



ECTYPOS

ARCHITECTURE

January 20, 2023
Updated: 2/6/2023

John Kenney, City Arborist
City of Mercer Island

Re: Permit # 2202-225—8435 SE 47th Pl.—memo supplemental to Sub4—Removal of exceptional tree #22. Refer to attached drawings AR-1 and C2

Dear John,

Per our conversation on 12/23/2022 we are indicating as removed tree #22, Scouler's Willow, an exceptional tree due to circumstances outlined below. The tree may not require removal, but this can only be determined when excavation and shoring work along the driveway are complete.

The site is a Critical Area—steep slopes with geologic hazards and potential for erosion. Much of this project has been driven by the conditions found on the site: the existing trees and some old grading that created a driveway ramp to a building pad (site access). The design seeks to utilize existing grading to the greatest extent feasible, avoiding impact to trees that bring aesthetic value, significant environmental and geo-structural function to the site and allow for over-all responsible development of the site.

The design had to balance requirements from fire; geotechnical; stormwater and utilities; and trees, all ultimately life safety issues (**MICC 19.10.060.3(a)**). To achieve Fire's required maximum 20% slope, we need to significantly excavate for the access ramp/driveway. Through a Fire Code Alternate we were able to reduce the required 20' wide driveway to 14', allowing an additional 6' breadth to the trees northwest of the driveway. This, however, necessitated shoring. Our decision to go with nail shoring minimizes the impact to the majority of existing trees. Tree #22, according to development standards, will be impacted by this work. It's current condition, however, shows it clinging to the hillside with bare roots exposed, while all proposed work is downhill from this. **Please see the attached photo on page 2 of this memo.** The site work may create a situation where this condition is actually improved allowing the tree to be maintained as stated above and ultimately thrive.

The design is a compact building which minimizes site work to the greatest extent feasible. The lot size is 19360 sf with an allowed GFA of 7744 sf. The proposed GFA is 4390.5 sf or 56.7% of allowed, stacked on 3 floors. This is well below the 85% of allowed GFA threshold for the removal of an exceptional tree (**MICC 19.10.060.3(b)**). Site work, too is as limited as possible, utilizing retaining walls only where absolutely necessary to mitigate grading and the driveway. A minimum amount of space required for car maneuvering and parking is provided at the top of the access ramp.



In the event the tree requires removal we are re-submitting the Arborist drawing (AR-1) with (14) replacement trees (R#). All limits of disturbance are shown on C-2 with distances to the trunks from protective fencing.

Maintaining tree #22 will make reasonable development of this site impossible. Its sacrifice allows for responsible development including the maintenance of several other trees that would otherwise need to be removed.

Best regards,

Lucia Pirzio-Biroli, AIA

Photo of tree #22 showing clinging to hillside with drop immediately below

