

Communication from Public

Name: Jay Ross

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 08:27 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: I support Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles to request that the Council votes to support Councilmember Ramen's 245 motion related to the illegal removal of protected trees and shrubs from the 8461 West Grand View Drive property in her district. The motion will be heard on Tuesday's May 14 Council agenda (#20). It is important that the Council assert its jurisdiction in this case to overrule the Board of Public Works' decision that drastically reduced the penalty available for the intentional removal of protected trees. We note that the trees were removed AFTER the owner was notified of their presence. That notification was recorded on video and is available for the Council to view. Our members attended and testified at the first and second hearings on this matter held by the Board of Public Works and were truly horrified at the position adopted by the Board's President. She sought to excuse the property owner and diminish the seriousness of the actions taken -- first alluding to the fact that he was foreign born. The President's second rationale had to do with the qualifications of the arborists hired to remove the trees which was also irrelevant. She sought to ignore the recommendations of staff to seek the maximum penalty available of 7 years and even to a compromise of 4 years. Instead, she seemed wed to a 2-year penalty which would have resulted in virtually no penalty whatsoever given the timeframe of the administrative process for the planned project coupled with the fact that the clock started running when the city was first notified of the issue. The penalty assessed by the Board of Public Works, if it stands, will expire on July 6, 2025. The message that such a ruling sends runs contrary to the intent of the City's Protected Tree Ordinance and fails to reflect the City's interest in fighting climate change and in protecting its tree canopy. The current decision fails to send a message that the City cares about their codes and seeks to protect the environment. We trust that the Council will vote to support Councilmember Ramen's motion and that the Council's future consideration of this matter will reflect the serious nature of the illegal actions documented.

Communication from Public

Name: Barbara Broide

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 08:40 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: It is important that the Council assert its jurisdiction in this case to overrule the Board of Public Works' decision that drastically reduced the penalty available against the property owner of 8461 W. Grand View Drive for the intentional removal of protected trees AFTER HAVING been notified of their presence. That notification was recorded on video and is available to the Council to view. The property owner in question (the subject/benefactor of the Board President's efforts to reduce any penalty because he is foreign born) is far from an unsophisticated individual. a) He admitted tracking the progress of the Wildlife Ordinance and stated that he decided to move forward with the tree clearing to avoid compliance with the measure. b) He hired a design/landscape architect whose renderings map all the trees (that were) on the property and subsequently hired two different firms (at different times) to destroy and remove the protected trees. c) He has taken extremely aggressive measures against members of the community who reported the protected tree violation by having cease and desist letters sent to them. (I am not familiar with such an action being taken in previous matters where citizens reported illegal behavior. It is akin to taking action against a whistle-blower and has resulted in at least one concerned citizen needing to consult with an attorney.) I attended and testified at the first hearing on this matter held by the Board of Public Works and was truly horrified at the position adopted by the Board's President. Despite the proof of intent presented, the Commission President led the meeting discussion and attempted to excuse the behavior of the property owner first claiming that she was taking into account the fact that he is foreign born, and that she did not know if the contractors hired by the property owner gave the owner proper information. She was, in essence saying that the City cannot enforce against the breaking of the law under existing LAMC if the owner (who hired the contractor) received incorrect information from a contractor. (And, no one knows the nature of communication between the owner and his contractor.) It does not matter. The Board ignored the recommendations of staff to seek the maximum penalty available of 7 years and even to a compromise suggestion discussed of 4 years. Instead the President seemed wed to a 2-year penalty which has resulted in virtually no penalty whatsoever given the

timeframe of the administrative process for the project coupled with the fact that the clock started running when the city was first notified of the issue. The penalty assessed by the Board of Public Works, if it stands, will expire on July 6, 2025. The message that such a ruling sends runs contrary to the intent of the City's Protected Tree Ordinance and compromises the City's interest in fighting climate change and in protecting its tree canopy. The current decision fails to send a message that the City cares about enforcement of adopted policy and is not serious about protecting the environment. It sends a message to lawbreakers that the consequences for bad behavior are negotiable and need not have negative impacts that would deter future bad behavior. In addition to concerns related to the President's efforts, this incident has also revealed the need to fine tune the Protected Tree Ordinance. One approach to strengthen the measure would be to have sellers /owners of properties declare under penalty of perjury the existence of any protected trees on their property and the number of such trees at the time of sale. (It is currently too easy for those reporting to put down a zero and I understand are sometimes advised by their realtors to do so.) I urge support for Councilmember Ramen's motion.

Communication from Public

Name: South LA Tree Coalition

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 08:41 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: May 13, 2024 Paul Kerkorian, Council President Los Angeles City Council City of Los Angeles 200 N Spring Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 RE: CF 24-0548 / BPW-2024-0168 / 8461 W. Grand View Drive Dear Council President Kerkorian, The South LA Tree Coalition is a local non-profit organization focusing on policies and programs that help protect the urban forest in South Los Angeles and increase tree canopy across our city. We request that the Los Angeles City Council assert jurisdiction of over the May 6, 2024 Board of Public Works action relative to the appeal filed by the property owner on the subject of illegal protected tree and shrub removal. We support the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Division and ask that the City Council, pursuant to LAMC 46.06, withhold building permits from the owner of 8461 West Grand View Drive for a period of seven (7) years for the illegal removal of the protected trees and shrubs on the property. Respectfully, Theresa Maysonet Co-Founder South LA Tree Coalition southlatrees@gmail.com About South LA Trees The South LA Tree Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded by women of color. Since its origins in 2021, in response to the removal of a grove of Protected Sycamore trees in South LA as a result of a development project, the SLA Tree Coalition works through grassroots efforts to prioritize the preservation, protection and growth of the urban forest and its tree canopy in South LA – a designated tree-poor region of the City. The SLA Tree Coalition aims to grow community awareness and agency in strengthening the role of trees as part of larger efforts including environmental justice, climate resiliency, biodiversity, and community wellness SouthLATrees.org



May 13, 2024

Paul Kerkorian, Council President
Los Angeles City Council
City of Los Angeles
200 N Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: CF 24-0548 / BPW-2024-0168 / 8461 W. Grand View Drive

Dear Council President Kerkorian,

The South LA Tree Coalition is a local non-profit organization focusing on policies and programs that help protect the urban forest in South Los Angeles and increase tree canopy across our city.

We request that the Los Angeles City Council assert jurisdiction of over the May 6, 2024 Board of Public Works action relative to the appeal filed by the property owner on the subject of illegal protected tree and shrub removal.

We support the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Division and ask that the City Council, pursuant to LAMC 46.06, **withhold building permits** from the owner of 8461 West Grand View Drive **for a period of seven (7) years** for the illegal removal of the protected trees and shrubs on the property.

Respectfully,

Theresa Maysonet
Co-Founder
South LA Tree Coalition
southlatrees@gmail.com

About South LA Trees

The South LA Tree Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded by women of color. Since its origins in 2021, in response to the removal of a grove of Protected Sycamore trees in South LA as a result of a development project, the SLA Tree Coalition works through grassroots efforts to prioritize the preservation, protection and growth of the urban forest and its tree canopy in South LA – a designated tree-poor region of the City. The SLA Tree Coalition aims to grow community awareness and agency in strengthening the role of trees as part of larger efforts including environmental justice, climate resiliency, biodiversity, and community wellness

Communication from Public

Name: Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 10:33 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: RE: Council File 24-0548 Strong Support Dear President Krekorian and Honorable City Council Members: The Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles (Coalition) requests that the Council votes to assert its jurisdiction in support of Councilmember Raman's 245 motion related to the illegal removal of protected trees and shrubs from 8461 West Grand View Drive. The motion will be heard on Tuesday's May 14, 2024 Council agenda (Item #20). It's important that the Council support the motion to overrule the Board of Public Works' decision that drastically reduced the penalty available for the intentional destruction of protected trees, which were removed AFTER the owner was notified of their presence. That notification was recorded on video and is available for the Council to view. Coalition members attended and testified at the first and second hearings held by the Board of Public Works on this matter, and were truly horrified by the position adopted by the Board's president, Aura Garcia. Garcia sought to excuse the property owner and diminish the seriousness of the actions taken -- first alluding to the fact that he was foreign born and then blaming the arborists hired by the applicant to remove the trees. President Garcia rejected the recommendations of City staff to seek the maximum penalty of 7 years and again to a compromise of 4 years. Instead, she promoted a 2-year penalty, which as adopted will result in virtually no penalty whatsoever, given the timeframe of the administrative process for the planned project coupled with the fact that the clock started running almost a year ago, when the City was first notified of the issue. The message that such a ruling would send runs contrary to the intent of the Protected Tree Ordinance and fails to reflect the City's interest in addressing climate change impacts by protecting its diminishing tree canopy. The current decision fails to convey that the City seeks to protect the environment and meaningfully enforce its codes. We trust that the Council will vote to support Councilmember Raman's motion and set a positive precedent that the Council's future consideration of this and similar matters will reflect the serious nature of the illegal actions documented. Thank you for your consideration, Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles

Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles

Defend our Public Spaces • Protect Our Visual Environment

May 13, 2024

Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

VIA EMAIL

RE: Council File 24-0548 Strong Support

Dear President Krekorian and Honorable City Council Members:

The Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles (Coalition) requests that the Council votes to assert its jurisdiction in support of Councilmember Raman's [245 motion](#) related to the illegal removal of protected trees and shrubs from 8461 West Grand View Drive. The motion will be heard on Tuesday's May 14, 2024 Council agenda (Item #20).

It's important that the Council support the motion to overrule the Board of Public Works' decision that drastically reduced the penalty available for the intentional destruction of protected trees, which were removed AFTER the owner was notified of their presence. That notification was recorded on video and is available for the Council to view.

Coalition members attended and testified at the first and second hearings held by the Board of Public Works on this matter, and were truly horrified by the position adopted by the Board's president, Aura Garcia. Garcia sought to excuse the property owner and diminish the seriousness of the actions taken -- first alluding to the fact that he was foreign born and then blaming the arborists hired by the applicant to remove the trees.

President Garcia rejected the recommendations of City staff to seek the maximum penalty of 7 years and again to a compromise of 4 years. Instead, she promoted a 2-year penalty, which as adopted will result in virtually no penalty whatsoever, given the timeframe of the administrative process for the planned project coupled with the fact that the clock started running almost a year ago, when the City was first notified of the issue.

The message that such a ruling would send runs contrary to the intent of the Protected Tree Ordinance and fails to reflect the City's interest in addressing climate change impacts by protecting its diminishing tree canopy. The current decision fails to convey that the City seeks to protect the environment and meaningfully enforce its codes.

We trust that the Council will vote to support Councilmember Raman's motion and set a positive precedent that the Council's future consideration of this and similar matters will reflect the serious nature of the illegal actions documented.

Thank you for your consideration,

Coalition for a Beautiful Los Angeles

Barbara Broide

Co-President

Wendy-Sue Rosen

Co-President

*200 S. Barrington Ave., Box 49583, Los Angeles, CA 90049
losangelesbeautiful@gmail.com*

Communication from Public

Name: Prissma

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 10:37 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: Please vote yes on Item 20, Council File 24-0548. It is important that the Protected Tree Ordinance is enforced. If the ordinance is not enforced, it will render the protected tree ordinance meaningless. Our protected trees are important to protecting wildlife, our children and future generations from the impacts of climate change.

Communication from Public

Name: Clara Solis

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 07:08 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: Please vote yes on Item 20, Council File 24-0548. It is important that the Protected Tree Ordinance is enforced. If the ordinance is not enforced, it will render the protected tree ordinance meaningless. Our protected trees are important to protecting wildlife, our children and future generations from the impacts of climate change. I treasure and fight for trees which are our children's future. They protect us. Not enforcing the protected tree ordinance encourages developers to remove our trees and jeopardizes the future of our children by accelerating climate change. I grew up next to the 60/ 710 freeway interchange in ELA where hundreds of trees in ELA were removed and where decades later they took out our parkway and most of our remaining oaks and sycamores. Now you can't find oaks and sycamores anywhere in ELA except in parks and cemeteries. This is the future for the City of Los Angeles that we are facing if the protected tree ordinance is not enforced.

Communication from Public

Name: Joanne D'Antonio

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 04:56 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: I support the veto. Tree protection laws are meaningless unless enforced. The tree removing crew was caught in the act and hired by the property owner. Why is the BPW decreasing the recommendation of the Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry Division. If tree removal requires a permit, then the owner should have gotten a permit, had is property inspected and formed a mitigation plan. There is huge public outcry at what happened at BPW -- it is all over the neighborhood council system. I speak as an individual here, but many stakeholders listened to the hearings and have come to me appalled at what happened at the BPW.

Communication from Public

Name: Laila Villalobos
Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 08:16 PM
Council File No: 24-0548
Comments for Public Posting: Please support Raman's motion filed on May 10 for an enforcement matter related to protected trees and protected shrubs from unpermitted removal. Immediate action by the council is needed to assert jurisdiction over the Board of Public Works decision in order to conduct further review.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 09:17 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: I urge support of Councilmember Ramen's motion.

Communication from Public

Name: Phil Davis

Date Submitted: 05/13/2024 11:27 PM

Council File No: 24-0548

Comments for Public Posting: I support Councilmember Ramen's 245 motion related to the illegal removal of protected trees and shrubs from the 8461 West Grand View Drive property in her district. The motion will be heard on Tuesday's May 14 Council agenda (#20).