**Client**: Fosec Tree Service
**Project Location**: 15 Cottage Avenue, San Anselmo
**Inspection Date**: July 31, 2019
**Arborist:** Ben Anderson

URBAN FORESTRY ASSOCIATES, INC.

## Assignment

Erick Dominguez contacted Urban Forestry Associates on behalf of his clients to request an inspection and report on a mature Deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodora*). The report is to be used as part of an application for a Tree Removal Permit from the Town of San Anselmo. The tree owner is reportedly concerned about fire danger after a visit from a representative of the Fire Department.

## Observations

| | |
|---|---|
| Species | Deodar cedar |
| Diameter | 23.6 inches |
| Location | See map in Figure 1 and photo in Figure 2. The tree is located on the apparent property line between 15 and 19 Cottage Avenue. There is a short retaining wall adjacent to the base of the tree that raises grade on the 19 side of the fence (Figure 4). There is another short retaining wall adjacent to the base of the tree that lowers grade on the 15 side of the fence. The base of the tree is approximately six feet from the auxiliary dwelling unit at 15 Cottage. |
| Health | Good. See explanation of condition ratings in Table 1. |
| Structure[1] | Fair. The tree has many codomiant stems[2] (Figure 3), which is common for the species. |
| Form[3] | Good. |
| Fire | Both properties are in the Wildland Urban Interface (marinmap.org). Shed needles were accumulated all around the property (Figure 5), despite a reported active campaign to keep the property clean. Branches from the subject tree extend over the roof of the ADU. |

## Discussion

FIRESafe Marin recommends removing all pines in the defensible space zone of a structure. Deodar cedar is not a pine, but it related and shares many of the characteristics that make pines considered fire prone (high surface to volume ratio in the foliage and large canopies producing prolific needle droppings). Deodar cedar is a very large species and this tree is growing in a narrow strip between two retaining walls. The trunk will soon be in contact with the upper wall unless it is modified in the near future.

## Conclusions

It is a reasonable management option to remove this tree due to the fire risk posed by the accumulated needle debris as well as the structural defects in the canopy that are beyond the point of an easy correction through pruning and will pose an increasing risk of failure.

[1] **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.
[2] **Codominant stem** - forked branches nearly the same size in diameter, arising from a common junction and lacking a normal branch union (ISA Dictionary Online).
[3] **Form** – The plant's overall appearance as it relates to its shape or silhouette. Can be negatively affected by crown asymmetries.

## 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, other trees, etc. Even structurally sound, healthy trees can fail during severe storms. Consequently, even a low risk rating is not a guarantee of no risk, hazard, or sound health.

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**Table 1. Condition ratings table. Taken from *Guide for Plant Appraisal, 10th edition***

| 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 | | | |

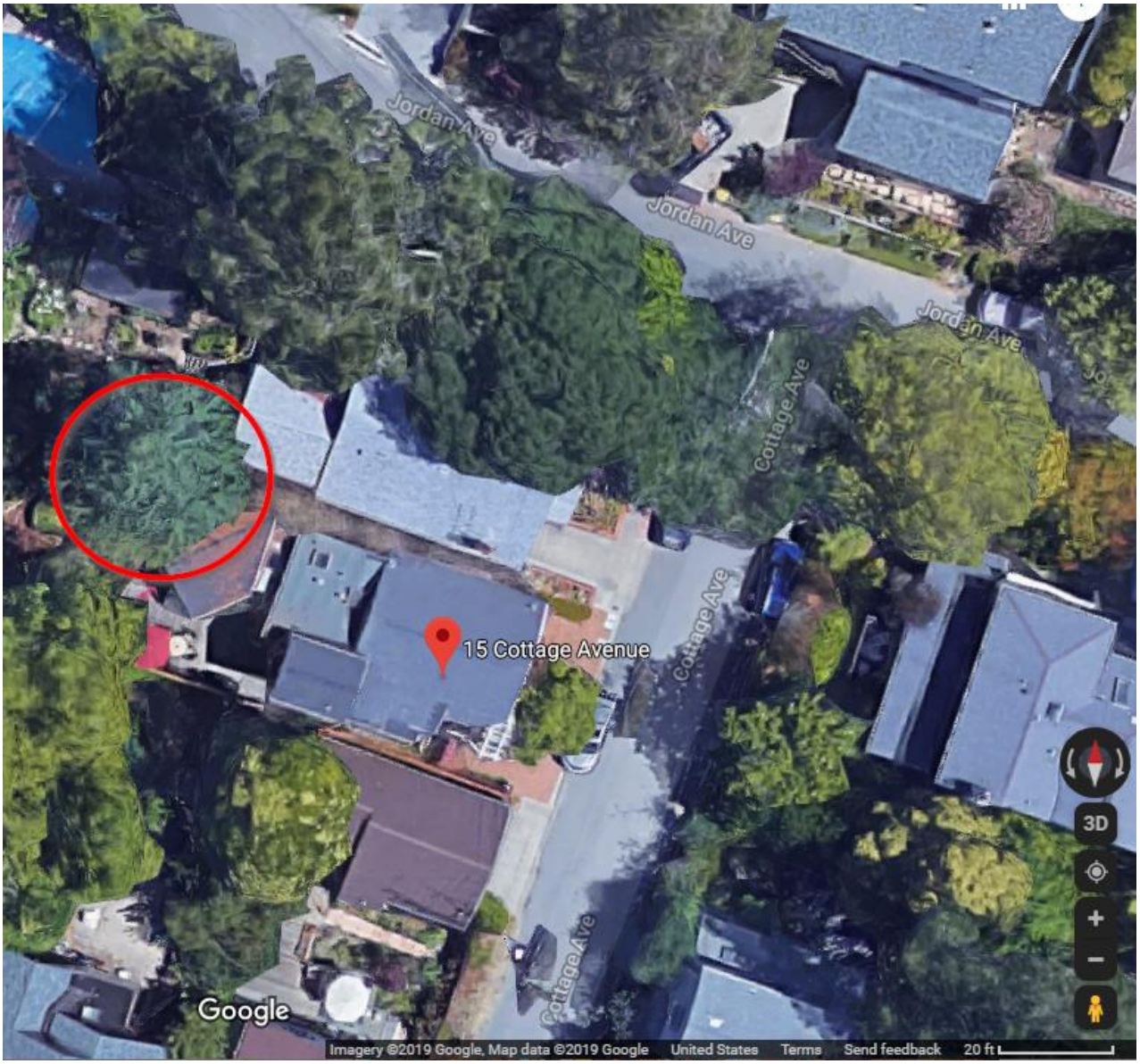


**Figure 1. Map showing location of subject tree, indicated in red.**

**Figure 2. Subject tree as viewed from the southwest. ADU at 15 Cottage visible in foreground.**

**Figure 3. Photo showing codominant stems in the canopy.**

**Figure 4. Base of subject tree as viewed from the east-southeast. Top of retaining wall on 19 Cottage indicated with green arrows.**

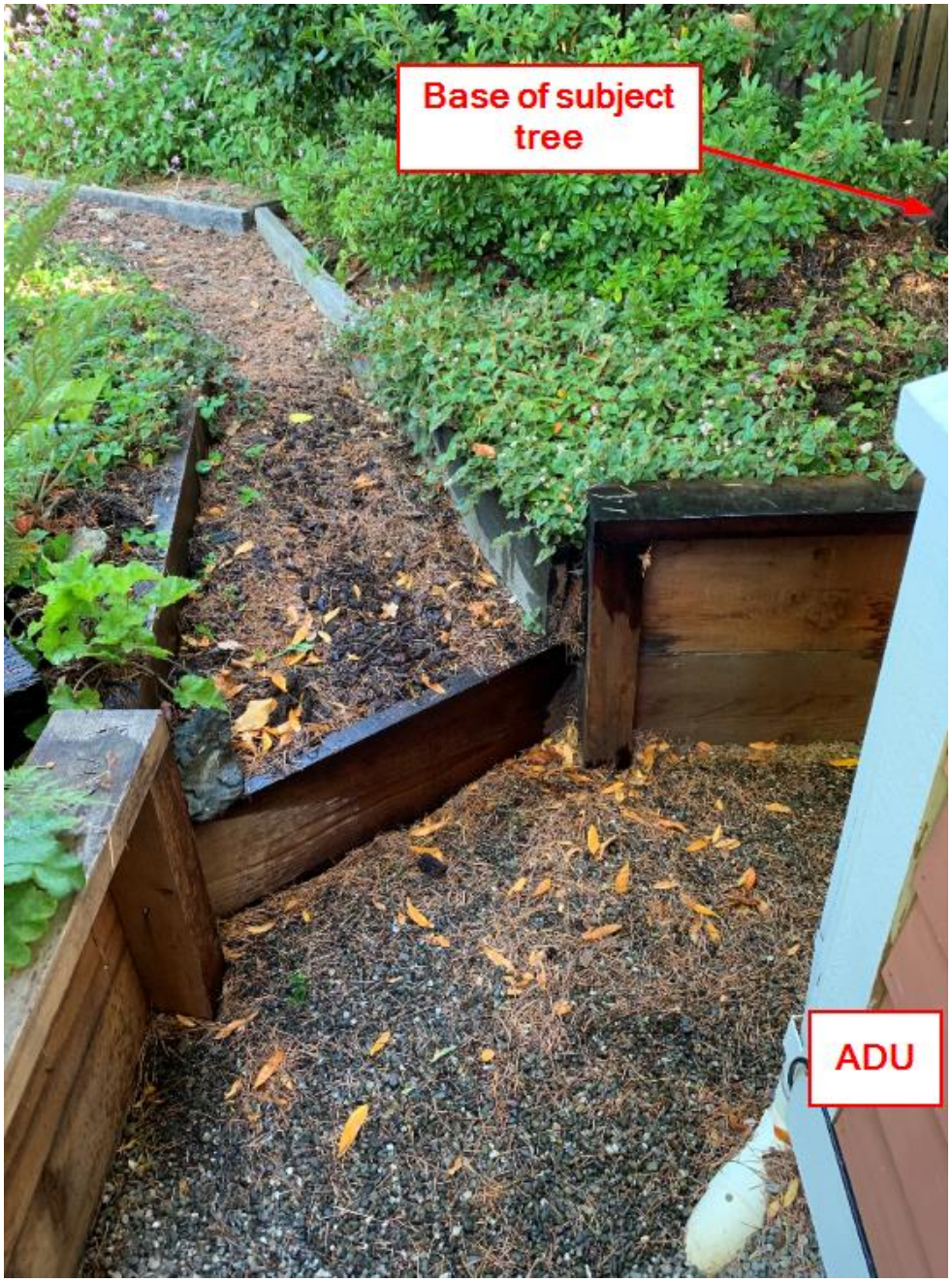


**Figure 5. Photo showing needle debris. ADU visible in lower right. Base of tree indicated with red arrow. Lower retaining wall also visible.**