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September 4, 2015

Mayor Schneider and Council Members
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RECEIVED

2015 SEP -4 AM 10:45

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Re: Appeal of the Parks and Recreation Commissions Approval of
Setback Tree Removal at 1187 Coast Village Road

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

The Montecito Association appeals the Parks and Recreation Commission's August 26, 2015 decision to allow the removal of two specimen setback trees at 1187 Coast Village Road. The Montecito Association is a community association that seeks to protect the semi-rural residential character of Montecito. I provided testimony to the Commission on behalf of the Association and we file this appeal on behalf of our members. We believe that the Commission failed to make the required findings for removal and their action was in error. As the removal of these significant trees would be detrimental to the character of the neighborhood, we ask that you grant this appeal and require the retention of the trees.

The stated basis for the request to remove these trees is to accommodate a proposed seating area within the front yard setback of the site and to address structural and pine needle litter concerns. We do not believe this is an adequate basis to make any of the findings pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.24.0900 to justify removal. Additionally, the City's General Plan Environmental Resources Element establishes the importance of urban trees and calls for their protection and maintenance. It also states that "New development shall be sited and designed to preserve existing mature healthy native and non-native trees to the maximum extent feasible."

As City policy and the Municipal Code recognize, existing skyline trees are an important community resource that should be preserved. Along the very wide expanse of pavement that is Coast Village Road, these tree canopies provide critical shade, cooling and visual relief. They are some of the few skyline trees along this side of the frontage/parking strip and should be retained. Further, mature 65-foot trees are very difficult to replace, especially during an extended period of drought.

The proposed tree removal is not consistent with the General Plan, does not conform to Municipal Code requirements and does not represent good forestry practice. For these reasons, the application should be denied. Thank you for your careful consideration of this proposed tree removal. Please grant the appeal and require retention of these important trees.

Sincerely,

Cindy Feinberg, President