

The Village Green Owners Association

Tree Committee Memorandum

to

Owners/Residents of Village Green

April 2013

2012 - 2013 Carob Tree Removal and Replacements

As many of you know, beginning on Monday, March 18, 2013, our landscape company, TruGreen, began the removal of 15 carob trees along the Rodeo Road median, along with 4 additional trees elsewhere on the Village Green. This information is being shared with you to better explain the current activity associated with our carob tree removals and their replacements.

These removals were in accordance with an overall removal and replacement plan for this tree species (*ceratonia siliqua*) developed over the last several years. 21 new carob trees were planted in 2011, replacing removed diseased trees or filling vacant sites where carob trees once existed in our landscape plan. The next phase of the plan, to replace 20 carob trees in 2012, was delayed for various reasons until the first half of 2013 and is now underway. An additional 20 more carob trees may be removed and replanted in the second half of 2013 depending on the receipt of various approvals.

Below is more detailed information regarding the background and details of the plan. If you would like more information, please attend the Tree Committee's regularly scheduled meeting on the third Monday of each month, at 7:30 p.m., at the Clubhouse or visit the Village Green's website where tree information will be posted beginning this month: http://villagegreenla.net/committees/tree_committee/

Carob Trees at Village Green

The master tree inventory for Village Green contained, prior to the removals noted above, 147 carob trees among its approximately 1,900 tagged specimens. The majority of these Carobs are trees from our original 1940s-era landscape. It was a popular and fashionable tree in Southern California during the period when Village Green was being designed. As a hardy Mediterranean species with few native pests, the carobs grow well here with minimal water requirements.

Evaluation & Assessment

Upon his arrival as the contract arborist for Village Green in the fall of 2006, Dan Jensen assessed the condition of our carob trees and recognized a lot of them, many averaging 70 years old, were showing signs of age-related decline. The conditions Dan looked for and observed included *ganoderma* and *laetiporus* (sulphur) fungus conks, evidence of internal decay, lateral cracks on major trunks and scaffold branches, major trunk losses that revealed large voids and cavities, stunted leaf growth, end of branch die back, basal suckers and water sprouts (epicormic buds) all of which are signs of distress and other indications of serious weakness.

In doing this, Dan took his cues from the City of Los Angeles and the City of Santa Monica. Those cities had undertaken comprehensive assessments of their substantial carob tree populations and in the last few years began removing aging carob trees as a preventative measure, intelligently prioritizing those in the worst shape. These trees and many of the carob trees at Village Green are street trees, planted near major roadways and sidewalks, and therefore represent significant potential hazards to cars and pedestrians should they unexpectedly drop limbs or experience trunk failure. In decline, our Rodeo Road median trees represent potential liability to the public and the Village Green.

Three-Year Plan

After undertaking his evaluation, Dan proposed a plan to remove the declining trees he identified over a span of three years. This would distribute the costs over three budget years and moderate the impact of removing so many trees in close proximity of similar age and species. Replanting the trees within a three-year window better assures that the replanted trees would grow and mature apace with the others. It also helps provide a buffer should one year's plantings experience problems.

Conclusion

Dan will continue to monitor the remaining carob trees in our landscape to determine whether further replacements will be necessary in the near term. Many of these are some of the largest trees within the Village Green and display lots of individual character and qualities from their long maturation.

Please be assured that all tree removals are approved only after careful consideration, following the recommendation of a qualified professional. This action is not being taken lightly. Prior to their being planted, replacement tree stock is vetted for quality and viability and there are explicit protocols to be followed for site and root ball preparation and appropriate staking, tying and watering to insure the young trees thrive during their early years when they are most at risk of failure.

March 2013 Removals (originally slated for 2012)

• Rodeo Road Median (a.k.a. Parkway/Fairway) (15 trees total)

- (#s 4, 6, 7) - adjacent to north side of Court 11
- (#s 10, 11, 12) - adjacent to Court 12 entrance
- (#s 21, 24) - between entrances to Court 13 and Court 14
- (#s 28, 30, 32) - between entrances to West Circle and Court 14
- (# 35) - adjacent to Admin Building/East Circle
- (#s 41, 43, 44) - adjacent to Court 15 entrance

• Court 4 entrance (1 tree total)

(#420)

• Adjacent to parking lots on Village Green property (3 trees total)

- (#s 1603, 1609) - west of Court 16 entrance
- (# 1830) - north side of East Circle garage court lawn

[Note: #1105 – adjacent to Court 11 entrance on Hauser Boulevard – removed on an emergency basis on May 21, 2012, was originally part of the 2012 batch of removals and was replaced in-kind in 2012.]