

VENICE ARBOR COMMITTEE

MOTION CONCERNING VENICE NEIGHBORHOOD TREE GUIDELINES

The Venice Neighborhood Council recognizes the significant contributions including the environmental, aesthetic, privacy, and economic benefits provided by a large and thriving tree canopy and understands that maintaining and increasing the shade tree canopy is essential to the health and vitality of our stakeholders. We, therefore, in land use matters, have established building guidelines to provide design standards for preserving, maintaining and increasing our tree canopy. Creativity and thoughtfulness regarding our tree canopy are on par to requests for height, density and parking considerations and projects adhering to these guidelines will receive preferential treatment during our review process. The Venice Neighborhood Council adopts these guidelines at the earliest possible date to be transmitted to the CD11 office, and mayor's office, and appropriate city department officials, for consideration for later translation into legislation; as follows:

Guidelines

- Protect existing mature trees and incorporate them as a design feature. Show all existing trees on site surveys and plans at the beginning of the design process. If possible identify the species and size and design new construction around them. Plan for and locate utilities away from existing trees.
- For passive solar considerations plant deciduous trees on the south side of property (to protect from hot summer sun and allow the winter sun) and evergreen on the north side of the property to protect from colder winter winds.
- Plant trees and/or install shade structures to increase comfort and provide passive cooling opportunities.
- Provide canopy trees in planting areas for shade and energy efficiency, especially on south and southwest facing façades. For passive solar considerations plant deciduous trees on the south side of property (to protect from hot summer sun and allow the winter sun) and evergreen on the north side of the property to protect from colder winter winds.
- Plant shade-producing street trees at the minimum spacing permitted by the Division of Urban Forestry to create a consistent rhythm.
- Retain existing healthy, mature street trees to the extent possible.
- Select trees that are suitable for the climate and capable of attaining the largest canopy size possible given spatial constraints, in consultation with Urban Forestry Division.
- Submit tree planting design, exclusive of landscaping design, during review process.
- Priority given to native tree species with special consideration to species that provide large leafy canopies, including Coast Live Oak and Western Sycamores, both of which support wildlife and encourage biodiversity.
- Design efforts be made for inground planting, including subterranean considerations; including simple accommodations at the sublevel to accommodate inground trees.
- Efforts be made to preserve existing trees at the perimeter of property.
- When necessary to trench near or adjacent to a tree, use hand tools for digging to avoid cutting large roots.

- Water and maintenance commitment of five (5) years for any new tree plantings, including street trees.
- Design efforts to be made to increase tree well size to accommodate large canopy trees.
- Tree replacement ratios including number and size are based on number and size of tree(s) requested for removal.
- Consideration for waiving side yard setbacks requirements to encourage preservation of all trees along the lot lines.
- Guarantee of new tree planting success, under certain circumstances, may require a bond and/or covenants for maintenance of newly planted trees.
- In the public right-of-way or adjacent to sidewalks/pathways, design efforts should be made to create bump-outs to accommodate large mature trees.
- Design efforts in right of way to accommodate large canopy trees.
- Consideration of driveway placement to retain existing street/yard trees might include narrowing parts of the driveway or meandering it.
- Creative design efforts be made to look for every possible opportunity to increase shade tree canopy.
- In the rare exception when the loss of a tree cannot be avoided, a community benefit package may be required as a possible mitigation.

There is an exponential increase in the value of large, mature trees and their associated environmental and health benefits. The impact of removing large, mature, viable trees cannot be overstated and cannot be mitigated by planting small individual trees. The deep and cyclical benefits that an individual, large mature tree offers to the community in which it is situated are infinite. Damage and disregard of individual trees, on a site-specific basis, pose dire cumulative impacts when contextualized by the many similar actions that remove trees throughout a community. The VNC will continue to make every effort to preserve our tree canopy and looks forward to working with those who share in this endeavor.

Distribution List:

Traci Park – CD11

The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Department

The California Coastal Commission

The Department of Public Works

Los Angeles Planning Department