



June 17, 2024

City of Thousand Oaks  
Planning Commission  
2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

Re: Ferruzza Project – 3948 Skelton Canyon Circle

---

To the Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We offer this brief description regarding the issue of developing in and around the protected trees at the project being discussed this evening. We have prepared a detailed Protected Tree Report for this project, which provides an overview of the potential impact on trees.

### **TREE REMOVALS**

Tree No. 4 - This tree is from a regenerating tree stump and has several trunks that vary from one (1) to six (6) inches in diameter. It is low branching and conflicts with the driveway. This tree (regenerated stump) was damaged by a large Valley Oak that failed from the adjacent property.

Tree No. 7 - This tree was previously scheduled for retention, however, with the VCFD new regulations the tree is positioned too close to the proposed dwelling to meet and comply with the VCFD set back from a combustible structure. In a walk through with a fire department inspector we will determine, if in fact this tree can pruned back to accomplish the required setback, allowing the tree to remain with yearly pruning.

Tree No. 51 - This tree is also positioned too close to the proposed dwelling to meet and comply with the VCFD set back from a combustible structure.

### **PRUNING**

Trees along the driveway will be pruned only for clearance for access and to comply with the VCFD requirements after a walk through with the fire department and city consultant. Our Encroachment and Pruning Schedule approximates the level of pruning.

Tree Nos. 51a-g are small volunteers growing within the leaf canopy between Tree No. 51 and Tree No. 53. They will require pruning to meet the VCFD setback requirements. Tree No. 53 needs pruning for this same reason.

## **TRANSPLANT**

Tree No. 99 is a sapling size Coast Live Oak tree that lies within the driveway alignment. The tree can be successfully transplanted to the west side of the driveway near the location of Tree No.4.

## **HAZARDOUS TREE**

Tree No. 1 appears to be vigorous and healthy. However, the level of decay in the tree makes it very hazardous and destined to failure. This tree will eventually fail, but the issue is when. We believe that, due to its growth form, it will fall in a north-north-west direction onto the public street. There is a great potential for loss of human life if one should be in the wrong place during failure. We have not requested this tree to be removed, however, for citizen safety you might want to consider it.

## **DRIVEWAY ALIGNMENT**

The fifteen (15) foot driveway corridor has been designed using modular pavers with concrete borders on each side to maximize infiltration. We have planned, along with the Civil and Structural Engineer, to minimize surface grading. It is planned that the driveway excavation be no more than eight (8) inch depth into the natural soil. To compensate for differences in natural contours, voids beneath the pavers and behind the walls will be filled with compacted road base to allow infiltration. This action will minimize tree root disturbance.

## **ROOT DISTURBANCE**

If this project is to be built, excavation for utilities excision of tree roots cannot be avoided. Since 1972, when the Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance was instituted, it has been proven that, if carefully executed, this can be accomplished without causing the demise of individual trees. Affected trees will respond to the root loss by entering a period of water deficit. During this time a tree will respond by reducing its leaf volume. As the tree regains its feeder root density the tree will recover to its normal status. Often times, a change in appearance resulting from the root loss cannot be visually detected.

## **UTILITY TRENCHING**

Trenching for utilities will occur at the center line of the driveway. While excavating by hand, it's inevitable to encounter and trim some roots. Once these roots are trimmed along both sides of the driveway, they will promptly be treated with Aliette Fungicide to ward off any potential disease infiltration. Given the presence of trees flanking the driveway, it's imperative to treat all trimmed root ends, even if the origin of a root to be trimmed is indiscernible. In our experience, no tree will be permanently disabled.

## CONCLUSION

Our experience leads us to believe that all of the trees of this site, including those trees that are impacted by pruning, grading, or root disturbance, will survive without permanent long-term effects.

We have performed similar impacts to approximately ten thousand (10,000) individual trees of both Valley Oak and California Live Oak in the North Ranch community. In addition, we authored an eighteen (18) month Scientific Study of the oak tree root impact within that area. This report is known as THE BEN JOHNSON OAK TREE STUDY. It was published by USDA ECOLOGY, MANAGEMENT, AND UTILIZATION OF CALIFORNIA OAKS in 1979.