

**ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT
& NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION**



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Kim Chymer Kelley- Commissioner
Marguerite Shuster- Commissioner*

TO: ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

FROM: JAMES CARLSON, MANAGEMENT ANALYST

DATE: July 15, 2015

SUBJECT: STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS - PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Tree Reviews and Actions since last update

Per the Commission's request, staff will provide a summary of the requests, reviews, and actions that take place between meetings. This summary covers the requests that the Public Works Department has received and actions taken since the last Commission update in June as well as a few items that may be reviewed in the days before the Commission meeting. Any new information is highlighted.

280/286 W. Montecito Ave., Jacarandas and Camphors – Staff received a request from a resident to check the health and condition the Jacaranda and Camphor trees along the parkway in front of large condominium complex. Staff has visited a few specific trees from time to time, but we will check them all with the arborist. There are concerns about appearance and structure of some of the trees. Staff and the arborist visited reviewed all 9 trees that are in the parkway in front of this large multi-complex property. Trees are numbered east-to-west. #1 (Camphor) – tree has been overtrimmed, and not by staff, WCA, or Edison. It also has a bad connection at the crotch, signs of borers (not PSHB), and removal is recommended. #2 (Jacaranda) – Tree is in fair condition. It is in decline and should be removed soon, although it is not an immediate hazard. #3 (Camphor) – Again, tree has been overtrimmed by unknown person. It is in fair condition, but removal should be considered soon. It is not an immediate hazard. #4 (Jacaranda) – Tree is in poor condition, has rot and mites. It should be removed now. #5 (Camphor) – Tree is in good shape. #6 (Jacaranda) – Tree has a few pieces of dead wood, but is in good shape. #7 (Camphor) – Tree is in good condition. #8 (Jacaranda) – Tree has crossing branches and a sharp lean into the street. It is unbalanced and in fair condition. Should be removed soon, but not an immediate hazard. #9 (Jacaranda) – Tree is in fair condition, has some rot and signs of mites. Should be removed soon, not an immediate hazard.

430 Auburn Ave., Side #1 Jacaranda – Staff received a request from the owner of the property to check the health and condition of this tree. It was described as looking as if it was struggling to survive. Staff went by and believes that the tree is most likely dead or at its last moments. Staff and the arborist reviewed this tree. It is in fair condition

and is showing some new growth. It has been topped by SCE and should be watched. It is not an immediate hazard.

124 E. Alegria Ave., Jacaranda. - Staff noticed this tree and believe it has died. Staff missed this tree during the reviews and it will be looked at during next tour.

500 Ramona Ave., Coast Live Oak. – Staff noticed that this tree, planted with during the County planting grant, has now died. Previously, staff had spoken with the owner on a number of occasions regarding watering it correctly. However, the owner moved and staff believes that the house remained empty for a while. **Tree is dead and should be removed.**

555 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Southern Magnolia – The owner of the apartment complex has asked that the city/arborist view a parkway Southern Magnolia with considerations for root pruning in order to install a retaining wall. The property recently removed grass and did xeriscape landscaping. The new retaining wall would assist to keep the new dirt from the sidewalk. There is one major root that is buckling the sidewalk and could be troublesome for the new wall. **Staff and the arborist reviewed the trees, focusing on the one tree with the major root. The care-taker of the property accompanied the review and was pleased to hear that all trees should be able to withstand the root pruning needed for both the retaining wall and sidewalk repair. It is advised, however, to look at the one major root when concrete is removed again, and also to watch this particular tree after work is done.**

161, 171 E. Grand View Ave., Liquidambar – A resident asked that the arborist check the health and condition, and consider trimming the Liquidambar in the parkway in front of these two addresses. There was a large limb failure on June 6th that raised concerns about the tree and trees in the area. **Staff and the arborist reviewed the trees. Both are in good shape, but both should be trimmed for balance and thinning.**

367 N. Lima St., Italian Cypress – A resident is requesting the removal of an Italian Cypress in his parkway. The resident made a similar request to the Commission approximately two and a half years ago, and was told that he would have to pay for the removal. He is asking again due to the lean and potential hazard of the tree. **Staff and the arborist reviewed this tree. There are a few dead branches that should be trimmed. It also appears that some recent driveway apron work has occurred very close to both sides of the trunk. The tree does not appear to be an immediate hazard, but with the lean, it should be watched.**

155 E. Montecito Ave., Italian Cypress – A resident reported the sidewalk in front of his address is badly buckled. He requests that the city consider removing the tree and making a durable repair to prevent the hazardous situation. **Staff and the arborist reviewed this tree. The tree is in very good shape, however it has severely overgrown its small space. If durable repairs to the hardscape are undertaken, the tree should be removed.**

Santa Anita Ave. Medians, Canary Island Pines. – A resident contacted staff and expressed her concerns health and condition of the Canary Island Pines in the medians. She is concerned that the lack of watering the medians is causing the Pines to struggle. Staff and the arborist reviewed all of the trees in the medians. They do appear to be struggling. Some a little more than others. Their condition is what would be expected during the drought situation and lack of water. None of the trees are immediate hazards, but supplemental watering is encouraged and they should be watched.

39 W. Orange Grove Ave., Coast Live Oak. – A neighboring resident contacted staff with concerns that there was grading occurring under the Oak at the entrance of the property. Upon inspection, it was discovered that the workers had dug out a very large and deep hole starting approximately six feet south of the trunk, in violation of their approved Arborist Report. Work was stopped and a new Arborist is being required that will assess the damage and provide recommendations to save the tree and additional requirements for protecting the trees on the property. As of 6/11/2015, staff received a new Arborist Report but has returned it with comments. Staff is pleased to report that the owner/contractor complied with staff's requirements to treat the affected tree per an arborist's recommendations, and produce a new arborist report that addresses the situation and complies with all protection measures. Staff regularly checks for continued compliance.

662 Fairview Ave., Magnolia. – A resident informed staff that a parkway Magnolia had been removed during a landscaping project in her neighborhood. Staff investigated and found that the tree was removed without permission and in conflict with the Tree Preservation Ordinance. Staff is working with Code Enforcement to enforce the mitigation requirement. This is still being addressed through Code Enforcement. The City's Code Enforcement officer took new employment elsewhere, and staff is working to cover these tasks until a new employee is attained.

110 W. Sierra Madre Blvd, Magnolia and Coast Live Oak – The owner of Sierra Briganti asked staff to check the health & condition of the two trees in front of his business. The Oak is actually in a bow-out. He would also like to have them trimmed. Staff and the arborist reviewed the trees and both are in very good shape. The Oak in the bow-out has one crossing branch that should be removed to promote the future health of a very nice young specimen.

188/190 Santa Anita Court – Red Flowering Gum – Staff noticed this tree during the course of work and indicated that it appeared to be dead. Staff and the arborist reviewed the tree and it is dead and should be removed.

Sycamore Place – Multiple – Commissioner Kelley reported at the June meeting that she had concerns about a Sycamore on the west side of the street near E. Grand View Ave. After staff determined the tree in question, staff noticed 4 Liquidambar that appeared to be dead at 337 Sycamore place. Staff and the arborist reviewed the locations

and determined that the Sycamore was in good shape (it had some discoloration around the base, but was normal), and the 4 Liquidambar up the street were, in fact, dead.

390 W. Sierra Madre Blvd – Tulip Tree – Staff noticed that this tree appeared to be dead and it was confirmed by the arborist visit.

398 W. Sierra Madre Blvd – Tulip Tree – Staff noticed that this tree appeared to be dead and it was confirmed by the arborist visit.

680-708 W. Sierra Madre Blvd – Tulip Tree – Staff noticed that two trees appeared to be dead and it was confirmed by the arborist visit.

38 E. Montecito Ave. – Cypress – Staff received a request to check the health & condition of the Cypress tree and have it trimmed. Staff will review at next arborist visit.

618 Auburn Ave. – Pine – Resident reported that this tree had rapidly declined and may now be dead. Staff has watched this tree for some time, and shared the resident's concern for its apparent rapid (and recent) decline. Staff will review at next arborist visit.

Memorial Park – Redwood near Weeping Wall – Staff has been watching this tree and Water crews have been supplementing its water with hydrant flushing water. It needs a new review and this will be done at the next arborist visit.

407-413 Mariposa Ave – Construction Stop Work Order – During the week of June 22nd, staff received numerous complaints from residents that the construction of new multi-housing complex was planting a huge amount of new trees towards the completion of the project. Staff reviewed the approved water-efficient landscaping plan and found the plants/trees that were onsite were very inconstant with the plan. Before the vast majority of the plants/trees were in the ground, staff stopped work. The Stop Work order has not been lifted as of writing of this report, and Director Inman may also have additional comments at the meeting regarding this situation.

Water Conservation

Director Inman will provide the latest updates to the City's Water Conservation efforts at the meeting.

EWMP

After 30 months of development, the Rio Hondo/San Gabriel River Water Quality Group's Enhanced Watershed Management Plan (EWMP) was submitted to the Regional Board on June 29th after receiving the authorization to submit at the June 26th City Council meeting. A total of 12 EWMPs were submitted by the various water quality groups. Also, the monitoring plan that was submitted a year ago was approved and work continues to go forward on monitoring per the plan's specifications.

Finally, on June 16th, the State Water Quality Control Board held its final hearing and adopted an amendment to the 2012 NPDES permit. While there were many details that were finally agreed upon, the main outcome of the State Board's decision was the confirmation of the WMP/EWMP programs. Staff will continue to update the Commission on the City's work locally and within the region to work towards water quality objectives.

New General Industrial Stormwater Permit

The State Water Quality Board has issued the new General Industrial Permit for California on July 1st. This affects various types of commercial and industrial companies and activities and requires new planning and structural BMPs to prevent water quality issues. The City is required to comply with this permit for its City Yards facility. Staff has been proactive in getting ready for the new requirements by installing filters at all of the surface drains in the City Yards facilities, and although not required, also installed filters in the surface drains behind the City Hall as well as Police/Fire facilities. Staff has met with 2 contractors to provide updated pollution prevention plans as well as training, and selection of the contractor is expected within the next week.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Water Working Group

Staff will continue to attend and contribute to this organization's efforts that focus on regional water conservation and stormwater issues. A proposal was approved at last month's meeting to retain a consultant to do stormwater compliance analysis and educational outreach to elected officials in the San Gabriel Valley.

Infrastructure Funding Fair

On July 8th, staff attended an Infrastructure Funding Fair hosted by LA County Public Works. It included presentations from the State Water Quality Control Board, Department of Water Resources, US Bureau of Reclamation, California Conservation Corp, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. The Funding Fair was a very broad description of grants and loans that can be used for infrastructure investments. Much of the talk centered about the anticipated guidelines that will be developed for the large Prop 1 program.

A notable point of interest were presentations from SCE and the Gas Company. Both agencies have funded efforts for locally produced energy. Unfortunately, SCE has expended all of its current funding, however the Gas Company may still be a resource to consider in regards to the waste-to-energy concept brought forth by Commissioner Kelley.

Rivers and Mountains Conservancy – Prop 1 Workshop

Staff will be attending the next workshop hosted by the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy focused on the anticipated funding that will be available from Prop 1. The workshop will be held on July 27th in West Covina. Staff has attended the recent workshops and new details on how the grant guidelines are shaping up are discussed at each of the valuable meetings.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Sierra Madre's annual HHW event will be held this year on Saturday, August 15th in the Mariposa Parking Lot. The event will be held from 9:00am to 3:00pm and has been a very popular services to our residents. Promotion of the event has begun with water bill inserts for the months of July and will continue for the other side of town in August.

PUBLIC NOTICE PROCESS

This item has been noticed through the regular agenda notification process. Copies of this report are available at the City Hall public counter.

COMMISSION ACTION NEEDED

Staff recommends that the Commission receive and file this informational report.

Submitted by:

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