



City of Santa Barbara
Parks and Recreation Department

Memorandum

DATE: August 24, 2012
TO: Jaime Limon, Senior Planner
FROM: Irene Macias, Library Director
SUBJECT: Central Library Historic Building Designation

The Library Department supports creating a historic building designation for the Central Library. The Central Library is a well known building with significant architectural features, and is considered a community jewel.

The library is pursuing updating the surrounding Library Plaza with a design that will make the space more open and usable for library and public events. We believe that the plaza redesign will return the space to a look that is closer to the original plaza design before 1930. This redesign will also make the plaza compliant with the American Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, the redesign will address security issues that have consumed significant library and Police Department staff resources.

Landscape architects Campbell & Campbell were hired to create a preliminary design for the plaza area and held two public workshops on the Library Plaza design. In the first workshop many of participants observed that the entrance to the library is not visible because of the three Eucalyptus trees directly in front of the entrance. In the second workshop, two potential designs were shown, one with the three trees remaining and one that required the removal of the trees. The participants favored the design that proposed the removal of the three Eucalyptus trees as it allowed for a larger flat area for the purpose of programming and to allow a fountain design.

In addition, there is a concern about the hazards of falling limbs to both the historic building and the public who visit the facility daily, as three of the trees are in the direct path of the Anapamu St. entrance.

For these reasons, the Library recommends against the historic designation of the Lemon Scented Gum Eucalyptus trees.