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NEWPORT BEACH

PB&R Commission Staff Report

Agenda Item **VI-A**
October 7, 2025

TO: Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission

FROM: Public Works Department
John Salazar, Deputy Public Works Director
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PREPARED BY: Kevin Pekar, Parks and Trees Superintendent
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TITLE: Continuation of Reforestation Request – 1716 Santiago Drive

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission consider the reforestation request of a City American sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) located at 1716 Santiago Drive due to a blocked yard drain, roots encapsulating the water meter and the applicant's desire to re-grade and renovate the parkway as part of a larger landscape renovation project.

The applicant, Robert Kone, resident at 1716 Santiago Drive, has met the procedural requirements established in City Council Policy G-1 – *Retention, Removal, and Maintenance of City Trees* (City Council Policy G-1) to apply for reforestation. If approved by the PB&R Commission, staff recommends requiring the replanting of a one-for-one, 36-inch box holly oak (*Quercus ilex*) replacement tree. The applicant would pay for both removal and replacement, but the work would be performed by a City contractor coordinated by the Public Works Department.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Kone contacted the City Arborist to request the removal of an American sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) located at 1716 Santiago Drive. Mr. Kone explained that he wished to renovate the parkway, lowering the grade to the same level as the sidewalk. Furthermore, Mr. Kone has experienced blockages to his landscape drain, which is situated a couple feet from the tree's location. The replacement tree would be located farther from this drain. Finally, the tree's roots surround the water main line to the house and Mr. Kone fears this may cause a rupture in the future.

Although the species is listed as a Problem Tree in the City Council Policy G-1, staff inspected the tree and determined that the tree is in good condition and did not meet the criteria for removal referenced in the Policy. Mr. Kone was advised of the reforestation process as an option. He is willing to pay for the tree removal and the planting of a 36-inch box holly oak (*Quercus ilex*) replacement tree. Additionally, as required by City Council Policy G-1, the applicant provided the meeting minutes documenting the Dover Shores Community Association Board of Directors discussing and approving removal and replacement of the tree.

This item was presented to PB&R Commission at the September 2, 2025, meeting. Commission voted to continue the item to allow the applicant, who was not in attendance, to gather more evidence of property damage or other reasons why the reforestation was necessary. Additionally, the subject tree was not properly posted prior to the meeting, which would better inform surrounding neighbors of the request.

NOTICING:

Robert Kone, Councilmember Erik Weigand and Dover Shores Community Association have received a copy of this report. The tree was posted with information regarding the reforestation request, and postcard notifications were sent by the City to property owners within 500 feet of the subject tree's location. The agenda item has also been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which PB&R Commission considers the item).

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Reforestation Application
- B. Dover Shores Community Association Meeting Minutes/Approval
- C. Tree Removal Report/Review
- D. Info Sheet – Holly Oak
- E. Postcard Notification Map