

Client: Steve Nielson

Arborist: Zach Vought

Project Address: 50 Ross Avenue, San Anselmo

Inspection Date: October 21, 2019



Assignment

Steve Nielson contacted Urban Forestry Associates to request an inspection of the coast redwood tree located in the backyard of his property at 50 Ross Avenue in San Anselmo. The inspection was prompted by Mr. Nielson's concerns related to the tree's proximity to structures on his property and the neighbor's property and the potential for tree related issues. This report is meant to satisfy the Town of San Anselmo's requirement for an arborist report to accompany heritage tree removal permit applications.

Observations

Tree 1

Species coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)

Size 23.1 Dbh¹

Location In the backyard growing directly against the common fence between 50 Ross Avenue and the west "wing" of 53 Woodland Avenue. The concrete walkway at 53 Woodland is buckled and the foundation for that structure stands approximately 6 feet from the trunk (See Figure 3). The Nielson guest house is only 6 feet from the tree's trunk (See Figure 2).

The canopy of the subject tree is encroaching on the roofs of both said properties (See Figure 4).

Condition The tree displays good health based on the relatively dense canopy and dark green foliage.

The structural condition of the tree is good- no apparent decay or defects in the trunk, canopy or roots were observed.

The tree's form is good- exhibiting typical conical form.



Figure 1. Subject tree as viewed from the Nielson backyard. Note the main trunk stands 6 feet from the foundation of the guest house (right).

¹ Dbh- tree diameter measured at 4.5 feet above grade with a Spencer loggers tape.

Discussion

At maturity coast redwood is one of the largest trees in the world. In Marin County the species regularly achieves heights over 100 feet and trunk girth of over 3 feet. When conditions are favorable the species can reach a trunk diameter of 3 feet in less than 50 years. The species is shallow rooted, especially on urban sites that have been subjected to soil compaction from development. Consequently, the species can quickly outgrow the available space when planted too close to infrastructure. For these reasons redwood is a poor species choice for compact residential lots.

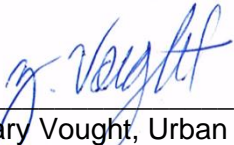
Unfortunately, the subject tree is located close to the Nielson guest house and 53 Woodland apartment complex, significantly elevating the likelihood of conflict with the trunk or roots as the tree continues to grow. While coast redwood is not particularly fire prone the lower branches proximity of both nearby structures is out of compliance with fire code and over half the canopy would have to be removed to achieve enough clearance.

Conclusion

The subject tree is very poorly placed and has outgrown the available space. The tree has not even come close to reaching its full grow potential so there is high risk of root or trunk related damaged if the tree is retained. In my professional opinion the only reasonable action to abate the risk is removal of the tree and stump.

Recommendation

Whole tree removal.



Zachary Vought, Urban Forester
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WE-9995A



Figure 2. Tree location map.



Figure 3. Buckled walkway at 53 Woodland. As viewed from the Nielson property over the fence.



Figure 4. Proximity of canopy to to Nielson guest house.

Glossary

Health – overall health or ability of the plant to deal with stress (vitality). Health assessment is based on the appearance of foliage, incremental growth, and the amount of living vascular tissue.

Form – The plant's overall appearance as it relates to its shape or silhouette. Can be negatively affected by crown asymmetries.

Structure – Overall stability of the tree or its branches. This can be negatively affected by things such as acute angle crotches, decay cavities, strong leans, stem girdling roots, ambrosia beetles, history of failures, etc.

SCOPE OF WORK AND LIMITATIONS

Urban Forestry Associates has no personal or monetary interest in the outcome of this investigation. All observations regarding trees in this report were made by UFA, independently, based on our education and experience. All determinations of health condition, structural condition, or hazard potential of a tree or trees at issue are based on our best professional judgment. The health and hazard assessments in this report are limited by the visual nature of the assessment. Defects may be obscured by soil, brush, vines, aerial foliage, branches, multiple trunks or other trees. Even structurally sound, healthy trees are wind thrown during severe storms or other weather events. Consequently, a conclusion that a tree does not require corrective surgery or removal is not a guarantee of no risk, hazard, or sound health.

Table 1. Tree Condition Ratings

Rating category	Condition components		
	Health	Structure	Form
Excellent	High vigor and nearly perfect health with little or no twig dieback, discoloration, or defoliation	Nearly ideal and free of defects.	Nearly ideal for the species. Generally symmetric. Consistent with the intended use.
Good	Vigor is normal for the species. No significant damage due to diseases or pests. Any twig dieback, defoliation, or discoloration is minor.	Well-developed structure. Defects are minor and can be corrected.	Minor asymmetries/deviations from species norm. Mostly consistent with the intended use. Function and aesthetics are not compromised.
Fair	Reduced vigor. Damage due to insects or diseases may be significant and associated with defoliation but is not likely to be fatal. Twig dieback, defoliation, discoloration, and/or dead branches may comprise up to 50% of the crown.	A single defect of a significant nature or multiple moderate defects. Defects are not practical to correct or would require multiple treatments over several years.	Major asymmetries/deviations from species norm and/or intended use. Function and/or aesthetics are compromised.
Poor	Unhealthy and declining in appearance. Poor vigor. Low foliage density and poor foliage color are present. Potentially fatal pest infestation. Extensive twig and/or branch dieback.	A single serious defect or multiple significant defects. Recent change in tree orientation. Observed structural problems cannot be corrected. Failure may occur at any time.	Largely asymmetric/abnormal. Detracts from intended use and/or aesthetics to a significant degree.
Very poor	Poor vigor. Appears to be dying and in the last stages of life. Little live foliage.	Single or multiple severe defects. Failure is probable or imminent.	Visually unappealing. Provides little or no function in the landscape.
Dead			