

Client: Lou Dangles
Project Location: 74 Madrone Avenue, San Anselmo
Inspection Date: October 17, 2019
Arborist: Ben Anderson



URBAN FORESTRY ASSOCIATES, INC.

Assignment

Lou Dangles asked Urban Forestry Associates (UFA) to inspect the mature coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) tree apparently located on the property line between his and the neighboring property to the east (68 Madrone). Mr. Dangles was referred to UFA by Rich Torresan of Elite Tree Service. This report is to be used as part of an application for a tree removal permit from the town of San Anselmo.

Observations

Species	coast live oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)
Diameter	24.0 inches
Location	Directly east of the home on the apparent property line with the east neighbor (Figure 1). The tree targets the Dangles home and the neighbor's secondary utility lines.
Health	Good. The canopy displays symptoms of cryptocline (<i>Cryptocline cinerescens</i>) in the form of scattered brown leaves in the lower canopy.
Structure ¹	Poor to fair. It appears the tree was topped at five feet above grade long ago. Six codominant stems ² arise from the topping cut. There is a decay cavity at the attachment (Figure 2). Two of these stems cross one another higher in the canopy, creating an additional structural weak point.
Form ³	Good. Upright with a high canopy (Figure 3).

Discussion

Poorly attached codominant stems are a common structural defect with an elevated likelihood of failure. The decay cavity in the attachment further elevates this likelihood. This has been a particularly bad year for cryptocline in the Bay Area. This is a native fungal pathogen that affects the leaves and twigs of a tree but does not typically have any long-term effects on the health of the tree.

This appears to be a co-tenancy tree, meaning it is shared between two property owners. This is often a problematic location for trees and can lead to legal disputes. It is therefore an ill-advised location for a tree.

¹ **Structure** – Overall stability of the tree or its branches. This can be negatively affected by things such as acute angle crotches, decay cavities, strong leans, stem girdling roots, ambrosia beetles, history of failures, etc.

² **Codominant stem** - forked branches nearly the same size in diameter, arising from a common junction and lacking a normal branch union (ISA Dictionary Online).

³ **Form** – The plant's overall appearance as it relates to its shape or silhouette. Can be negatively affected by crown asymmetries.

Conclusions

Likelihood of failure could be mitigated through pruning and/or cabling, but this would not solve the inherent structural issue in the tree. Removal of individual spars posing the most danger to targets would leave too large a wound at the common attachment of any remaining spars. These wounds would then decay, further elevating the likelihood of failure.

Due to the structural issues and poor location of the tree, whole-tree removal is a reasonable management option.

SCOPE OF WORK AND LIMITATIONS

Urban Forestry Associates has no personal or monetary interest in the outcome of this investigation. All observations regarding trees in this report were made by UFA, independently, based on our education and experience. All determinations of health condition, structural condition, or hazard potential of a tree or trees at issue are based on our best professional judgment. The health and hazard assessments in this report are limited by the visual nature of the assessment. Defects may be obscured by soil, brush, vines, aerial foliage, branches, multiple trunks, other trees, etc. Even structurally sound, healthy trees can fail during severe storms. Consequently, even a low risk rating is not a guarantee of no risk, hazard, or sound health.



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Table 1. Condition ratings table. Taken from *Guide for Plant Appraisal, 10th edition*

Rating category	Condition components		
	Health	Structure	Form
Excellent	High vigor and nearly perfect health with little or no twig dieback, discoloration, or defoliation	Nearly ideal and free of defects.	Nearly ideal for the species. Generally symmetric. Consistent with the intended use.
Good	Vigor is normal for the species. No significant damage due to diseases or pests. Any twig dieback, defoliation, or discoloration is minor.	Well-developed structure. Defects are minor and can be corrected.	Minor asymmetries/deviations from species norm. Mostly consistent with the intended use. Function and aesthetics are not compromised.
Fair	Reduced vigor. Damage due to insects or diseases may be significant and associated with defoliation but is not likely to be fatal. Twig dieback, defoliation, discoloration, and/or dead branches may comprise up to 50% of the crown.	A single defect of a significant nature or multiple moderate defects. Defects are not practical to correct or would require multiple treatments over several years.	Major asymmetries/deviations from species norm and/or intended use. Function and/or aesthetics are compromised.
Poor	Unhealthy and declining in appearance. Poor vigor. Low foliage density and poor foliage color are present. Potentially fatal pest infestation. Extensive twig and/or branch dieback.	A single serious defect or multiple significant defects. Recent change in tree orientation. Observed structural problems cannot be corrected. Failure may occur at any time.	Largely asymmetric/abnormal. Detracts from intended use and/or aesthetics to a significant degree.
Very poor	Poor vigor. Appears to be dying and in the last stages of life. Little live foliage.	Single or multiple severe defects. Failure is probable or imminent.	Visually unappealing. Provides little or no function in the landscape.
Dead			



Figure 1. Map of tree location. Approximate location of base indicated with red arrow.



Figure 2. Decay cavity in the common attachment of the codominant spars. Framing hammer inserted in the cavity visible in the center of the image.

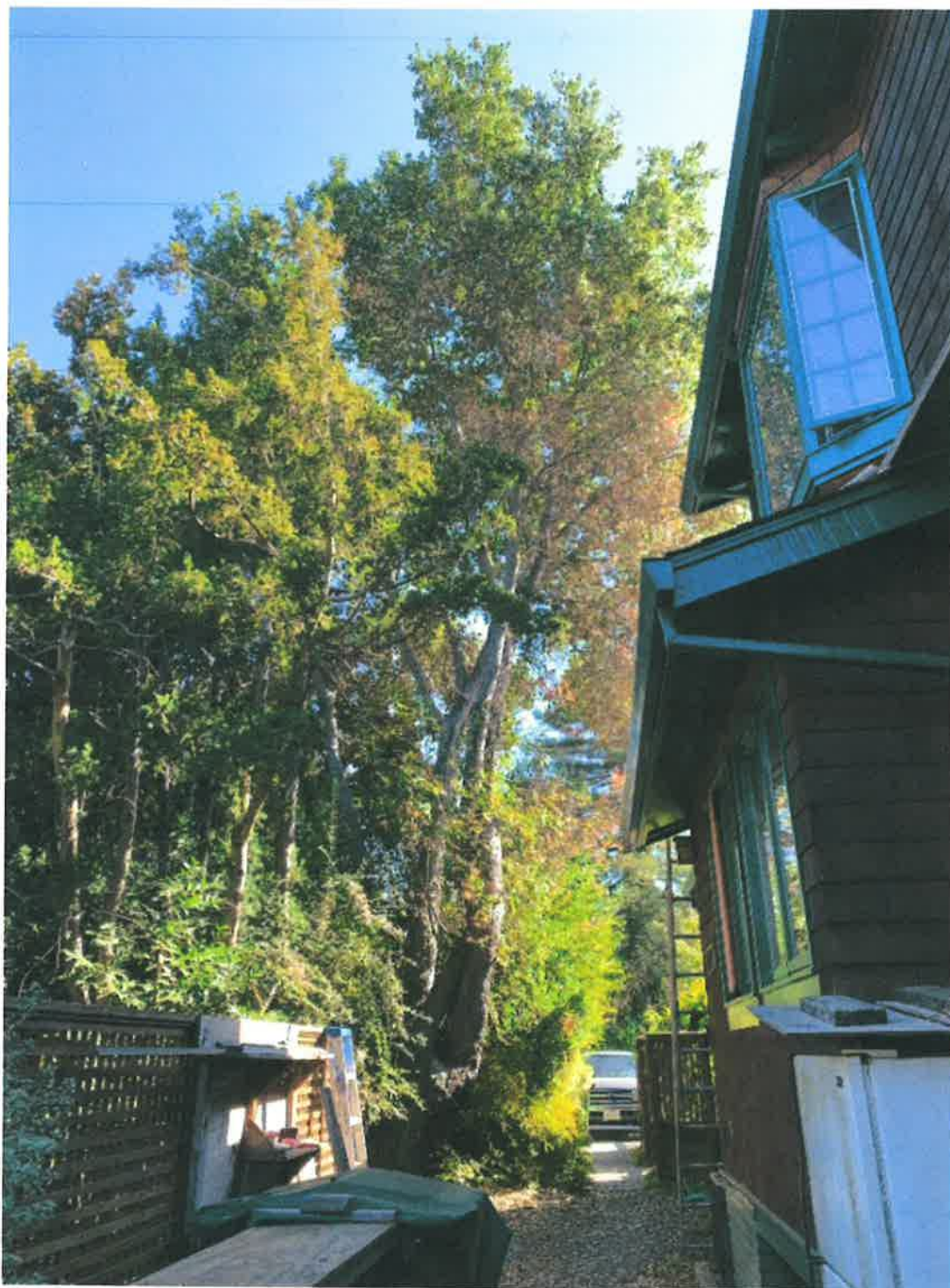


Figure 3. Subject tree as viewed from the north looking south.