SAUSALITO TREES & VIEWS COMMITTEE
Thursday, December 6, 2012
Draft Summary Minutes

Call to Order
Chair Bickford called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 420 Litho Street, Sausalito.

Present: Chair Mary Lee Bickford, Committee Member Betsy Elliott, Committee Member Wingham Liddell
Absent: Vice-Chair Ronald Reich
Staff: Assistant Planner Alison Thornberry

Approval of Agenda

Committee Member Liddell moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a motion to approve the agenda. The motion passed 3-0.

Public Comments of Items Not on Agenda
None.

Approval of Minutes
October 4, 2012

Committee Member Liddell moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a motion to approve the summary minutes of October 4, 2012. The motion passed 3-0.

Public Hearings

1. **TRP 12-293, Tree Removal Permit, Rushford/Goff, 416/420 Napa Street.** Tree Removal Permit to allow the removal of one Plum tree located behind the residence of 420 Napa Street and one Douglas Fir tree along the property line between 416 and 420 Napa Street (APN 064-151-19 and 064-151-17).

The public hearing was opened.

Assistant Planner Thornberry-Assef presented the Staff Report.

Committee questions to staff:

- Regarding the Douglas Fir tree, is it split from the base or just from the very top? *Staff responded the arborist's report states it splits approximately 25 feet above ground.*
- Does the Plum tree provide privacy between the two houses, which are close together? *Staff responded the Trees & Views Committee should not concern themselves too much with privacy because the two property owners are*

ITEM NO. Min PAGE 1

applying for the removal of the tree and can deal with any privacy issues another way, such as hedges or a short fence.

The public testimony period was opened.

Chris Gibson, 418 Napa Street, indicated the following:

- Her home is located behind the house with the Douglas Fir.
- It was the choice of the homeowner to let the ivy strangle the Douglas Fir because it has scars on the base they wanted covered. In her opinion the tree was left to die.
- Two years ago a branch broke off the tree and hit their house.
- They loved the tree when it was alive because it provided privacy but it now appears to be dead and should be removed because it is a hazard.

Committee question to Ms. Gibson:

- How much privacy did the Douglas Fir provide to you? *Ms. Gibson responded it provided much more privacy when the branches were full and provides considerably less now. When the tree is removed the streetlight high on Napa Street will shine directly into their home. They would like to request the light be lowered.*

Don Russo, 114 Filbert Street, indicated the following:

- He concurs with the arborist and his neighbor that the Douglas Fir is not in good shape and needs attention.

The public testimony period was closed.

Committee comments:

- After viewing the site, the Plum tree is definitely cracking the walls, which is a hazard, as well as dropping fruit, and needs to be removed. The TVC agrees with staff's recommendation that the trunk be ground down to prevent sprouting, and also concurs that the Douglas Fir should be removed.
- The Douglas Fir should be replaced with a indigenous, comparable tree.

Committee Member Liddell moved and Committee Member Elliott seconded a motion to approve a Tree Removal Permit for 416/420 Napa Street. The motion passed 3-0.

The public hearing was closed.

Old Business

None.

New Business

2. City Council Appointment of Trees & Views Committee Members.

ITEM NO. Min PAGE 2

Staff comments:

- The City Council began closed session interviews for new Trees & Views Committee members in September or October 2012 and voted on November 27, 2012.
- The new members will be seated at the January 2013 Trees & Views Committee meeting.
- Vice-Chair Reich and Committee Member Liddell will leave the Trees & Views Committee after tonight's meeting.

Staff Communications

Department of Public Works Tree Maintenance Activities—November 2012:

Committee comments:

- It is hoped that someday the Department of Public Works will not be the sole governing authority on the removal of trees. The November 2012 Tree Maintenance Activities report shows three large trees removed because of the "threat" or "possibility" of a hazard.
- There are no checks and balances with this system. One person having the sole authority to make tree removal decisions and then implement those decisions is not the most efficient way of going about it.

Staff comment:

- The City's process for tree removal, either in the public right-of-way or on an emergency basis is if it is on an emergency basis and the tree is on private property, the applicant is required to submit the same information as is required to be heard by the Trees & Views Committee, their application, arborist's report, photographs, etc. If the arborist's report does not state there is an imminent hazard to life or property the Public Works Department will not look at it and it will be seen by the Trees & Views Committee. If it is an emergency however Public Works looks at the tree and then hires its own arborist to evaluate the tree. If the City's arborist returns with the same conclusion that the tree is a hazard, then the tree will be removed. While the director of Public Works makes the ultimate decision, he uses the expertise of the two arborists.

Future Agenda Items:

Committee comment:

- Each new Trees & Views Committee member should be given a contact number in the event they see a tree being cut down, as well as reading the agendas and actually visiting the trees.

Staff comment:

- There will be training for the new Trees & Views Committee members during the January 2013 TVC meeting where Staff will go over the process. This would be the time for current TVC members to add their comments.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Submitted by
Alison Thornberry-Assef
Assistant Planner

Approved by
Chair Mary Lee Bickford

ITEM NO. Min PAGE 4