



Amber Blizinski <ablizinski@sunnyvale.ca.gov>

Heritage Oaks at Butcher's Corner

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Thu, May 5, 2016 at 9:29 AM

To: ael-hajj@sunnyvale.ca.gov, heritagepreservation@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Amber,

Here is some background on the oak trees at Butcher's Corner regarding condition and age. Hopefully this information will prove useful as you prepare your report.

First, two separate requests were made at the meeting and should be considered as two requests.

Martin requested that the one large oak tree (#106) be designated as a heritage tree.

I requested that the oak grove on the corner of Wolfe and El Camino be designated as heritage trees (#119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 126). I will discuss the oak grove.

I am referencing the Butcher's Corner DEIR, as they have numbered and evaluated the trees. The DEIR also provides a bit of background on the trees.

I want to point out that my initial questions to you date back to October 29, 2015, right after this property was annexed into the city (on October 13). It was the annexation that prompted my actions. The fact that the trees have been targeted for removal as part of the Butcher's Corner project simply adds urgency to the request. On the plus side, the DEIR and arborist report that were prepared for the project have provided supporting data.

History of the Trees - In the video listed below, Audrey Butcher explains how she planted a number of the oak trees near the corner fifty or more years ago. In the video from 2007, she said that she planted them over forty years earlier (which would make them over fifty today).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrRhWVFLXJg>

DEIR - Appendix E - Arborist Report and Biological Resources Data -

The Tree Assessment Plan identifies the location and condition of the trees of interest. The grove of trees are listed as protected trees in good condition with a moderate suitability for preservation. The trees are healthy.

DEIR - Within the DEIR, Section 4.0 Biological Resources - Under the BIO-2 discussion (page 4.3-14), it is stated that "Of particular interest is a grove of mature native coast live oaks near the intersection of El Camino Real and Wolfe Road that contribute to the aesthetic and habitat values of the site. These consist of five mature coast live oaks (Trees #119, 120, 121, 123, and 126), all of which are of a protected tree size, are in good to excellent condition and have a moderate suitability for preservation according to the Preliminary Tree Report."

DEIR Project Info - The arborists report lists the trees as healthy and they are expected to live a long life.

Despite the health of the trees, and the stated interest in the trees, the proposed project would basically raze the property and remove 245 trees, while saving only one tree.

Heritage Worthy -

The group of oak trees at the corner of Wolfe Road and El Camino Real qualify as heritage trees.

The Sunnyvale Municipal Code 19.96.050 Criteria for evaluation and nomination of heritage resources, item (f), states that a tree may be designated a heritage resource if "It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city of Sunnyvale."

The group of trees on the corner is a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood and the city. Protection of the trees would maintain the established vista at this busy intersection. It would also preserve one of the few remaining areas along El Camino that have large trees.

As development encroaches on that area, preserving the trees is an important step to saving the visual feature

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and will benefit both the neighborhood and the city. Removal of these trees will greatly alter the look and feel of the area, and they should be protected. Adding a heritage tree status should add an extra layer of approvals required to receive a tree removal permit.

I am requesting that the oak grove be declared heritage trees on their own merit, not simply because of this project. This designation should move forward regardless of the project, as the project may change as it goes through the review process.

Please let me know if there is any other data you need. I might have something in the various documents I have accumulated.

Please pass this information on to the Heritage Preservation Commission members.

Thank you,
Mary Brunkhorst
(408) 739-6480
brunkhorst@aol.com

Heritage Tree Designation

Butcher's Corner - Corner of El Camino Real and Wolfe Road

Heritage Tree - Unique location, singular physical characteristic, a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city of Sunnyvale

Center Oak

300 years old



Oak Grove

Established
visual Feature



Overview



Aerial view of Butcher's Corner



View of city owned property (left side) and Butcher's Corner (right side)

Oak Grove

The oak grove is shown from various angles.

The trees are a familiar visual feature of this intersection.

The trees are an important part of the community and a treasure for the City of Sunnyvale.



View from Wolfe Road towards El Camino Real



View from opposite side of El Camino



View from El Camino towards Wolfe Road



View from opposite corner across El Camino Real



View from across Wolfe Road

Heritage Tree Designation –

Grove of five Coast Live Oak trees at the corner of El Camino Real and Wolfe Road
Large Valley Oak in center of property

Heritage Preservation – 19.96.050 Criteria for evaluation and nomination of heritage resources (f) – A tree may be designated a heritage tree if “It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city of Sunnyvale.”

The oak grove is a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood and the city. Protection of the trees would maintain the established vista at this busy intersection. The significance of the oak grove and center oak are noted in the DEIR that was prepared for Butcher’s Corner. The size, health, age, and location of these trees deem them worthy of heritage status.

DEIR – Biological Resources – 4.3.2 Impact Discussion – Item BIO-2

BIO-2 Explains that the regulations regarding protected trees apply to this project.

“Many of the protected trees on the site are in good to excellent condition, have a high suitability for preservation, and contribute to the aesthetic and habitat values of the site. The City’s Tree Preservation regulations are intended to provide for reasonable protection of trees which qualify as protected trees, and removal of all but one of the protected trees on the site would conflict with that intent.”

“Of particular interest is a grove of mature native coast live oaks near the intersection of El Camino Real and Wolfe Road that contribute to the aesthetic and habitat value of the site, and complement the existing grove of oaks on the east side of South Wolfe Road, opposite the site. These consist of five mature coast live oaks, all of which are of a protected tree size, are in good to excellent condition and have a moderate suitability for preservation.”

“There is also a large heritage oak tree (tree #106) located in the middle of the site, which is noted as “existing tree to remain” in the proposed site plans.”

Arborist Report (DEIR Appendix E) Summary –

The five trees in the oak grove are identified as #119, 120, 121, 123, 126

The large center oak is #106.

Trees are healthy. Trees are protected.

Map of tree locations and arborist report are included.

On Page 9 it is noted that “Several mature coast live oaks (#119, 120, 121, 123, and 126) form a grove near the highly visible El Camino Real and Wolfe Road intersection. These trees have moderate and high suitability for preservation, and would complement the stand of coast live oaks on the east side of Wolfe Road.”

On Page 4, it was noted that “Valley oak #106 was the largest and most dominant tree at Butcher’s Corner with a trunk diameter of 64 inches.”

Video of Audrey Butcher – Sunnyvale Voices, Sunnyvale Public Library February 17, 2007

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrRhWVFLXJg>

A video of Audrey Butcher describing the history of the Butcher property was produced in 2007. The Butcher Family has a long history on the property. The trees in the oak grove are over 50 years old. The large center oak is over 300 years old.

Tree Assessment

Butcher's Corner
Sunnyvale CA
Placeworks
September 2015

TREE No.	SPECIES	TRUNK DIAMETER (in.)	PROTECTED TREE?	CONDITION 1=poor 5=excell.	SUITABILITY for PRESERVATION	COMMENTS
101	Canary Island date palm	35	Yes	5	High	Good form & structure; 25' of brown trunk.
102	Euonymus	5,3,2	No	2	Low	Leans away from building; poor form & structure.
103	Canary Island date palm	47	Yes	3	Low	Pencilling; crook just below pineapple; 35' of brown trunk.
104	Calif. buckeye	8,8,8,7,6,5	Yes	4	Moderate	Multiple attachments @ base; branch tear-out @ 8'; one-sided W.
105	Canary Island date palm	27	Yes	4	High	Slight pencilling; smallish crown; 35' of brown trunk.
106	Valley oak	64	Yes	3	Low	Multiple attachments @ 12'; large pruning cuts S.; decay in trunks & branches; basal cavity W.; thin canopy.
107	Catalina cherry	19,18,8	Yes	2	Low	Multiple attachments @ 3'; extensive trunk decay; history of branch failure; vigorous.
108	Catalina cherry	7	No	3	Low	Suppressed; leans N.
109	Catalina cherry	8	No	3	Low	Suppressed; leans N.
110	Coast live oak	7	No	4	High	Upright form; canopy a little thin.
111	Catalina cherry	5	No	3	Low	Suppressed; crown bowed W.
112	Catalina cherry	5	No	3	Low	Suppressed; leans S.
113	Catalina cherry	5	No	3	Low	Suppressed; leans S.
114	Catalina cherry	9,9,8,7,6,4	Yes	3	Low	Multiple attachments @ 2'; thin canopy; vigorous root suckers.
115	Calif. pepper	47	Yes	3	Low	Multiple attachments @ 20'; large cavity with decay W.; stub S.
116	Coast live oak	36	Yes	4	Moderate	Off-site, no tag; good form; can't see base; canopy a little thin; extends 20' N. over wall.

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Tree Assessment

Butcher's Corner
Sunnyvale CA
Placeworks
September 2015

TREE No.	SPECIES	TRUNK DIAMETER (in.)	PROTECTED TREE?	CONDITION 1=poor 5=excell.	SUITABILITY for PRESERVATION	COMMENTS
117	Olive	8	No	3	Low	Off-site, no tag; good form; suppressed with entire canopy bowed N. over wall.
118	Coast live oak	36	Yes	3	Moderate	Off-site, no tag; good form; pruned hard on S. for building; most of canopy extends 25' N. over wall.
119	Coast live oak	31	Yes	4	Moderate	Codominant with #120; one-sided SE.; pruning wounds.
120	Coast live oak	18	Yes	3	Moderate	Codominant with #119; included bark; crown bowed slightly SW.
121	Coast live oak	24,22,20,14,14	Yes	4	Moderate	Multiple attachments @ 4'; spreading form; thin upper canopy; heavy lateral limbs E.
122	Coast live oak	17,12	Yes	3	Low	Codominant trunks @ 3'; suppressed; poor form & structure.
123	Coast live oak	20	Yes	3	Moderate	Codominant trunks @ 8'; narrow attachment; asymmetric form.
124	Canary Island date palm	30	Yes	5	High	Good form & structure; fire scars @ base; 35' of brown trunk.
125	Coast live oak	27	Yes	2	Low	Slight lean S.; no basal flare; borer damage; dead top.
126	Coast live oak	26	Yes	4	Moderate	Multiple attachments @ 8'; good form; laterals SE.
127	Canary Island date palm	30,30,30	Yes	5	High	Multiple attachments @ base; main trunk has good form & structure; 35' of brown trunk.
128	Calif. pepper	18,16	Yes	3	Moderate	Codominant trunks @ 3'; wide attachment; one stem upright; one stem a lateral to the S.
129	Catalina ironwood	18,12,12,12,10,8	Yes	3	Low	Multiple attachments @ 3'; fair structure; twig dieback throughout canopy.
130	Catalina cherry	7,5,4,4	No	3	Moderate	Multiple attachments @ 2'; small laterals.

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Tree Assessment Plan

Butcher's Corner
871 East Fremont Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA

Prepared for:
Placeworks
Berkeley, CA

September 2015



No Scale

Notes:
Base map provided by:
Dorlin Group
Pleasanton, CA

Numbered tree locations are approximate.
Fruit and nut trees are not included in this assessment.



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