



# City of Palo Alto City Manager's Report

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2000 CMR:384:00

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE DESIGNATION OF A SILVER MAPLE LOCATED AT 1872 EDGEWOOD DRIVE AS HERITAGE TREE NO. 5 AND AN AMERICAN ELM AT 4226 PONCE DRIVE AS HERITAGE TREE NO. 6.

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council approve the designation of two trees for heritage status: a Silver Maple located at 1872 Edgewood Drive as Heritage Tree No. 5 (see Attachment A); and an American Elm located in the center of the San Alma Homeowners Association housing complex, at 4226 Ponce Drive, as Heritage Tree No. 6 (see Attachment B).

## BACKGROUND

Chapter 8.10.090 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, entitled "Designation of Heritage Trees," provides for persons to nominate a tree on their property as a heritage tree. After City Council approval of such designation, the tree will be included in a listing maintained by the Planning and Community Environment Department. This listing includes information such as specific location, overall size and canopy spread. Once designated, a heritage tree will be subject to the provisions of the Tree Preservation and Management Regulations, unless removed from the list by subsequent action of the City Council. These regulations include guidelines and restrictions regarding pruning, removal and development that impact the tree.

## DISCUSSION

### Heritage Tree No. 5.

Mr. Donald Starner and Ms. Mary Starner, owners of the property at 1872 Edgewood Drive, filed an application for heritage tree status for the Silver Maple located in the back yard of their property. The tree is an outstanding example of its kind and perhaps the oldest and biggest Silver Maple in the City. It provides aesthetic quality and shade to the surrounding area.

The Silver Maple meets the standards for heritage tree designation set forth in Chapter 8.10.090 and the Heritage Tree Checklist, which was developed by staff (see Attachment C). Written request, consent and photographs have been received from the Starners. In addition, a written analysis of the tree's specific location, size, dimensions and qualities was conducted by arborist Kenneth D. Meyer, of Mayne Tree Expert Company, Inc. (The letter of request/consent and arborist report are included as Attachment A). According to the arborist report, the appraised valuation of the tree contributes \$16,900 to the value of this property.

Staff recommends that this tree be designated as Heritage Tree No. 5, based upon the finding that it is unique and of importance to the property owner and community because it meets criteria 1, 3 and 4 of the following criteria set forth in the Tree Preservation Ordinance:

- (1) It satisfies PAMC Section 8.10.090 requirements;
- (2) It is an outstanding specimen of a desirable species;
- (3) It is one of the largest and oldest trees in Palo Alto; and
- (4) It possesses distinctive form, size, age, location and/or historical significance.

#### Heritage Tree No. 6.

The San Alma Homeowners Association, owner of the complex of homes at 4226 Ponce Drive, filed an application for heritage tree status for the American Elm located at the center of this complex. The tree has historical significance in that it is a significant tree located on the site where Don Secundo Robles, once the owner of all of the land that is now Palo Alto, built his adobe home in 1840. The tree is an outstanding example of its kind. It is 60 feet tall and is a landmark for the housing complex and the surrounding community.

The American Elm meets the standards for heritage tree designation set forth in Chapter 8.10.090 and the Heritage Tree Checklist. Written request, consent and photographs have been received from the San Alma Homeowners Association, along with a written analysis of the tree's specific location, size, dimensions and qualities by arborist John H. McClenahan, of S. P. McClenahan Co., Inc. (The request/consent letter and arborist report are included as Attachment B). According to the arborist report, the appraised valuation of the tree contributes \$10,900 to the value of this property.

Staff recommends that this tree be designated as Heritage Tree No. 6, based upon the finding that it is unique and of importance to the property owner and community because it meets criteria 1, 3 and 4 set forth in the Tree Protection Ordinance:

- (1) It satisfies PAMC Section 8.10.090 requirements;
- (2) It is an outstanding specimen of a desirable species;

- (3) It is one of the largest or oldest trees in Palo Alto and;
- (4) It possesses distinctive form, size, age, location and/or historical significance

**RESOURCE IMPACT**

There is no resource impact expected as a result of these designations.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommended action would continue to promote the process of heritage tree designation and is consistent with existing City policies and urban forest goals and objectives.

**TIMELINE**

After designation as a heritage tree by Council, the heritage tree will be recognized as such immediately.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**


The designation of heritage trees is exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the designation will have a significant effect on the environment.

**ATTACHMENTS**


- Attachment A: Donald and Mary Starner's Request, Photographs, and Arborist Report
- Attachment B: The San Alma Homeowners Association's Request, Photographs, and Arborist Report
- Attachment C: Tree Preservation and Management Regulations, Ordinance #4568 and Heritage Tree Checklist

PREPARED BY: Dave Dockter, Managing Arborist, Planning Division

DEPARTMENT HEAD REVIEW:

  
G. EDWARD GAWF  
Director of Planning and Community Environment

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:

  
AUDREY SEYMOUR  
Assistant to the City Manager



## Mayne Tree Expert Company, Inc.

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STATE CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE NO. 276793

KENNETH D. MEYER  
PRESIDENT

April 26, 2000

535 BRAGATO ROAD, STE. A  
SAN CARLOS, CA 94070

RICHARD L. HUNTINGTON  
VICE PRESIDENT

TELEPHONE: (650) 593-4400

FAX: (650) 593-4443

E MAIL: [info@maynetree.com](mailto:info@maynetree.com)

Ms. Mary Starner  
1872 Edgewood Drive  
Palo Alto CA 94303

Re: Status of your Norway maple

Dear Ms. Starner,

On Wednesday, April 26, 2000, I inspected a large Norway maple (*Acer plantanoides*) located on your property four feet west of your house. The purpose of the inspection was to assess the size, condition and value of the tree in an effort to obtain Heritage Tree recognition by the City of Palo Alto.

The tree is 55.2 inches in diameter with a measured height (clinometer) of 72 feet. The foliar dripline extends out 45 feet in radius or 95 feet in diameter, including the trunk. The canopy overhangs your roof as well as the neighbor's garden to the west and a small portion of the neighbor's garden to the south. The age of the tree is estimated to be 55 years, or slightly more than half the estimated life span of 100 years.

Two large lower limbs of about 14 inches in diameter, one on the southwest side and the other on the northeast side, have been removed. This gives the four major upright limbs a more sweeping upward appearance. These four uprights come from a central crotch that shows no evidence of decay, but has been strengthened by the installation of cables further up the tree. The overall shape of the tree is good. The structural integrity appears to be good and the condition is excellent.

I appraised the value of the tree as \$30,400. This was done using the International Society of Arboriculture formula method as described in the "Guide for Plant Appraisal", 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1992. The guide takes into account the size (diameter at 4.5 feet = 55.2"), species (Norway maple = 30%), condition (90%) and location (80%) of the tree. The location is a composite of the site (100%), function (90%) and the placement (50%). The latter is low as the tree was planted approximately 6 feet from your home and has a potential to cause damage to your slab foundation. I understand you have not experienced any problems to date.

It is my opinion, after inspection you maple, that the tree should obtain Heritage Tree status based on the very large size, excellent condition and good form.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth D Meyer  
Certified Arborist

KDM:pap

**TRUNK FORMULA METHOD FORM FOR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, 1992**  
**Established by the International Society of Arboriculture, 1992**  
**Trees MORE Than 30" Diameter**

Appraised Value = Basic Value X Condition X Location

Basic Value = Replacement Cost + (Basic Price X [TA<sub>A</sub> - TA<sub>R</sub>] X Species)

SPECIES: ACER SACCHARINUM Silver maple TREE#: 1

1. Replacement Cost = \$1805

Cost of largest commonly available transplantable tree, as installed in an average location, (as established for Northern California, by the Western Chapter). If the appraised tree is in a location which will make installation of a replacement especially difficult or expensive, you should increase this line to account for costs above the average.

2. Replacement tree Basic (per square inch) Price Group # 1 \$ 91 per inch<sup>2</sup>  
 (from Table 11-1992)

3. Determine difference in trunk areas

If diameter = 30" or more, determine ATA<sub>A</sub> DBH 55.2  
 from Table 4-1, or 4-2 in "Guide"

A. ATA<sub>A</sub> = 2393.15 in<sup>2</sup>

B. Replacement tree TA<sub>R</sub> = 5.95 in<sup>2</sup>  
 (refer to table 11-1992)

C. Subtract TA<sub>R</sub> from TAA (3A-3B) = 2387.2 in<sup>2</sup>

4. Multiply Basic Price by area differences \$ 91.00 per in<sup>2</sup> X 2387.2 in<sup>2</sup> = \$ 217,235  
 (2) (3C)

5. Adjust step 4 by Species rating 10 % = \$ 21,724

6. Basic Value = \$1,805 + \$ 21,724 = \$ 23,529  
 (line 1) (line 5)

7. Adjust Line 6 by Condition 90 % = \$ 21,176

8. Adjust for Location:

Location = (Site + Contribution + Placement) + 3 =  
100 % + 90 % + 50 % = 240 % + 3 = 80 %

Adjust Line 7 by Location = \$ 16,940

9. Appraised Value (before damage, if applicable) = Round Line 8 to nearest \$100 = \$ 16,900

Appraised Value (after damage, if applicable) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

10. For Partial Loss: \_\_\_\_\_ % of loss X #9 = \$ value of loss = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

11. Removal/Reconstruction Cost, if appropriate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL = \$ 16,900

Prepared for: Mary Starner

Address: 1872 Edgewood Drive, Portola Valley

Date: 9/30/00 Job #: \_\_\_\_\_

Failure Date: \_\_\_\_\_