



City of Santa Barbara
Parks and Recreation Department

Memorandum

DATE: October 4, 2012

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Parks and Recreation Commission

SUBJECT: Comments Regarding the Historic Landmarks Commission
Recommendation to Designate the Thirteen Eucalyptus Citriodora
Trees at the Central Library as Historic

At their meeting of September 26, 2012, the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed the Historic Landmarks Commission recommendation to designate the thirteen Eucalyptus Citriodora Trees at the Central Library as Historic. The Commission received a staff report and heard recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Department and the Library Department, and received input from Jaime Limon, Senior Planner, staff liaison to the Historic Landmarks Commission.

The majority of the Commissioners (5/1) supported the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation and Library departments which were that the Library's Eucalyptus trees should not be designated as Historic at this time. Commissioners noted that the Library's trees are currently and adequately protected through the Street Tree Ordinance in the City's Municipal Code.

Commissioners stated that the earlier proposal to remove the trees had been associated with a conceptual plan to improve public access, safety and use of the Library Plaza. The design was developed through public workshops which focused on library user and community priorities. Given the importance of these trees, commissioners said that any discussion about removing them will be highly controversial. The public should have the opportunity to weigh in on the value of trees as well as the value to the public if the trees were removed as part of a project which improved public access, safety and use of the Library Plaza.

Two commissioners, Chair Wiscomb and Commissioner Longstreet, stated that they did not believe that sufficient information had been provided to justify designation of the Eucalyptus trees as Historic. Chair Wiscomb further commented that the Historic Landmarks Commission staff report states that the Library Plaza was being excluded from designation as Historic due to the drastic alterations made from its original design and because it no longer conveys its historic significance. Therefore, in her opinion,

since the three Eucalyptus trees at the Library's entrance are an integral part of the Library Plaza they should not be considered for historic designation. Commissioner Longstreet noted there was reference to a landscape plan that was not included in the staff report and that she saw no visual evidence in the photos provided.

cc: Jim Armstrong, City Administrator
Paul Casey, Assistant City Administrator
Nancy Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director
Tim Downey, City Arborist
Bettie Weiss, City Planner
Irene Macias, Library Director
Jaime Limon, Senior Planner
Nicole Hernandez, City Historian