

From:
To:
Cc:
Subject:
Date:

Subject: Re: Jefferson Street Redwood Tree Concerns

Dear John,

Thank you for the copy of the Arborist's report and upcoming Council Agenda. Unfortunately, I have meetings at work all afternoon on Tuesday March 5th. I've added on two of my neighbors that share concerns about the tree.

I did stop by Town Hall this afternoon, hoping to catch you or Brad, but missed you. It was suggested to write and email.

I hope that my lack of appearing on Tuesday does not imply my concerns are lessened with the report.

I really appreciate the Strategic Goal and Objective with Quality of Life and our Urban Forest.

My personal contribution towards this effort was removing 2 approximately 90 year old doug fir trees in the Jefferson Street frontage of my property that had become a safety concern as well as in severe decline. I replaced those two old trees with two 120 year old Spanish olive trees. My aim was to keep as much urban forest as possible and have a finished project that looks like it has been in place for 100 years.

Also, most importantly, remove the safety concern of these two massive trees coming down on our house, our neighbor's house to the south of us, or anyone or anything else.

This was done at a great expense, but was done not just for our appreciation, but that of the historical district.

These large conifer type trees belong in groves and not in our neighborhoods - at least not when presenting this risk in my opinion.

The location of the Redwood tree is indeed, very unfortunate. Our house was built about 120 years ago. I'm confident the Redwood tree was there but probably not Jefferson or Adams street as they exist now, nor many of the houses.

As prominent and obvious as this Redwood tree is - being right in the public right of way and all- makes me wonder how such a large beautiful specimen was not previously listed on the Heritage tree list. Was it possibly some concern back in that time. That seems quite an oversight.

I agree even though the tree appeared healthy to the arborist, the fate of such a poorly placed tree is another matter.

For me when taking down the two doug fir trees planted by my Grandmother, my concern was how I could deal with mentally having them come down and injure or cause significant property damage. How could I look at my neighbor and not feel horrible. That outweighed any emotional attachment or sentimental feelings about those trees.

We live in a small town. We know each other. We've all walked by the same neighbors' home. How could any of us - and you the Council reviewing this matter - go on should a catastrophic event occur and not take the risk adverse path. It's not an easy decision. You have a tough job and choice. Personally, I never want to be in a situation years down the road to say you were told by the residents.

The Arborist's report is lacking in a couple areas in my opinion.

Firstly, years ago the top of the tree broke off. What grew back is not a top but a growth. I would suggest a drone inspection of that top area - a high lift may not be needed. I could be wrong, but that sticks in my mind and the top section seems deformed.

Secondly, if I am reading the report correctly, in the area of risk and impacts.

Two separate large branches with diameters of 3" or more broke off in the recent storm. One to the east and one more or less northwest.

One of those landed in front of my neighbor's house to the east, nearly hitting their parked car.

It also landed a few feet from me as I was standing outside talking with the neighbor. I never heard it coming. It appeared on the ground without a sound.

The Town Manager was driving by in the electric car and I spoke with him about what had just happened and pointed to the branch.

Before the Town Staff could pick it up, my neighbor had cut the branch up and removed it from the street.

The other large branch landed in my yard. It also was over 3" in diameter. The Town Staff happened to be driving by and my wife flagged them down and they helped us remove the branch from the cables.

While the second branch didn't hit anyone, it did pull the communication wire from the utility pole and also my house, causing damage to the house where the mounting anchor was ripped off taking a piece of siding with it.

So I disagree with an event of branches of 3" breaking off and causing damage to property, cars or people are low, unlikely, or any of that. It just happened will happen again.

The tree is a landmark. It's beautiful. It's now a Heritage tree. I very well could have looked at that tree for more years than most of you. I appreciate the beauty. It has also become dangerous and a risk. None of us should want to accept that risk and just let insurance companies figure out the mess after a disaster.

Respectfully,
Bryan

Bryan P. Lilienthal, CPSM, CPSD


On Fri, Mar 1, 2024 at 10:08 AM John Ferons <jferons@yville.com> wrote:

Dear Bryan,

The Town Arborist has completed the inspection of the Redwood Tree on Jefferson Street. That report will be presented to Town Council at their regular meeting Tuesday March 5th starting at 3:00 pm. Please find attached an advanced copy of the Town Council Staff Report with the Arborist Report included. Also attached is the Agenda for the meeting, the Arborist Report is item 12 (a).

Please let me know if you have questions or would like more information.

Best Regards,

John F

Town of Yountville

Public Works Director

From: John Ferons
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 4:29 PM
To: 'Bryan Lilienthal' [REDACTED]
Cc: Brad Raulston <braulston@yville.com>; Hilary Gaede
<hgaede@yville.com>
Subject: Jefferson Street Redwood Tree Concerns

Dear Bryan,

Thank you for your letter to the Town Manager about the redwood tree at 6750 Jefferson Street and providing background on the redwood tree. After the recent storms the Town Arborist is currently evaluating Town trees in Yountville, including the one in question. Additionally, the Town Land Surveyor is collecting current data on the stature of the tree. An arborist's report and survey data are forthcoming regarding its condition and any necessary actions. The Town appreciates your concern for safety will share any information as it becomes available.

Please let me know if you have questions or would like to discuss further.

Best Regards,

John Ferons

Town of Yountville

Public Works Director

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