab. The owner has already had to tear up the floor due to the damage. 2 of the 3 trees are continuously being topped by PG&E to keep them out of the electric wires.

All 3 trees have been marked with white tape for easy identification by the City Arborist.

CITY USE ONLY

Fill out upon receipt:

Application Date: _____

Planning File #: _____

Received By: _____

Fee(s): \$ _____

Completeness Date: _____

Action:

Staff/Admin: _____

Planning Director: _____

Design Review/Tree Board: _____

Planning Commission: _____

City Council: _____

Action Date:

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

SITE DATA TABLE

If an item is not applicable to your project, please indicate "Not Applicable" or "N/A" in the appropriate box; do not leave cells blank.

SITE DATA TABLE	REQUIRED / ZONING STANDARD	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zoning	N/A		
Use	N/A		
Lot Size		40,365	
Square Feet of Building/Structures <i>(if multiple structures include all separately)</i>			
Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R)	_____ FAR	_____ FAR	_____ FAR
Lot Coverage	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.
Parking			
Building Height			
Number of Stories			
Building Setbacks – Primary			
<i>Front</i>			
<i>Secondary Front Yard (corner lots)</i>			
<i>Side – Interior</i>			
<i>Rear</i>			
Building Setbacks – Accessory			
<i>Front</i>			
<i>Secondary Front Yard (corner lots)</i>			
<i>Side – Interior</i>			
<i>Rear</i>			
Special Setbacks (if applicable)			
<i>Other (_____)</i>			
Number of Residential Units	_____ Dwelling Unit(s)	_____ Dwelling Unit(s)	_____ Dwelling Unit(s)
Residential Density	1 unit per _____ sq. ft.	1 unit per _____ sq. ft.	1 unit per _____ sq. ft.
Useable Open Space	_____ sq. ft.	_____ sq. ft.	_____ sq. ft.
Grading	Grading should be minimized to the extent feasible to reflect existing topography and protect significant site features, including trees.	N/A	Total: _____ cu. yds. Cut: _____ cu. yds. Fill: _____ cu. yds. Off-Haul: _____ cu. yds
Impervious Surface Area	N/A	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.
Pervious Surface Area	N/A	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.	_____ % of lot _____ sq. ft.

CONDITIONS OF APPLICATION

1. All Materials submitted in conjunction with this form shall be considered a part of this application.
2. This application will not be considered filed and processing may not be initiated until the Planning Department determines that the submittal is complete with all necessary information and is "accepted as complete." The City will notify the applicant of all application deficiencies no later than 30 days following application submittal.
3. The property owner authorizes the listed authorized agent(s)/contact(s) to appear before the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review/Tree Board and Planning Director and to file applications, plans, and other information on the owner's behalf.
4. The Owner shall inform the Planning Department in writing of any changes.
5. **INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT:** As part of this application, applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, release and hold harmless the City, its agents, officers, attorneys, employees, boards, committees 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.

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.

6. **REPRODUCTION AND CIRCULATION OF PLANS:** I hereby authorize the Planning Department to reproduce plans and exhibits as necessary for the processing of this application. I understand that this may include circulating copies of the reduced plans for public inspection. Multiple signatures are required when plans are prepared by multiple professionals.
7. **NOTICE OF MAILING:** Email addresses will be used for sending out staff reports and agendas to applicants, their representatives, property owners, and others to be notified.
8. **DEPOSIT ACCOUNT INFORMATION:** Rather than flat fees, some applications require a 'Deposit'. The initial deposit amount is based on typical processing costs. However, each application is different and will experience different costs. The City staff and City consultant time, in addition to other permit processing costs, (i.e., legal advertisements and copying costs are charged against the application deposit). If charges exceed the initial deposit, the applicant will receive billing from the City's Finance department. If at the end of the application process, charges are less than the deposit, the City Finance department will refund the remaining monies. Deposit accounts will be held open for up to 90 days after action or withdrawal for the City to complete any miscellaneous clean up items and to account for all project related costs.
9. **NOTICE OF ORDINANCE/PLAN MODIFICATIONS:** Pursuant to Government Code Section 65945(a), please indicate, by checking the boxes below, if you would like to receive a notice from the City of any proposal to adopt or amend any of the following plans or ordinances if the City determines that the proposal is reasonably related to your request for a development permit:

☐ A general plan

☐ A specific plan

☐ An ordinance affecting building permits or grading permits

☐ A zoning ordinance

Certification

I, the undersigned owner of the subject property, have read this application for a development permit and agree with all of the above and certify that the information, drawings and specifications herewith submitted are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and are submitted under penalty of perjury. I hereby grant members of the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and City Staff admittance to the subject property as necessary for processing of the project application.

Property Owner's Signature: _____

Date: _____

I, the undersigned applicant, have read this application for a development permit and agree with all of the above and certify that the information, drawings and specifications herewith submitted are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and are submitted under penalty of perjury.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the applicant and their representatives to be aware of and abide by City laws and policies. City staff, Boards, Commissions, and the City Council will review applications as required by law; however, the applicant has responsibility for determining and following applicable regulations.

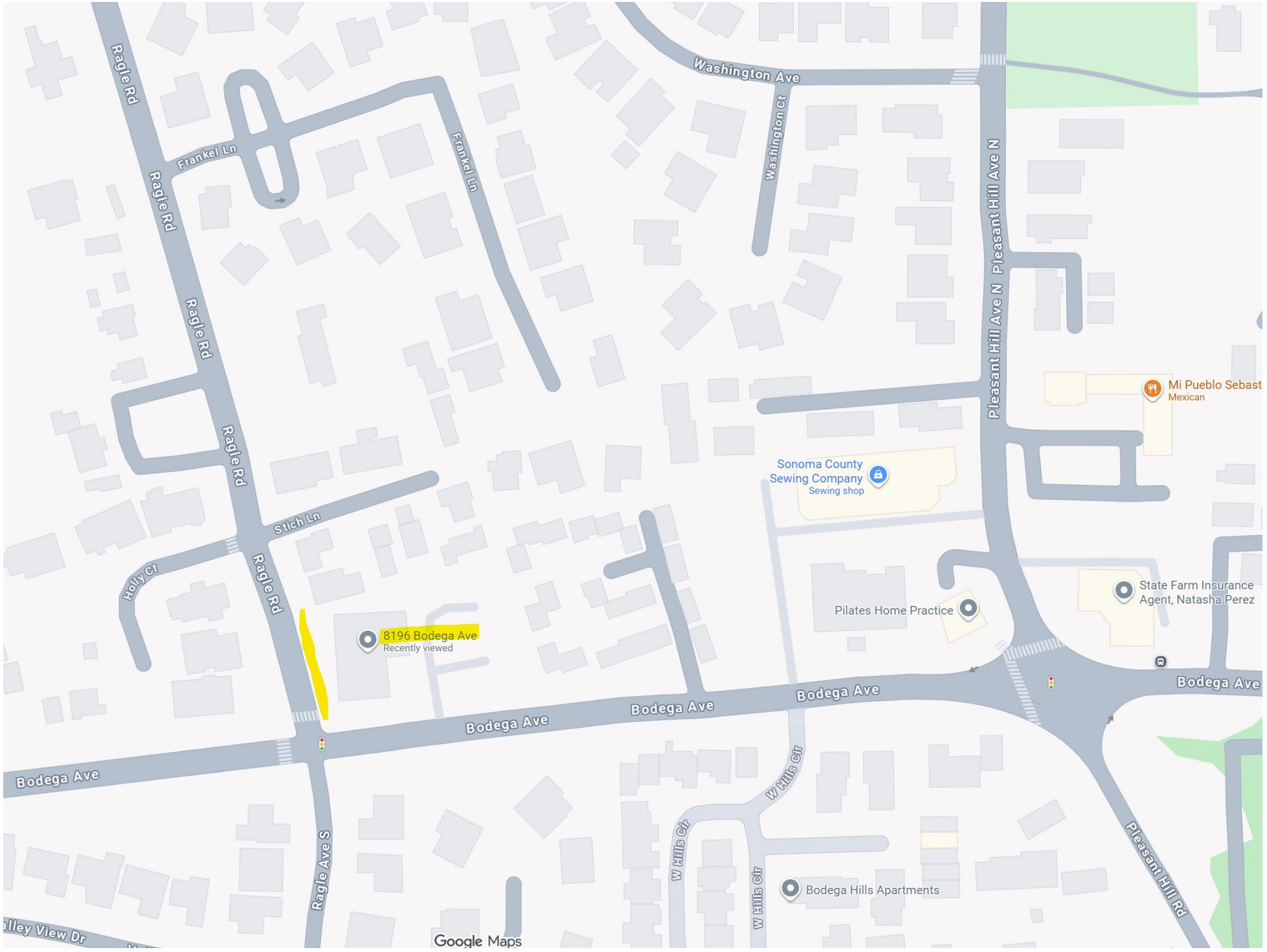
Received

12/01/2025 9:32:37 AM



April 2024

Parcel #004-580-001



11/14/25

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this as my statement to include with my permit request for tree removals. All 3 trees have roots disturbing the interior and exterior of the foundation and slab. The floor has already been torn up due to the damage. 2 of the 3 trees are continuously being topped by PG&E to keep them out of the electric wires.

All 3 trees have been marked with white tape for easy identification by the City Arborist.

I would like permission to remove all three trees a.s.a.p.

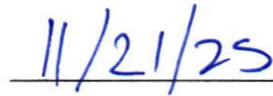
Thank you,



Devan Paddock

8196 Bodega Ave

Sebastopol, CA 95472



Date



City of Sebastopol

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO REMOVE TREES

SPECIES: Redwood 3 of 3

ADDRESS: 8196 Bodega Ave, Sebastopol, CA 95472

DIAMETER AT BREAST HEIGHT (per tree): ” d.b.h.

DATE POSTED: (at least 10 days prior to Public Hearing or
administrative action)

HEARING DATE:

An application has been submitted to the City of Sebastopol to remove a tree(s) protected under the City Tree Ordinance. The Ordinance allows removal in various circumstances. Anyone who wishes to make a comment on this matter may send a letter to the Sebastopol Planning Department at P.O. Box 1776, Sebastopol, CA, 95473, or contact the Sebastopol Planning Department at 707/823-6167.

IT IS A MISDEMEANOR TO DEFACE OR REMOVE THIS NOTICE.

Client: City of Sebastopol Planning Department
Project Location: 8196 Bodega Ave, Sebastopol, CA
Inspection Date: December 17, 2025
Arborist: Ben Anderson



Assignment

Sebastopol Planning staff asked me to review a tree removal permit application for three coast redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*) on the subject property to determine whether their proposed removal would be consistent with the Sebastopol Municipal Code.

Observations

No arborist report was submitted with the tree removal application. The applicant cited repeated damage to the slab foundation and interior floors caused by tree roots as the basis for the removal request. No one met me on site during my inspection.

The three subject trees are coast redwoods located between the building and Ragle Road. From north to south, their trunk diameters measured approximately 40.5 inches, 34 inches, and 23 inches. For clarity, I refer to these trees as Tree 1 through Tree 3, with Tree 1 being the largest and northernmost specimen.

Tree 1 has not been topped for line clearance and is very tall. Trees 2 and 3 have been maintained below overhead utility lines. A covered walkway separates the trees from the building's interior, which appears to be used as a dance studio. Active work appeared to be underway inside the building at the time of my inspection.

Based on observations made through the windows, a raised floor appears to have been installed over the slab foundation. Tree 3 is the smallest of the three and is located closest to the building. Its trunk appears to be approximately one foot from the building eave, and the trunk base is nearly in contact with the cement walkway surrounding the exterior of the structure. The canopies of Trees 2 and 3 are in contact with the building.

The cement walkway adjacent to the building has been lifted in multiple locations in a manner consistent with root-related displacement beneath the concrete. I did not observe direct evidence of current damage to the interior floors, though such damage may have been repaired and concealed by the raised floor system.

All three trees display normal canopy color and density and appear healthy and structurally stable at the time of inspection. I observed cracks in the building's stucco exterior that appear consistent with structural movement. According to publicly available information, the building was constructed in approximately 1948, which predates modern building standards that better accommodate expansive tree root systems.

Given the proximity of the trees to the building and walkway, installation of root barriers would require cutting into structural roots at distances inconsistent with root management best management practices published by the International Society of Arboriculture. Pruning the trees to achieve the degree of clearance commonly required by insurance carriers in this area would not be practical or sustainable given the size and growth characteristics of coast redwood.

Discussion

From the Sebastopol Municipal Code 8.12.060: "Tree removal permit—When a Tree Removal Permit is Required."

1. Single-Family and Duplex Residential. On properties which house a single-family or duplex residential use, no person shall allow or cause the removal of a tree that has a minimum

diameter at breast height (d.b.h.) of 20 inches or more if the tree has a single trunk, or which has at least one trunk with a minimum d.b.h. of 20 inches if the tree has two or more trunks without first obtaining a TRP, unless otherwise exempted herein.

The three subject trees are over 20 inches in diameter and require a standard tree removal permit.

From the Sebastopol Municipal Code 8.12.060 D "Tree removal permit – Tree Removal Criteria," at least one of the following conditions must be satisfied to approve a tree removal permit:

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 years.

The subject trees appear healthy and structurally stable at the time of inspection. This criterion does not apply to the removal request.

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 trees are located extremely close to the building and associated hardscape, with Tree 3 nearly in contact with the cement walkway and within approximately one foot of the building eave. The canopies of Trees 2 and 3 are in contact with the structure. Root-related displacement of the walkway is already evident.

Given the proximity of the trunks to the building, installation of root barriers would require cutting into structural roots at distances inconsistent with accepted arboricultural best management practices. Pruning sufficient to eliminate building contact and meet common insurance clearance requirements would not be practical or sustainable. Based on these constraints, the foreseeable impacts to the structure cannot be reasonably mitigated through available management methods.

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.

The application cites repeated damage to the slab foundation and interior floors caused by tree roots. While I did not directly observe interior damage during my inspection, the raised floor system appears consistent with an effort to address prior slab-related issues. The lifting of exterior hardscape further supports ongoing maintenance concerns related to root growth. These conditions are consistent with recurring, difficult-to-manage impacts associated with the trees' proximity to the structure.

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.

The building predates modern construction practices and appears not to have been designed to accommodate the expansive root systems of mature coast redwoods at such close distances. Given the age of the structure, the presence of cracks in the stucco exterior, and the limited space between the building and trees, redesign or alteration of the structure to avoid continued impacts from these trees does not appear reasonable.

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.

Coast redwood is a very large tree species that is not well suited to confined spaces immediately adjacent

to buildings and utilities. The size of these trees relative to the building, walkway, and overhead utilities indicates that they have matured beyond what the narrow planting site can reasonably accommodate.

Conclusions

The three subject coast redwoods exceed the size threshold requiring a Tree Removal Permit under the Sebastopol Municipal Code. Although the trees are healthy and structurally stable, their proximity to the building and associated hardscape has resulted in ongoing and foreseeable conflicts that cannot be reasonably mitigated through pruning, root barriers, or other management strategies consistent with accepted arboricultural standards.

Given the building's age and apparent construction limitations, the close spacing of the trees, and the impracticality of long-term mitigation measures, removal of all three trees is reasonable and consistent with multiple findings required under Sebastopol Municipal Code Section 8.12.060(D).

The Sebastopol Municipal Code 8.12.060 E "Replacement Trees" requires the provision of replacement trees, in-lieu fee payment, or an approved alternative. The Tree Board or the City Arborist shall determine the number and size of replacement trees. Replacement trees are not discussed in the permit application. I recommend at least one 15-gallon replacement tree for each tree planted on-site. A lower spreading tree like an Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*) would be appropriate, but another reasonably large species could be considered. A small tree, like a crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia sp.*), is not an acceptable replacement. The \$75 fee would not cover the purchase or installation of new trees off-site if no trees are planted. The trees to be removed are quite substantial, justifying more than one replacement tree fee. I recommend requiring four in-lieu fees to better cover the cost of off-site replacement trees, and to encourage the applicant to replant on-site.

SCOPE OF WORK AND LIMITATIONS

Urban Forestry Associates has no personal or monetary interest in the outcome of this investigation. All observations regarding trees in this report were made by UFA independently, based on our education and experience. All determinations of the health condition, structural condition, or hazard potential of a tree or trees at issue are based on our best professional judgment. The health and hazard assessments in this report are limited by the visual nature of the assessment. Arborists cannot detect every condition that could lead to a tree's structural failure. Since trees are living organisms, conditions are often hidden within the tree and below ground. Arborists cannot guarantee that a tree will be healthy or safe under all circumstances or for a specific period of time. Likewise, remedial treatments cannot be guaranteed. Trees can be managed, but they cannot be controlled. To live near trees is to accept some degree of risk, and the only way to eliminate all risks associated with trees is to eliminate all trees.



Benjamin Anderson, Urban Forester
ISA Board Certified Master Arborist & TRAQ
RCA #686, WE #10160B
ben@urbanforestryassociates.com



Figure 1. Oblique angle of the subject property from Google Maps showing the subject trees' locations.