



Staff Report

Agenda Item #: {{section.number}}C

Yountville Town Council Staff Report

DATE: March 21, 2023

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Diane Levine, Assistant Planner

PREPARED BY: Diane Levine, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT:

Adopt Resolution Number 23-4193 Approving the Tree Removal Permit Application for the Yountville Community Church (6621 Yount Street; APN 036-053-002) to permit the removal of the approximately 33.5" DBH Valley Oak tree located on the north end of the property.

DISCUSSION/BACKGROUND

On March 7th, 2023, the Town Council held a regularly scheduled meeting where they received a Staff Report and presentation from Staff. As the decision-making authority, the Town Council was asked to make a determination on whether the Tree Removal permit application for the removal of one protected/heritage tree located on the north end of the lot at 6621 Yount Street, more commonly known as the Yountville Community Church, be approved or if another course of action was better suited to remediate the situation.

One member of the public and two members affiliated with the applicant participated in public comment, followed by the Town Council's deliberation. The Town Council directed Staff to return with a resolution approving the Subject Tree's removal subject to several conditions, pursuant to the Yountville Municipal Code (YMC) 17.128.060 (C), to ensure compliance with the purpose and intent of the YMC chapter that regulates tree preservation and management.

The Town Council recommended the following conditions of approval prior to removal of the Subject Tree and at the cost of the applicant a second arborist report, approved by the Planning Officer to inspect the health of both the Subject Tree and the second Valley Oak tree on the south side of the property to analyze whether and to what extent removal of the Subject Tree will impact the second Valley Oak tree. The arborist report shall include but is not limited to providing the following information:

1. A review of and response to the determination of the arborist report prepared by Bill Pramuk in September 2022;
2. Mitigation measures that may help to save other protected trees on the property.
3. A recommendation on the largest Native Oak or similar replacement tree that can be planted on-site while maintaining a high likelihood of success;
4. A recommendation on replacement tree(s) well-suited for the location of the Subject Tree to be removed; and
5. An evaluation of the health of the second Valley Oak, including whether and to what extent its health will be affected by the removal of the Subject Tree, and recommended care instructions to improve the health of the second Valley Oak over the course of the next five years.

The Town Council recommended as a condition of approval that the applicant shall acquire, at their own cost, a certified arborist to conduct the tree care recommendations made in the required arborist report pertaining to the Native Oak tree that is to remain. The applicant shall follow the care instructions, reporting on an annual basis to the Town of Yountville with proof of tree care performance and monitoring. The Planning & Building Department was directed to monitor the tree care performance throughout the five-year timeframe.

Additionally, the Town Council conditioned that any and all foreign items (e.g., lights, nails, wires, etc.) be removed from any protected tree as defined in YMC 17.128.040 to enable completion of the required conditioned arborist report.

All other typical conditions of approval for tree removals shall also be applicable.

As a result of the deliberations, the Town Council recommended that the responsible reviewing authority may approve the application and authorize the Tree Removal Permit application based on the following finding [YMC 17.128.060 (B)(3)]:

Alternative mitigation measures that reduce a structural defect but do not result in removal of the tree(s) are either impracticable or would not benefit the longevity of the subject tree(s).

Although the arborist report did not include possible mitigation measures, the arborist report does state the subject tree shows very poor to no potential for recovery. Because it is understood that mitigation measures would likely not revive the health of the tree based on its current condition, and not allowing the tree's removal now would only lead to its needed approval in the future, the Town Council finds that the approval is warranted under this finding. However, the Town Council as the decision-making authority, under YMC 17.128.060 (C), chose to attach reasonable conditions to ensure compliance with the purpose and intent of Chapter 17.128.

As directed by the Town Council, Staff has drafted a Resolution to reflect the recommendations of the Town Council for their consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Categorically Exempt per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guideline; Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

Is it Currently Budgeted? No

Where is it Budgeted? N/A

Is it Mandatory or Discretionary? Discretionary

Is there a Staff Resource Impact? Nominal

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

Is item Identified in Strategic Plan? Yes

If yes, Identify Strategic Goal and Objective. **Premier Destination:** The Town values its residents, rich history, natural environment, culinary excellence, arts, and distinguished businesses that make our home a place people love.

Briefly Explain Relationship to Strategic Plan Goal and Objective. Oak trees are valued within the Town of Yountville's natural environment from both an ecological and aesthetic standpoint.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution Number 23-4193 Approving the Tree Removal Permit Application for the Yountville Community Church (6621 Yount Street; APN 036-053-002) to permit the removal of the approximately 33.5" DBH Valley Oak tree located on the north end of the property.