

PARKS, RECREATION, AND GOLF COMMISSION

**CIVIC CENTER CONFERENCE ROOM #5
411 WEST CLAY STREET, UKIAH, CA 95482**

REGULAR MEETING

**TUESDAY February 19, 2013
5:30 P.M.**

A G E N D A

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**
- II. **APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**
Minutes of January 15, 2013
- III. **AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**
The Parks, Recreation and Golf Commission welcomes input from the audience. If there is a matter of business on the agenda that you are interested in, you may address the Commission when this matter is considered. If you wish to speak on a matter that is not on this agenda, you may do so at this time. In order for everyone to be heard, please limit your comments to three (3) minutes per person and not more than ten (10) minutes per subject. The Brown Act regulations do not allow action to be taken on audience comments in which the subject is not listed on the agenda.
- IV. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Update on Tree at Carpenter-Hudson Park (Report Attached)
- V. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Continue Discussion on Tennis Courts (Verbal Report)
 - B. Meeting Locations for 2013 (Verbal Report)
 - C. Update on Parks and Playground Topics (Verbal Report)
 - D. Update on Recreation Programs and Events (Verbal Report)

Please be advised that the City needs to be notified 72 hours in advance of a meeting if any specific accommodations or interpreter services are needed in order for you to attend. The City complies with ADA requirements and will attempt to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities upon request.

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing agenda was posted on the bulletin board at the main entrance of the City of Ukiah City Hall, located at 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, California, not less than 72 hours prior to the meeting set forth on this agenda.

Dated this 15th day of February, 2013
Jarod Thiele, Recording Secretary

VI. **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

A. Topics for Future Discussion

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

The next regular meeting will be held March 19, 2013

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Dated this 15th day of February, 2013
Jarod Thiele, Recording Secretary

PARKS, RECREATION, AND GOLF COMMISSION

Civic Center Conference Room #5
411 West Clay Street, Ukiah, CA 95482

REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2012
5:30 P.M.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: 5:34pm

Called to order by Chair Antle at 5:34pm

Commissioners Present

Darcie Antle-Chair
Fay Hefte- Vice Chair
Don Rones
Susan Knopf
Henry Sadowski
Katy Selzer

Staff Present

Jarod Thiele, Recording Staff Person
Katie Marsolan, Community Services Administrator

Commissioners Absent

Eric Barkhurst- Reported

II. APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES: 5:35pm

M/S: Sadowski/Knopf to approve minutes of December 11, 2012 as presented. Motion carried by an all AYE voice vote from all Commissioners

III. AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: 5:35pm

The Parks, Recreation and Golf Commission welcomes input from the audience. If there is a matter of business on the agenda that you are interested in, you may address the Commission when this matter is considered. If you wish to speak on a matter that is not on this agenda, you may do so at this time. In order for everyone to be heard, please limit your comments to three (3) minutes per person and not more than ten (10) minutes per subject. The Brown Act regulations do not allow action to be taken on audience comments in which the subject is not listed on the agenda.

IV. NEW BUSINESS: 5:35pm

A. Discussion on visiting sites and meeting locations

Administrator inquired with the commission as to whether they are interested in visiting sites and holding meetings at those locations. Commissioner Rones suggested Observatory Park as the first site. Consensus of the commission was to start there. Administrator Marsolan said she would do planning and return to the commission with a calendar at the next meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS: 5:47pm

A. Update on Parks and Playground Topics (Report Attached)

Administrator Marsolan commented that the green slide at Todd Grove Park was finally repaired and that the Alex Rorabaugh center is seeing increased use. Administrator Marsolan also said she has been contacted by several groups wanting to schedule Anton Stadium for a summer adult baseball league. Commissioner Sadowski commented that he learned some of the original artifacts from Observatory Park will be returning to Ukiah. Administrator Marsolan said they will be stored with the collections at the Grace Hudson Museum.

B. Update on Recreation Programs and Events (Verbal Report)

Administrator Marsolan commented that the new recreation guide is out and there are 95 youth basketball teams this year and opening weekend was last weekend. This fall will be the 20th anniversary of PumpkinFest scheduled for Oct. 19-20, 2013.

VI. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS: 6:15pm

The next meeting will be held February 19, 2013.

Commissioner Sadowski requested to add the Tennis Court discussion back to the agenda in February.

Commissioner Knopf would like to add an agenda item to discuss a walking path around Todd Grove Park.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: 6:15pm

M/S: Rones/Antle to adjourn. Motion carried by an AYE voice vote from all Commissioners. Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.

Jarod Thiele, Recording Secretary



ITEM NO.: 12b
MEETING DATE: February 20, 2013

AGENDA SUMMARY REPORT

SUBJECT: RECEIVE REPORT ON OAK TREE AT CARPENTER HUDSON PARK; AUTHORIZE STAFF TO IMPLEMENT TREE PLAN; AUTHORIZE JOHN PHILLIPS TO PERFORM TREE PRUNING SERVICE NOT TO EXCEED \$5,000 AND CORRESPONDING BUDGET AMENDMENT

Summary: Staff has been monitoring and researching the health of a large oak tree at Carpenter Hudson Park. This agenda summary report provides Council with an update on the research and a proposal for managing the tree.

Background: Carpenter Hudson Park is located at 431 Main Street at the property with the Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House. The entire parcel of the park, museum and Sun House was deeded to the City in 1975 for the purposes of an art and history museum. There is a large oak tree which is a wonderful feature of the museum grounds. During the past five years the tree has dropped two large sections. The photos that are included as Attachment #1 show the most recent failure that occurred in the Spring of 2011. The failure was an immense section and following this incident there was immediate concern about the tree and the safety of the area under the tree. Staff contacted a number of arborists and subsequently removed benches and picnic tables from under the tree. Staff placed barricades and signs around the tree to further reduce the potential for a person to be injured by a limb falling from the tree.

Discussion: The tree and the area around the tree continue to be a concern for safety, risk management, existing park use and future planning within the park. Staff has collected a number of arborist reports that are included as Attachment #2 and #3. One report states that "...the tree is in decent health" however, "...the primary problem with the tree is that it is situated in an area frequented by people and given the tree's history and condition, a failure of large size will probably occur again."

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive report on Oak Tree at Carpenter Hudson Park.
2. Authorize staff to implement ongoing management plan for the Oak Tree to include pruning, monitoring, mulching of roots within the drip-line, replanting of future replacement tree(s).
3. Authorize contract with Arborist John Phillips for an amount not to exceed \$5,000 for Tree Pruning Services.
4. Authorize budget amendment for up to \$5,000 from the General Fund.

Alternative Council Option(s): Direct staff to pursue the removal of the tree.

Citizens advised: Tree Advisory Group, Sun House Guild
Requested by: N/A
Prepared by: Katie Marsolan, Community Services Administrator,
Dr. Sherrie Smith-Ferri, Museum Director
Coordinated with: Jane Chambers, City Manager, Sage Sangiacomo, Assistant City Manager
Attachments: 1. Photos of limb failure 2011
2. Arborist reports 2011: John Phillips, Greg Giusti, Becky Duckles
3. Arborist canopy investigation & recommendations: John Phillips 2012
4. Photos of tree 2013

Approved: _____
Jane Chambers, City Manager

Community members have expressed a desire to protect the tree and the area around the tree. They have proposed to simply fence off the area to preserve the tree. It is not feasible to retain the tree in its existing form while also making the area safe and functional for park patrons or museum programs.

The park property was designated for programs and activities associated with the Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House. This is clearly stated in the deed restrictions for the property. The City secured a sizable state grant to develop the park area into an outdoor exhibit space which is consistent with the property deed. Work is underway on the grant project features. If the City were to retain the tree in its existing form, the City would have to fence the tree to properly address risk management issues and protect the public. The fence would encompass the tree drip-line or rather the "fall-zone" in the event that the Oak Tree may experience a limb failure. This option would isolate the entire NW corner of the park with a fence and it would therefore be inaccessible for educational programs and the larger grant project. This approach would be inconsistent with the property deed and the overall goals for the property.

Staff is proposing a management plan to modify the tree with pruning. If authorized, staff will work directly with Arborist John Phillips who has performed work on this particular tree for the past twenty years. Mr. Phillips will perform pruning this spring while the tree is dormant. The work that is proposed will remove sections in the tree canopy above the existing cables. The goal of the work is to reduce the overall weight that is bearing on the limbs and thereby reducing the likelihood of a failure. Staff will then work with Mr. Phillips to monitor the tree through the summer for growth and activity. If necessary we will reevaluate the tree for additional pruning in the spring of 2014. The pruning work will make the fall-zone smaller and increase the useable space around the tree.

In addition to pruning the tree, staff will work closely with Mr. Phillips toward a long-term management plan. This plan may include mulching the root-zone, protecting the drip-line from impacts, selective replanting near the tree to plan for a succession, and continued monitoring of the health of the existing tree. Staff is also mindful that this tree may need to be removed in the future and that it will be important to plan for access for vehicles, crane/lift and staging area near the tree. This will be considered for the planning of future features around the tree.

As an alternative action, the City Council may elect to direct staff to have the tree removed, thereby eliminating the costs for pruning, ongoing management and staff time. Staff previously collected bids for removal of the tree and they were between \$6,000 and \$9,000. Those bids are expired and the pricing is listed only to provide an estimated cost.

At this time staff is recommending that the City Council sole source a small contract for tree pruning services with Arborist John Phillips not to exceed \$5,000. John has a long history working with this particular tree and staff want to ensure that there is consistency in the management of the tree. This work is typically charged to the Park Fund for Contract Services. However, this large amount is not currently budgeted and staff is recommending a corresponding budget amendment.

Fiscal Impact:

Budgeted FY 12/13 New Appropriation Not Applicable Budget Amendment Required

<u>Amount Budgeted</u>	<u>Source of Funds (title and #)</u>	<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Addtl. Appropriation Requested</u>
N/A	Parks Dept: Contract Services/Tree Work	10022100.52100	not to exceed \$5,000









Tom Hamlett
City of Ukiah
300 Seminary Dr.
Ukiah, Ca. 95482

JOHN M. PHILLIPS
ARBORIST, 3rd GENERATION



Dear Tom,

At your request, I have visited Carpenter Park and observed the oak that sustained recent limb failure. Following are my assessment and recommendations.

The limb broke near the main trunk, leaving a wound approximately 2 ft. x 3 ft. Remnants of the limb near the break exhibit advanced wood decay. This wood condition probably extends downward into the main trunk at least several feet.

Given the age of the tree and the presence of other, older wounds, it is likely that decay is present elsewhere in the main structure of the tree. There are also several large dead limbs in various stages of breakdown.

The tree was pruned and cabled at least 15 years ago by my company. At that time, we removed large dead limbs. The cable system we installed is still intact and appears to be functioning properly. It was not attached to the portion that broke (there is an older set of cables that are broken and hanging; they may have been attached to the broken piece).

Despite the degraded structure, the tree exhibits decent health signs and will probably live many more years.

The primary problem with the tree is that it is situated in an area frequented by people. There are pathways, benches and tables well within a potential zone of failure. And given the tree's history and condition, a failure of large size will probably occur again.

To significantly reduce this potential, the tree would need to be reduced in size. The more it is reduced, the greater the improvement for safety. However, extreme reduction will lead to tree health and structure problems in a few years. A more moderate pruning may not make much of an improvement.

The minimum action recommended is to move the benches and tables outside the potential zone of failure. Include pruning out the obvious large dead and/or rotted limbs. This would leave the tree in good appearance and health but would do little towards reducing the kind of structural failure experienced recently.

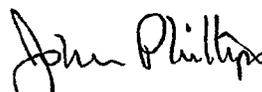
Going beyond this minimal pruning treatment presents a management dilemma: The best improvement for human safety is also the most injurious to the tree. It also leaves an appearance that has questionable aesthetics and a poor model for arboricultural care.

If the tree is to be retained with the greatest degree of safety while leaving a specimen of integrity, the only solution I can offer is to fence off the tree at the perimeter of the zone of potential failure. This would occupy a rather large space in a small park.

If the tree is to be removed, I recommend that at least four trees are planted in the circular area it occupies. If done with some forethought and good practice, these trees would form a replacement canopy in less than ten years.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have further need. Thank you for this opportunity to be of service.

Sincerely,



John Phillips

Certified Arborist #106

Written in response to John Phillips assessment

Katie Marsolan

From: Greg Giusti [gagiusti@ucdavis.edu]
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2011 2:40 PM
To: Katie Marsolan
Cc: 'Glenn McGourty'; 'John M. Harper'
Subject: RE: oak tree at Grace Hudson Museum

Katie,

As we discussed, the assessment provided by John Phillips is articulate, thoughtful and based on many years of professional experience. I have no reason to doubt anything that John has shared with you.

That said, and as we discussed, now that the city has a formal written recommendation identifying possible liability issues steps should be considered to minimize the public's exposure to injury. As you recall I suggested:

- 1) removing the benches and tables from below the drip line of the tree is the most obvious approach to minimizing exposure to falling limbs or branches;
- 2) encircling the tree with some type of formal fencing to specifically exclude people from gathering below the tree is another visible way to show the public that the site is not considered safe;
- 3) taking these actions, collectively, would also begin the process of increasing the public's awareness about the need to both remove the existing tree and the need to think of the aspect of "generational transfer" as you begin a new plan for the park that includes the recruitment of new, younger trees.

Talking about "the tree" in the holistic sense of re-designing the park for the future removes the focus on a single item and helps people understand what the long-range vision is for the park. As we discussed, the tree is a magnificent specimen and members of the public will be disheartened that it will be removed. Using a thoughtful, step by step approach, will help people understand that the removal has been carefully considered and that valley oaks will continue to play an important role within the park.

I hope this notes are helpful. Please feel free to contact me again if you have any questions.

Toolkit_Email_Sig_WIN
Gregory A. Giusti
County Director
Chair, UC-HREC Research Advisory Committee Forest Advisor, RPF #2709 Wildlands Ecology
Advisor Affiliate-College of Natural Resources UCB

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GRACE HUDSON MUSEUM
Ukiah, Ca

ARBORIST'S REPORT
December 21, 2011

Assignment

On December 15th I visited this site at the request of Katie Marsolan, Community Services Administrator for Ukiah. The tree she asked me to inspect is a 62" dbh (diameter at breast height, 4'-6") valley oak (*Quercus lobata*). It is located adjacent to the Grace Hudson Museum at 517 Main St., owned by the City of Ukiah. At the time of our visit the area under the tree's dripline was taped off with caution tape to prevent access by the public while the tree's condition is investigated.

For this inspection I was accompanied by Bruce Hagen, an urban forester and consulting arborist who has just co-authored a book on oaks published by the University of California titled Oaks in the Urban Landscape. Present at our meeting from the City of Ukiah were Katie Marsolan and Sage Sangiacomo, Assistant City Manager. They both provided some recent history of the tree, which included the fact that a large branch broke off and fell last summer.

Observations and Current Conditions

We performed a visual inspection from the ground with a few hand tools and binoculars. The tree is a majestic, single oak in a small, public park setting. It is approximately 80' tall x 80' diameter, with an irregular dripline. Mulch and natural leaf litter are retained within the dripline covering the soil surface. Walkways surround the tree on all sides, but no grading or other changes in the root zone have occurred in recent years. Some lawn areas are maintained outside the walkways, but no irrigation occurs in summer within the tree's dripline. Very little past pruning has been done. Several cables remain as they were installed in the tree; two broken cables can be seen from the east side. They may have been attached to the branch that failed. From the ground, it did not appear that there was decay present at the site of the recent branch failure though that can be confirmed during an aerial inspection. It was most likely that the branch failed from a phenomenon called 'summer branch drop'. Though it's not completely understood, it is usually explained as the physical failure of the moisture-laden branch full of foliage during warm weather.

The tops of the buttress root flares can be seen, and the root crown area appears generally normal. A small area of disrupted bark on the S/SW side was visible. We probed with hand tools but no signs of disease or root loss other than a little superficial decay were seen. This area could be investigated a little further with careful hand digging to expose portions of the roots. This will be discussed further in the report.

At the site of one old pruning wound in the center of the tree (facing upward), some basiodocarps or fruiting bodies of a fungus could be seen, but we weren't able to identify the species from the ground. This should be further investigated by an arborist who climbs the tree to evaluate a few issues from that perspective, described below.

Grace Hudson Museum - Oak Tree Evaluation
December 21, 2011
Page 2

Some of the tree's foliage was still present, and appeared normal and healthy for the season; good size leaves, with no apparent pests or disease. The foliage was relatively dense, mostly growing at the ends of the branches, which is normal. Very little epicormic growth or watersprouts were seen growing from the branches; (their presence usually indicates stress and slow decline). Shoot growth at the ends of branches, another indicator of tree health, was excellent for a tree of this age. Two flushes of growth from this year were seen on most branches, totaling 12-16".

We tested the trunk within reach of the ground with a mallet, and the tree sounds consistently solid. No drilling or other intrusive investigative procedures were employed at this time.

Conclusions

In spite of the fact that this tree has had branch failures in the past, both Bruce Hagen and I believe at this time that it is generally a healthy tree with many years left. Unfortunately this is the pattern for old oak trees - they occasionally drop branches in summer or other seasons without warning. Health and structure can often be entirely separate issues. But we agree it is a heritage tree well worth preserving longer. A few measures may be taken to further investigate and improve the structural soundness of the tree.

Recommendations

The cultural conditions around the tree within its root zone are close to optimal now, with the mulched surface and no competition from lawn or summer irrigation. Any future plans for retaining the tree should attempt to minimize pedestrian traffic within its dripline/rootzone (the imaginary line on the ground of the perimeter of the branches). This will serve multiple purposes - reducing the likelihood of anyone present if a branch should fall unexpectedly, and preventing soil compaction, which kills roots and limits growth. This can be accomplished with a low fence installed just inside the dripline. If desired, a sign can be placed describing the reasons for limiting access under the tree to better preserve its health and protect pedestrians.

Mulch should be replenished - it can be added directly on top of the new crop of leaf litter - to permanently maintain a layer of organic material 2-4" deep. The new mulch should be arbor mulch - chipped small branches, bark and foliage, replaced as needed, generally annually. It prevents soil compaction, reduces weed growth and competition, moderates soil temperature and adds organic material to the soil.

An aerial or in-tree inspection should be performed. That is accomplished by an arborist/climber qualified to analyze the soundness of the tree from the perspective of the interior, above-ground structure, the crown. Sometimes they may find defects such as cracked branches or decay not visible from the ground. They can probe the old wound described above where the fungus can be seen, to determine how deep and extensive the decayed area is, as well as identify the species of fungus. They can also inspect the old cables to check the tension and attachments, and determine if new cables need to be installed to replace the failed ones. It's often helpful to have the original installer/tree service provider perform this type of follow-up inspection to maintain continuity. They can make recommendations in regard to any issues found, such as pruning or removing cracked, weakly-attached or defective branches. This should be done annually on this tree to update any changes found in condition, structure, or the cables. If desired, a consulting arborist can collaborate with them to decide on the extent and type of mitigation measures.

Grace Hudson Museum - Oak Tree Evaluation
December 21, 2011
Page 3

Some pruning should be done to reduce several over-elongated branches, to reduce the risk of their falling, especially during summer. We noted some on the south side of the tree. One large, low, lateral branch appears to be somewhat oval in shape which suggests some compensatory growth, possibly to bolster an internal weakness. The amount of pruning should be minimal, but enough to reduce the end weight on a few large, heavy branches after the aerial inspection.

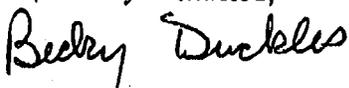
Because the tree's dense foliage and shoot growth indicate healthy roots and a good vascular system, a root crown examination isn't a high priority, but should be considered before any park renovation/construction is done. This will help determine the soundness of the structural roots which stabilize the tree as well as hydrate it. It can be done by hand, carefully exposing the tops and undersides of the buttress roots by digging with shovels and trowels. Another method is to use an 'Air Spade', a high-pressure pneumatic device which blows the soil away without damaging roots. For either method to be effective and efficient, the soil should be moist, either after rain or watering and letting it dry slightly. The exposed roots can then be inspected to see if there is decay and/or disease. The arborist would be looking for signs and symptoms of oak root fungus (*Armillaria mellea*) or other diseases and fungal infections.

Priorities & Sequence

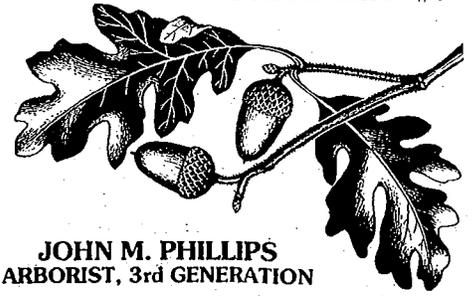
1. The aerial inspection should be done this winter while this tree is dormant, and any annual fungal fruiting bodies can be observed. The climber/arborist will also provide input regarding any defects seen during this investigation which will indicate where pruning needs to be done in addition to that determined from the ground.
2. Any necessary pruning should also be done this winter. If any collaboration/consultation is needed between the climbing arborist and our office, I'll be glad to be available.
3. The additional arbor mulch should be applied whenever it is available. It can be fresh, not composted and is available from tree services or recycling centers. The present layer is wearing thin and decomposing, and when there's any activity within the dripline (foot traffic, bicycles, vehicles), the soil becomes more compacted.
4. The caution tape may be taken down presuming that the aerial inspection and pruning didn't reveal any previously unknown hazards that were not mitigated by the pruning.
5. A root collar examination is recommended to be done in the spring of 2012 when the soil is drying out from winter rains. Initially it will be sufficient to excavate carefully on the south/southwest side, opposite the museum. If any indicators of significant disease or decay are found then, or if the examiner/excavator needs more information, the remaining circumference buttress roots may need to be exposed.
6. If everyone agrees, a perimeter fence can be installed after these various investigations and mitigation measures are complete, to replace the caution tape.

If any input is needed from my office during further investigation I'll be glad to provide it. Please call if there are any questions or clarification is needed on anything stated in this report.

Respectfully submitted,



Becky Duckles
Member, American Society of Consulting Arborists
ISA Certified Arborist #WE-0796A



JOHN M. PHILLIPS
ARBORIST, 3rd GENERATION

September 13, 2012

Katie Marsolan
City of Ukiah
300 Seminary Ave.
Ukiah, Ca. 95482

Dear Katie,

At your request, I have done an aerial inspection of the oak at Carpenter Hudson Park. The purpose for this was to make further observations of the tree's structure. These are summarized here and will be discussed with implications for future treatment of the tree. Also to note, I did read the documents (Duckles & Guisti) you sent and will refer to portions of them herein.

Observations (9/12/12)

I divide the structural defects into the basic categories of wood decay and cracks. Beginning with the former, there are small "pockets" of decay in the upper crown, mostly associated with places where branches were either shed or pruned off.

In the lower trunk, where the primary scaffold limbs (or trunks) divide, there are three large wounds with decay. One of these is where the failure occurred in 2010. My report following that failure says there was "advanced wood decay" in the sections I observed on the ground. The wood on the tree at this time tests "sound" by probing with a knife. The wood has many large checks (or cracks) about the surface of the wound.

The other two wounds appear to be the result of sections that were removed by pruning (although the one facing southwest has uneven wood fragments that suggest the limb broke off). These took place a long time ago. Decay is obvious and extensive in both wounds. The one facing upwards has remnants of a fungal fruiting body. It is too far gone at this time for thorough identification.

In at least three of the large limbs in the upper crown, there is evidence of wood cracks. On one, there is a faint line in the bark that runs at least 12 ft. along the limb in vertical orientation. The other two are expressed by dark staining on the under side of the limbs. These limbs grow in a curving to horizontal fashion. One of them has cables attached to it.

The cable system involves five cables. All are intact with their attachment hardware engulfed into the stem tissue. The cable material appears to be sound. There are also two hanging cables made of non-professional materials. One of these has a broken end.

Discussion

I was surprised to not find more advanced decay at the failure wound. The pieces on the ground that I observed two years ago definitely had this condition. So it must be that the advanced stage(s) were distal to the point of attachment.

This can possibly be explained by the fact that early stage (aka incipient) decay can reduce wood strength by 70%. Further, there is always the possibility of wood cracks involved with failures, and these are not always detectable. The cracks now visible on the wound surface are most likely "checks" which result as the wood dries. They are major entry points for wood decay organisms.

The decay visible in the other two wounds probably extends downward several feet (at least). These columns may join at some point as they progress in this direction. The area below them is a very massive growth of trunk which is presumed to be an enhancement of strength.

As for the cracks, none were seen to be recent or actively propagating.

Both decay and cracks can be considered normal for trees of this size and age. Given their presence, it would not be unlikely for limbs of any size to fail. I believe that cracks are more responsible for failures than decay. They are also usually less detectable.

Becky Duckles discussed the possible need for a root crown inspection. There is some minor bark abnormality on the west side that may indicate root deterioration. I suggest minor, manual excavation rather than use of an air spade as it would be less intrusive.

There has been discussion about probing the decayed areas to see how large they are. This is not easy to do without further wounding the tree. Also, any data produced can be difficult to translate into practical application.

It would be useful to know if the two columns of decay from the large pruning (or break) wounds coalesce and how much of the trunk volume is consumed. There are several tools for measuring this. We can discuss this in more detail if interested.

Recommendations

If this tree is to be retained, the minimum treatment should be pruning to reduce weight on the primary portions of the crown. In the short term, this will reduce the failure potential of the limbs with the noted cracks. Portions removed will leave wounds up to 12 inches in diameter. In the long term, these wounds will add to the defect profile of the tree.

Such pruning will probably cause the cables to slacken. Redoing the cables will need to be evaluated if and when it happens.

This kind of pruning will alter the appearance of the tree. It may be helpful to meet with you (and others) to review the recommended cut points and determine if the change is acceptable.

I concur with Greg Giusti's suggestions: remove fixed targets under the tree; install formal (and attractive) fencing at the perimeter of the crown; and promote the notion of "generational transfer".

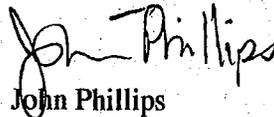
The purpose for this, as I understand it, is to make future removal of the tree more acceptable to the public. To extend the time before removal becomes necessary, I reiterate the need for continued mulching.

In anticipation of future maintenance, or possibly removal, it would be good to include in the park's design an access corridor to the tree. It should be approximately 10 ft. wide and strong enough to support large vehicles.

This concludes my assignment at this time. Please let me know if you have further need.

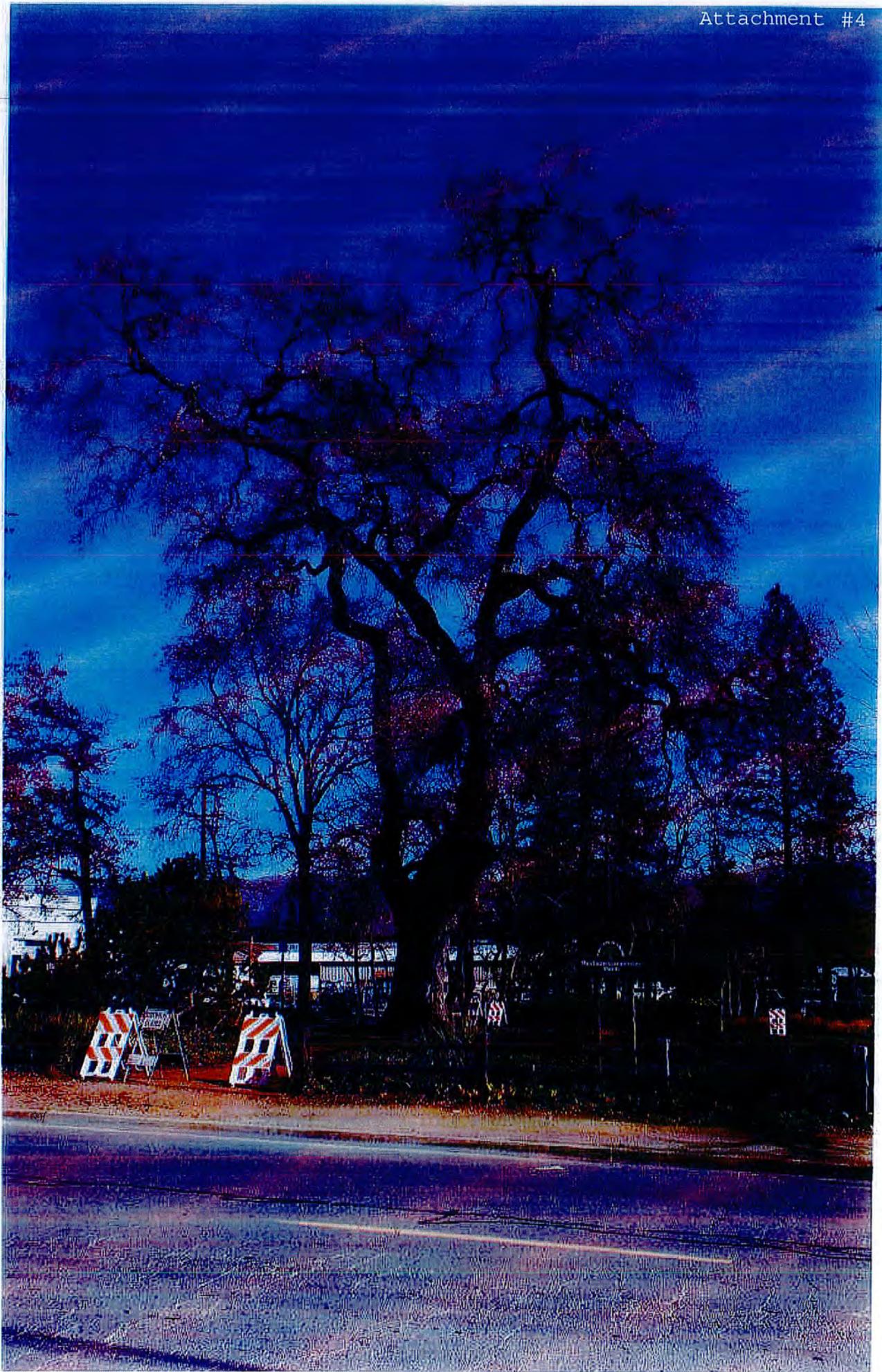
Thank you for this opportunity to be of service.

Sincerely,

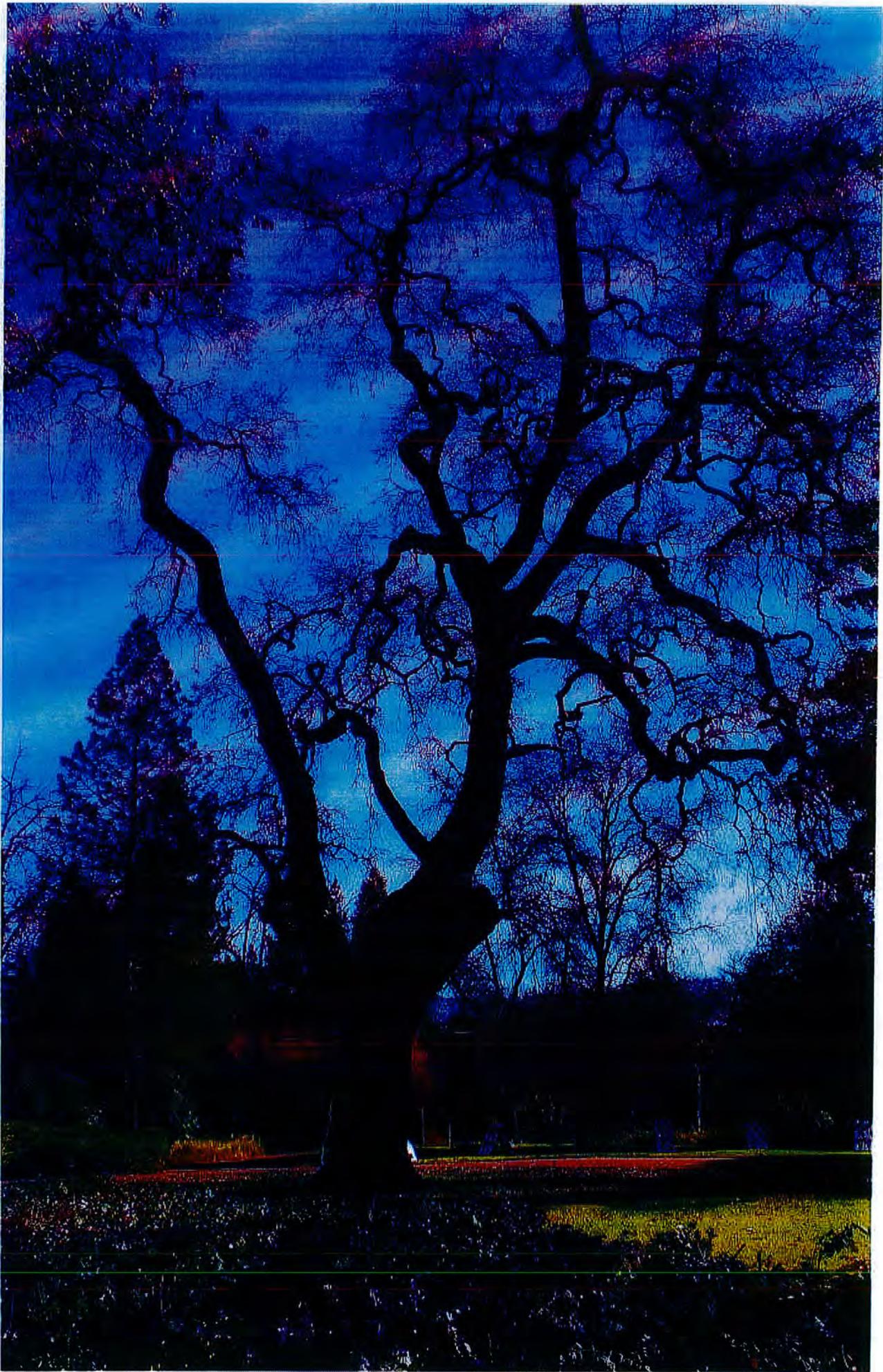

John Phillips

Certified Arborist #106

Cc: Tom Hamblet



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