

Sequoia sempervirens

OPPOSITION TREE REMOVAL PERMIT

A FORWARD

1959 Emerson Ave at Rinconada, corner lot permit for removal 24TRE00051
issued June 10, 2024; parcel 124-18-080

My opposition to the removal of this remarkable Coastal Redwood specimen is against all that needs to be done in the process to save our planet and the health of this community. I'm a California native and have lived in PA since 1971 and have watched the decline of our urban canopy and have heard less birds singing, less trees in our neighborhoods, higher temperatures and worries over our world's issues with climate change—every little bit makes a difference.

There is a need to do more; to stop the senselessness of removing healthy thriving trees that are just basically in our way. To think beyond, to set an example, to think about what's good for our communities, for climate change and not bow down to those who put pressure to boast and boost their financial values.

In protecting our trees, to stimulate architects and engineers to think in ways to co-exist with not just the Redwoods, but all the other existing mature trees that create value in our neighborhoods.

Palo Alto can be innovators in preserving what we have and can do to protect and contribute to our sustainability.

Palo Alto was the innovators in technology, let's not stop there. Think beyond and protect those wonderful trees that are still here and not extinct like the dinosaurs they lived alongside.

Think about doing the right thing and educate those that don't know about sustainability and ways to live together with what we are so fortunate to have in our communities. There are ways to coexist. People need to think of the good for all, not just the good for themselves. It can be done!

Thank you for your consideration for now and the future.

Mary Ann Young
Tennyson Avenue

The information regarding measurements *unknown* will be of value for
historical data regarding the past City's Canopy
"The Palo Alto City Trees"

The conversation is about trying to calculate the mass of the Redwood Hyperion tree which is the world's tallest Redwood tree. The conversation discusses using the density and volume of the tree to calculate its mass, but the density cannot be found. It is suggested to look up the density of a generic tree or search for the density of the specific tree, which is a Giant Redwood. It is also mentioned that Google can easily do the conversion for you. May 12, 2021 (9,10).

CALCULATIONS

Crown spread

<https://www.physicsforums.com/threads/how-do-i-calculate-density-given-height-and-volume.1003047/Tcrown>

(9)

Diameter= (Reticle scale) X (distance to target) ÷ (optical factor)

Volume and canopy mapping

Volume= $h(\pi/3)(r_1^2 + r_2^2 + r_1r_2)$

KNOWN measurements

Multi trunk Coast Redwood on this lot, Girth DBH 96 in. (8 ft)

UNKNOWN measurements

- approximate age
- height
- Volume
- canopy mapping
- Crown spread
- Density

Permission granted for NextDoor comments (total 74 comments, 99% agreement)

Comments quoted from my ND post.

C M M dated Aug. 8th, 2024 •Leland Manor

“These trees, all of them creating a collective treescape, are our local cultural heritage. They are a part of our community and have deep value beyond their significant monetary neighborhood value. I’m advocating that we honor what we’ve created and preserve and enhance our suburban canopy as best we can, to give future generations the value we now receive from it. As best we can.”

“I’m advocating that we honor what we’ve created and preserve and enhance our suburban canopy as best we can, to give future generations the value we now receive from it. As best we can.” (cmm)

Conversation relating to ways to save our trees, and the idea of living in harmony with nature. All of which should be considered for our community when making decisions about Sustainability and Climate Action Plans

Most homes in our neighborhoods are creating large amounts of grey water that currently goes into our sewers that, properly routed, can easily be used in our gardens to maintain these trees in relative perpetuity. Rainwater that comes off our roofs and into the storm drains can also be routed relatively easily into our gardens instead, using landscaping techniques that allow water to spread out into the soil that we have built up over many decades in our suburban Neighborhoods.

Redwoods have the right rooting structure for our soil that has a layer of clays not very deep below our current level of soil, because it’s in their nature to spread roots out, not down. Yes, this does create situations where the roots can impact existing foundations, but the cost of removing a tree as massive as some of these relatively young redwoods could easily be transferred instead into one of the many creative ways that building engineers have come up with co-existing with redwoods, that alters the foundation in a way that accommodates the roots and protects the house.

In other words, we can readily come up with ways to co-exist with not just the redwoods, but all the other existing mature trees that create value in our neighborhoods, regardless of their native habitat, because we’ve already altered that habitat by bringing massive amounts of water all the way from California’s Sierra Nevada on the east side of California.

These trees, all of them creating a collective treescape, are our local cultural heritage. They are a part of our community and have deep value beyond their significant monetary neighborhood value. I’m advocating that we honor what we’ve created and preserve and enhance our suburban canopy as best we can, to give future generations the value we now receive from it. As best we can

R.E dated Aug. 8th, 2024 Old Palo Alto

Thank you for this information! Thank you also for the helpful workarounds and reference to our cultural heritage.

For all -- there recently were a spate of articles in Science (IIRC) and other respected publications concluding that we could stem climate change by doing ONE thing and that one thing alone: NOT cutting down any existing trees! That alone could make huge headway into saving our planet. Unfortunately, people far too often (as in this thread) label nature as the problem, when nature is the solution! The problem is human activity that harms nature. We are literally undergoing a climate emergency that will continue to get worse at accelerating speeds, as harms trigger even worse harms (e.g. the melting of ice caps releases countless tons of greenhouse gasses, which accelerate further melting of ice caps). Every tree is important. (edited)

•[Allied Arts](#)•2d

What a beautiful tree! Trees like this is what makes our neighborhood so spectacular. It would be a complete unnecessary shame to cut it down. I wish I could come to the meeting.

•[Portola-Dixon-VanBuren-Laverne](#)•2d

I grew up nearby. It's been huge for +40 years. It is gorgeous.

•[MV - Rengstorff Ave](#)•1d

Nature's beauty.....should find a solution around the underlining issues....where there is a will....there is a way!

•[MV - Rengstorff Ave](#)•1d

Nature's beauty.....should find a solution around the underlining issues.... where there is a will.... there is a way!

•[Leland Manor](#)•22h

Many residents have had experiences in their neighborhood of Oaks and Redwoods that were mature and magnificent and in perfect health and the sadness of losing so many wonderful trees. My gardener said Palo Alto is noted for its canopy and he found it hard to believe we have ignored our sustainability.

As I read the Climate Action Plan, the priorities caught me by surprise. I feel these plans contradict what the Permits allow. It's extremely evident that 98% of buyers either leave the property vacant, rather remodeled or not, alluding the City into thinking they will be living in the home. Ninety percent of the time the buyer plans to tear down and rebuild. In this way the City is going against their Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. City Arborist assured me a tree is required to replace (not in size) the tree that was removed. Also, plans cannot be submitted during these three years.

•[Rengstorff Park](#)•34w

Agree that it is sad to lose the "great" trees. There are supposed to be laws to protect them, but such laws were put in place 30 to 50 years ago. As you implied, developers have developed the methods to get around them. Keep in mind that such laws may also be considered a hindrance by the city (loss of developer fees if they don't facilitate, plus trees don't vote), which might explain why they can't manage to tell the developers where not to dig, and let the developers off with minor penalties (cost of doing business) if any.

Old Mountain View. It's not just "developers have developed the methods to get around them." Here in MV, rules for many years have been quite different for residents vs. property developers. There *are* "laws to protect" trees, but those laws apply non-uniformly: If someone wants to remove a tree from their yard, old enough to qualify as "heritage" (18" average trunk diameter at a certain height, or *whatever*), there are serious obstacles; it's at the city's discretion, usually requiring a finding that the tree is diseased or risky, by a qualified arborist, whose analysis the resident pays for. OTOH, if a property developer, even on a single-family lot, proposes to remove a whole stand of large and healthy trees, the request gets completely different handling by the City -- different flow, different criteria -- and is often just OK'd as a detail among many in the permit process.

•[Leland Manor](#)•22h

Alternatively, perhaps the buyers could respect the tree's right to keep living, and not buy the house unless they're willing to accommodate it, as part of the cost of buying. There are plenty of homes available without redwoods or other magnificent trees to kill. After all, this city is named after a specific local, native redwood tree that figures greatly in our local history. A thousand-year-old coast redwood this community went to great lengths to save after it was nearly killed by steam-train pollution, many decades ago. A redwood tree figures prominently on our city's logo, our city's correspondence, our city's vehicles. Enough is enough; protect our local treescape, in all its mature variety.

GRY Old Palo Alto

Many residents have had experiences in their neighborhood of Oaks and Redwoods that were mature and magnificent and in perfect health and the sadness of losing so many wonderful trees. My gardener said, "Palo Alto is noted for its canopy, and he found it hard to believe we have ignored our sustainability".

California Coastal Redwood
Regarding TREE REMOVAL PERMIT

1959 Emerson Ave at Rinconada, corner lot permit for removal 24TRE-00051 issued June 10, 2024;
parcel 124-18-080

KNOWN measurements

Multi trunk Coast Redwood on this lot, Girth DBH 96 in. (8 ft)

UNKNOWN measurements

- approximate age
- height
- Crown spread
- Volume and canopy mapping
- Density

Coast Redwood is on the Red List of threatened
mature Species with the
International Union of Conservation of Nature
Sequoia Sempervirens - Coastal Redwoods are on the Red List of threatened
mature Species

These are facts noted

- Generations have lived to be **2,200 years** (2) reach 350 ft.
- Coastal Redwoods are the tallest trees in the WORLD (3)
- Coastal Redwoods are the Most Impressive Organisms on our Planet (2)
- Coastal Redwoods are the best trees in the WORLD at Storing CO2. (2,3)
- No other tree species can store more Carbon than a Coastal Redwood.

Population Severely Decreasing with Continuing Decline of Mature
threatened species (3)

- a. First cause of decline is logging in old growth forests
 1. Now being regulated
 - b. The Second decline in housing is Urbanization
 2. In urbanization, many mature, healthy, trees will decline rapidly in the next few decades (Noss 2000) as it has in the past 25 years (2)
1. Coast Redwoods contributes significantly to nutrient recycling, carbon dioxide absorption, and oxygen generation.
 2. Roots provide structural anchorage to keep trees from toppling over
 3. The ancient range of the genus Sempervirens (coastal redwoods) were from Europe through Asia, and considerable shifts in North America.
 4. Coastal redwoods lived alongside the now extinct Dinosaurs

The ancient range of the genus is considerably greater, with relatives of the coast redwood living in Europe and Asia prior to the Quaternary geologic period. In recent geologic time there have been considerable shifts in the Coast Redwood's range in North America. Coast redwood bark has been found in the La Brea Tar Pits, showing that 25,000–40,000 years before the present redwood trees grew as far south as the Los Angeles during the last ice age.[26][27] The authors of a 2022 paper suggest, "Were it not for the remarkable ability to sprout after fire, many southern forests may have lost their Sequoia component long ago." [28]

Sempervirens Fund.
Top 10 Facts That Make Redwood Trees Magnificent (3)

Redwood Story: CROWN Redwood Trees are the largest trees on earth reaching more than 350 feet high.

No other tree species can store more carbon than coastal redwoods

Endangered marbled murrelets lay their eggs on the upper branches of redwoods.

Redwood Story: CANOPY Studies so far conducted reveal a highly diverse and distinct fauna, such as the California ClouDED Salamanders live their entire life in a redwood canopy. They wander and nestle in mosses, lichens, ferns and bark. (5)

Redwoods can be so big and old that other trees and plants live on their branches and trunks.

Redwood Story: BRANCHES Redwood leaves can both “drink” from fog and help make it rain. Redwood leaves clean air by pulling in carbon and storing more of it than any other tree.

Redwood Story: TRUNK Redwoods are resistant to rot and fire so all but 5% of old growths were cut down for lumber. Fire can burn a cave-like hole in a living redwood where owls and bats like to live.

Redwood Story: BARK The bark can be up to a foot thick and full of tannins that protect it from bugs, rot, and fire so it can live for thousands of years.

Redwoods have survived for millions of years with some fossils dating back to the Jurassic age of dinosaurs.

Redwood Story: ROOTS Redwoods intertwine their roots with each other to stabilize one another and share nutrients. (3)

The City of Palo Alto’s, Sustainability and Climate Action Plan Implementation Work Plan (2023 through 2025)

Key Climate Action Plan

Appendix B: How Climate Action Priorities were Prioritized

- N1. Increase Palo Alto's Tree Canopy
- N2. Ensure No Net Tree Canopy Loss for all Projects
- N3. Reduce Pesticide Use in Parks and Open Space Preserves
- N4. Enhance Pollinator Habitat
- *N5. Establish a Carbon Storage of Tree Canopy Baseline and KPI
- N6. Maximize Biodiversity and Soil Health
- N7. Coordinate Implementation of City Natural Environment-Related Plans
- N8. Expand Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) Requirements (7)

Sustainability

Natural Environment Sustainability is not only about mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, but also regeneration – identifying opportunities for renewal, restoration, carbon sequestration, and growth of our natural environment.

Palo Alto will continue to build and restore the natural environment and its ecosystem services and supporting bio-capacity, including soils, tree canopy, biodiversity, and other components. To foster a robust urban ecosystem, Palo Alto seeks to expand, preserve, and maintain its urban forest, open space, and parks (6)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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<https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/34051/2841558#assessment-information>

2. Treehugger Sustainability for all

<https://www.treehugger.com/facts-about-coast-redwoods-worlds-tallest-trees-4858758>

3. Sempervirens Fund 10 Facts about Redwood Trees

<https://sempervirens.org/learn/redwood-facts/#fact-list>

4. Trees <https://sempervirens.org/learn/>

5. A Natural History of Conifers

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10. <https://www.britannica.com/plant/tree/Tree-structure-and-growth>

From: [Hernandez, Uriel](#)
To: [Clerk, City](#)
Subject: FW: 1959 Emerson
Date: Monday, August 12, 2024 8:43:49 AM

From: Mark Hlatky <hlatkymark@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 29, 2024 4:15 PM
To: Hernandez, Uriel <Uriel.Hernandez@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Cc: Mark Hlatky <mah@stanford.edu>
Subject: 1959 Emerson

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

My wife and I have lived for 34 years just down the block from the redwood tree at 1959 Emerson, and we were dismayed by the notice that this large, healthy tree might be cut down. It is a heritage tree, and has been growing there for a long time. It was there when the current owners bought their house, just a few months ago, and they should have been well aware of the tree and also of any problems with the foundation when deciding to buy this house.

Surely there is a way to preserve the tree while also protecting the house foundation. Cutting this tree down is just such a drastic solution to a situation that likely can be ameliorated in other ways, perhaps cutting the root that is impacting the foundation.

I'm sorry I can't attend this hearing (we will be traveling), but I did want to urge the city to look for alternative ways to address the problem without removing this magnificent tree.

Mark Hlatky
168 Rinconada Avenue

From: [Hernandez, Uriel](#)
To: [Clerk, City](#)
Subject: FW: Redwood Tree at 1959 Emerson Street
Date: Monday, August 12, 2024 8:42:57 AM

From: Barbara Millin <barbaramillin@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:53 PM
To: Hernandez, Uriel <Uriel.Hernandez@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: Redwood Tree at 1959 Emerson Street

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Uriel,

I am Barbara Millin. I have lived at 1944 Emerson St. since 1975. . I wish to concur with the sentiments of Adria and Carl Brown which give support to allowing the owners of 1959 to remove the redwood tree in their front yard.

My understanding as to why the tree has been dangerous is that it was "topped" long ago and has weak trunks up high which break off easily. History has proven that the owners' safety concerns about the tree are warranted.

The tree is beautiful and will be missed, but the safety and mental well being of our neighbors is important.

Regards
Barbara Millin

From: [Hernandez, Uriel](#)
To: [Clerk, City](#)
Subject: FW: Redwood at 1959 Emerson Street
Date: Monday, August 12, 2024 8:42:40 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Adria Brown <adriabrown@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 1:08 PM
To: Hernandez, Uriel <Uriel.Hernandez@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: Redwood at 1959 Emerson Street

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

To: Uriel Hernandez
Staff Arborist at the City of Palo Alto

Hi Uriel,

My husband, Carl, and I have lived at 187 Rinconada Avenue in Palo Alto since 1991. Our home sits directly across the street from 1959 Emerson Street. We are writing in support of the City of Palo Alto's decision to allow the removal of the coastal redwood tree by Ying Wei and Fuchun Peng (owners of 1959 Emerson).

We are concerned about safety issues related to the redwood tree at 1959 Emerson. Sometime in 1994 or 1995, a large branch from the top of this redwood broke off during a winter storm. Falling from the top of the tree, this branch crashed through the roof of neighboring 1947 Emerson and fell into the kitchen. It narrowly missed hitting the young child of Rod and Patrice Beckstrom who lived at 1947 Emerson at that time. I vividly remember this incident because my husband and I were starting a family of our own and I became concerned about the safety of our children and those of our neighbors.

Rod and Patrice Beckstrom moved shortly thereafter and Hillary and Tom Shroeder moved into 1947 Emerson. The Shroeders have also had to contend with falling branches.

Since that incident 30 years ago, I have worried about the safety of family and neighbors walking by the redwood at 1959 Emerson, especially as large branches continue to fall during strong winter storms. I have heard from an arborist that the tree appears to have been "topped" and the branches weakened at the top.

The safety of the residents at 1959 Emerson, 1947 Emerson and other neighboring properties must be the highest priority for the City of Palo Alto. We all love redwood trees, but not at the expense of the safety of residents of Palo Alto or the structural integrity of their homes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adria and Carl Brown
187 Rinconada Ave
Palo Alto, CA 94301