



ITEM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: September 7, 2022

NAME & NUMBER OF PROJECT: Shoal Cycle, SP-2021-0350C

APPLICANT NAME: CJI Properties Inc.

LOCATION: 812 West 11th Street, Austin, Texas, 78701

COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 9

STAFF: Naomi Rotramel, City Arborist, Development Services Department

ORDINANCE: Heritage Tree Ordinance (LDC 25-8-641)

REQUEST: The applicant is seeking the removal of a Heritage tree with a single stem over 30 inches in diameter.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The request meets City Arborist approval criteria set forth in LDC 25-8-624(A)(2). The variance is recommended.



MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Austin Environmental Commission

FROM: Naomi Rotramel, City Arborist
Development Services Department

DATE: September 7, 2022

CASE FOLDER: SP-2021-0350C

REQUEST: The applicant is requesting removal of a Heritage tree with a single stem over 30 inches in diameter.

Project Description

The property is located at 812 West 11th Street. The lot is 0.4052 acres and is zoned Downtown Mixed Use – Conditional Overlay (DMU-CO) Combing District.

The property is located in the Northwest Subdistrict of the Downtown Austin Plan.

The site is currently as office building with associated tuck-under and surface parking. The proposed use is for a 67-unit workforce multifamily project and 3,500 square feet of ground floor retail.

The applicant requested a predevelopment site consultation with the City Arborist. There is one (1) Heritage Live Oak with a single stem of 32” diameter that is centrally located on the property. The 32” Heritage Live Oak (#287) is requested for removal.

Tree Evaluation

Tree 287 Live Oak

Measurements

The subject tree is one Heritage 32-inch Live Oak (#287)

Canopy Conditions

Asymmetric crown; thin canopy; chlorotic (likely due to nutrient deficiency); copious amount of epiphytic ball moss usually prevalent on declining trees; leans southwest due to existing location of existing building; overhead utility lines run through the canopy.

Structure / Trunk

Trunk leans over the parking lot. Sonic tomography was conducted of the trunk indicating moderate decay at three different vertical planes with the tree – estimates 22-24% loss in structural integrity of the tree. Large decay pockets on upper side of two scaffolding limbs observed.

Root System

Buried root flare; approximately 95% of the critical root one is covered by impervious surfaces – concrete parking and existing office building.

Overall Condition

Fair condition; poor structure; moderate risk.

Variance Request

The variance request is to allow removal of a Heritage tree with a stem greater than 30 inches as allowed under LDC 25-8-643.

Recommendation

The City Arborist recommends removal of the tree due to the applicant demonstrating that the tree prevents reasonable use of the property.

Applicant met with Shoal Creek Conservancy and the Parks and Recreation Department to discuss a possible transplant however there was not a suitable location. Applicant has also demonstrated that due to the poor health of the tree, relocation is not feasible.

Based upon tree location, zoning, site characteristics, the proposed use, and the tree not being a good transplant candidate, the City Arborist believes the applicant has provided sufficient evidence that LDC 25-8-624(A)(2) has been met. Further there do not appear to be any waivers, variances, or modifications of code that would allow development concurrent with the preservation of the tree.

Mitigation

The Environmental Criteria Manual standard is 300% mitigation. Mitigation for this site shall be addressed by planting two (2) Live Oaks at 5-inch caliper as street trees. These two trees are proposed to have adequate soil to ensure survivability and, when planted, will have a combined crown surface area that will rival the thinning canopy of the existing 32-inch Live Oak. In addition, the remaining inches owed will be paid towards the Urban Forest Replenishment Fund for a total of \$18,500.

Please contact Naomi Rotramel at 512-974-9135 or naomi.rotramel@austintexas.gov if you have questions.

Exhibit 1: Whole tree surrounded by impervious cover



Exhibit 2: Large scaffold leader decay - west stem





Exhibit 3: Large leader decay – east stem



Exhibit 3: Thin Canopy; ball moss, chlorosis



Exhibit 4: Unbalanced crown

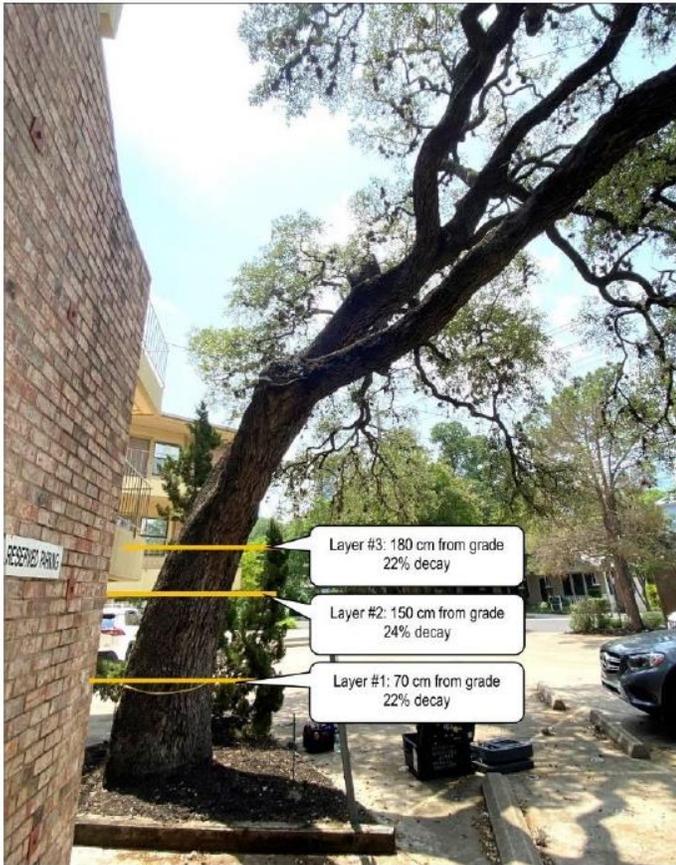


Exhibit 5: Sonic Tomography reading

ArborSonic 3D™ Tomograms

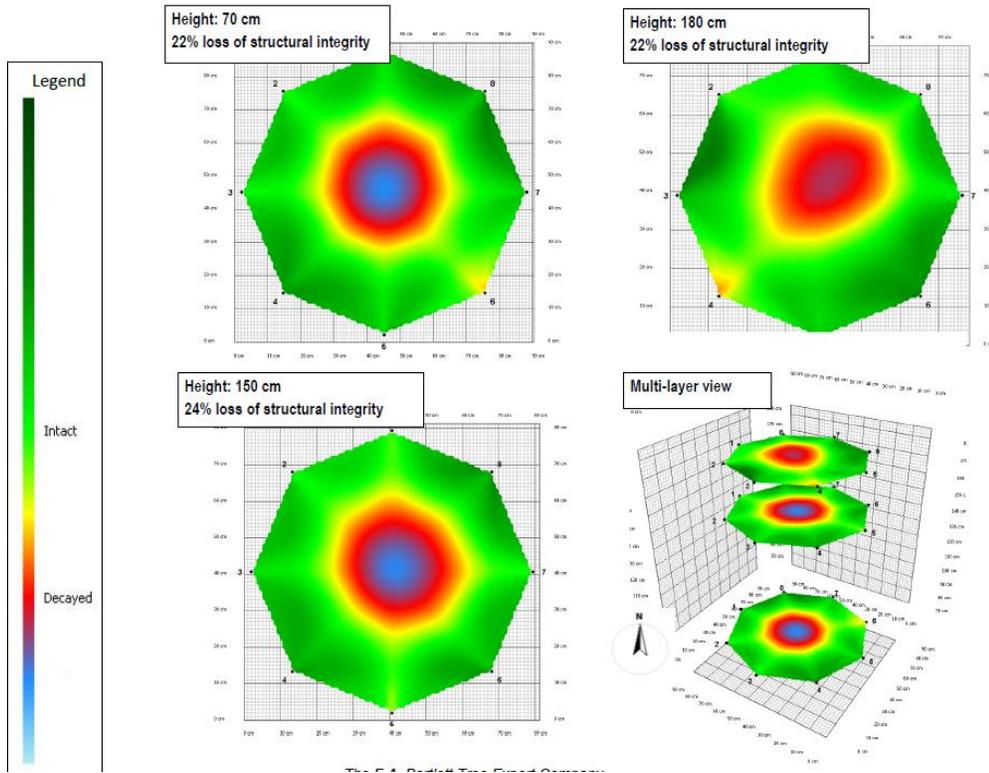


Figure 5.4: Sonic Tomography Readings