



Catherine Palmer <council@babenc.org>

Tree Removals at 9966 Liebe Drive

Mindy Mann <msrmann@gmail.com>
To: Catherine Palmer <council@babenc.org>

Tue, Feb 10, 2026 at 6:29 PM

Dear Members of the PLU Committee,

I am OPPOSED to the tree removal request for 17 protected trees for the redevelopment of a single family home at 9966 Liebe Drive, Item# 3 on the agenda, for several reasons:

1. The Protected Tree Ordinance was passed for the purpose of “protecting” several species that were deemed to be critical and in need of preservation. The spirit of this Ordinance is no longer being honored. If someone presents a plan to the city, in most cases, as long as they pay a fee, and show that they will plant the 4:1 replacement, then they are issued the permit allowing them to remove the protected trees/shrubs. The replacement was intended only as a last resort, not as a given exchange. Replacements are problematic for so many reasons. It takes many years for a 15 or even a 24 gallon tree to grow and provide the canopy and benefits provided by a mature tree. In addition, many replacement trees don’t survive either due to natural problems or due to simple neglect (in fact, a good percentage die in the first year after they are planted).

Only one of the 18 listed protected trees is being saved. I can’t help but wonder whether there couldn’t have been more time and effort spent finding a way to design the retaining walls in such a way that would have saved more of the trees.

2. The current tree replacement plan calls for 68 protected trees to be planted on the upper slope. The photo below shows that the upper slope is heavily covered with vegetation that appears to be the native chaparral combined with non-native vegetation. We do not have a current list indicating whether there are any protected shrubs in this area.

Are we going to destroy this native habitat for the purpose of planting the 68 trees? Has there been any kind of environmental study to indicate the impact on wildlife?

3. Assuming that there is a study, and it is environmentally sound to plant the 68 trees on the upper slope, how are they going to get access to the steep slope and successfully plant 24” boxes? And how are they going to keep these trees properly maintained and irrigated so they succeed and flourish? Furthermore, Oaks need a lot of space to grow – they have large canopies. Is there sufficient space for 68 trees to grow into mature trees?

My guess is that a good portion of these trees will die within the first year either from improper planting, or from improper maintenance. Who is going to monitor their success or hold the developer accountable if they do not survive?

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mindy Rothstein Mann