



City of Sunnyvale

Memo

TO: Shaunn Mendrin, Planning Officer / Trudi Ryan, Community Development Director
FROM: Travis Rios, Urban Landscape Manager
RE: 1365 Fisher Hawk Ave (PLNG-2026-0293 TRP Appeal)

Staff acknowledges that a limb failure occurred during a storm event several years ago. However, subsequent inspection by the City Arborist found the tree to be healthy and without structural defects that would warrant removal under the Municipal Code. Consistent with industry best management practices, routine structural pruning and periodic inspections are appropriate measures to reduce branch weight, maintain clearance from nearby structures, and mitigate the potential for future limb failures.

In addition to its structural condition, the mature tree provides significant environmental benefits that have accumulated over decades, including long-term carbon storage, annual carbon sequestration, stormwater interception, atmospheric cooling through shade and evapotranspiration, improved air quality, and wildlife habitat. These ecosystem services cannot be replicated by newly planted replacement trees for many decades.

Regarding the appellant's desire to expand garden space, the Protected Tree Ordinance is intended to preserve healthy mature trees unless they substantially impair the reasonable use of the property. While the tree may limit a preferred landscape use within a portion of the yard, the property continues to support reasonable residential use. The desire to accommodate an alternative landscape use, including expanded food production, does not independently satisfy the criteria for removal.

Best,



Travis Rios
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