

From: [Sue Perry](mailto:Sue.Perry)
To: jthatcher@a2gov.org; HDC; [Gray, Kerry](mailto:Gray.Kerry)
Subject: 529 Sixth Street/landmark tree removal request
Date: Monday, February 08, 2016 2:00:25 PM

There are now more than a few of us that are much concerned about the homeowner request/application to the planning commission for removal of a landmark walnut tree at 529 Sixth Street, based on her daughter's allergies.

(1) I have owned the home next door, at 529 Sixth, since 1987, and believe that the subject tree lies partly on my property. Please [see below](#) my communications with the current owners, the Waugh's, who purchased 529 Sixth in 2014.

(2) Some initial research shows me that the allergy concern is likely not an issue to warrant removal of the tree, including this from Dennis K. Ledford M.D., Director of The American Academy Of Allergy Asthma & Immunology, Inc.: " *I am convinced by the available literature and clinical experience that there is no significant risk associated with a tree nut allergic person engaging in activities in close proximity to a tree, even with nuts on the ground around the tree.*" <http://www.aaaai.org/ask-the-expert/inhaled-tree-nut-allergen.aspx>

(3) The Waugh's have just completed extensive home renovations - - all very lovely - - including a new rear deck just steps from the walnut tree - - and I understand that walnuts dropping on their deck can be problematic.

(4) I've had a local forester take a brief look at this tree, and though it has sustained a lightning strike in the past, it appears to be structurally sound and will likely be there for many, many years to come.

I am not without sympathy for those with walnut trees in their yards. My personal home at 1708 Fair has nothing but walnut trees in the backyard (6 of them !). I am able to minimize the "mess" caused during the weeks of "nut drop", mostly by being vigilant during this time and collecting the nuts before the soft outer shell begins to deteriorate.

---- The Waugh's were aware before purchasing the home that the walnut tree was there.

---- If the allergic condition is only activated upon eating the nut itself, I don't see how anyone, much less a child, could gain access to the actual nut. It practically takes a sledgehammer to get through the hard inner shell. And I have yet in 30 years, to see a squirrel leave a smidgen of the actual fruit/nut anywhere in my yard.

---- Removal of this tree would still leave walnut roots (containing juglone, if that is the issue) in the soil for many years/decades to come.

---- Though I had a large lower limb removed from my side of the tree last year ([see below](#)) since it was were crushing the mature lilac bushes below), there is still a very huge limb on the 529 side - - which, if removed, might eliminate much of the "messy deck" problem for the Waughs.

---- There are many other walnut trees adjacent to and nearby 529 Sixth, and of course, the squirrels will continue to carry, drop, and bury many walnuts in all of the surrounding yards, including 529.

---- Across the United States, there are others that have asked to remove maple, walnut, and other trees based on allergy reasons, and almost all have been denied.

---- Does the City of Ann Arbor have any precedence or previous experience with this type of request ?

I would appreciate any information you could share with us on this. Will there be an actual hearing or meeting ? When? Where? Will the neighbors be notified in writing, either by the HDC or Planning Commission or the City of this request/process?

As an adjacent homeowner, I would very much like to resolve this issue in a friendly fashion with the Waugh's - - and that is why I initially called them upon learning of their request via the Planning Commission general emails I receive.

Lastly, as a charter and founding member of the Ann Arbor Tree Conservancy, and a current member of the Elizabeth Dean Trust Fund Committee, I am concerned about the unnecessary removal of a landmark tree.

Thanks for your time and assistance.

Sue Perry
1708 Fair
Ann Arbor
662-3321

----- Original Message -----

From: Sue Perry
To: allison.waugh@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, February 07, 2016 8:42 PM
Subject: Walnut tree / 529-535 Sixth

Allison:

Was good to speak with you the other night about the walnut tree. Thanks for letting me know of your concerns.

I am still under the impression that this tree lies partly on my property as well, and so would request no actual work be done until we have our common lot line surveyed. In either case, I would still have strong reservations about having this grand landmark tree removed, and would hope that perhaps some other remedies or precautions might be taken to safeguard your daughter from her tree nut allergies.

Please feel free to call me again to further discuss if you wish. Thanks !

Sue
662-3321

----- Original Message -----

From: Sue Perry
To: Allison Waugh
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2016 7:11 PM
Subject: Walnut tree / 529-535 Sixth

Allison:

I don't seem to have phone number for you, just this email from our previous contact. Could you give me a call - or could I call you about the walnut tree? I see you are thinking of removing it ? Thanks !

Sue Perry
734-662-3321

----- Original Message -----

From: Allison Waugh
To: Sue Perry
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 9:31 AM
Subject: Re: Walnut tree / 529-535 Sixth

Hello Sue,

That sounds fine. I've actually contacted a few arborists, but was not able to get anyone to come out and take a look. So this is great timing. I'll contact Cam Knight to discuss the limbs he recommended for our side.

Thanks,

Allison Waugh

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 22, 2014, at 5:28 PM, "Sue Perry" <sueperry@comcast.net> wrote:

Justin and Allison:

Hope you are enjoying your new home !!

I met briefly with Cam Knight today to look at the walnut tree that straddles our lot lines. He gave me an estimate to do some tree work for me at 535 Sixth, including taking some of the lower limbs off the walnut, specifically several limbs that now over-reach onto the tops of the lilac bushes.

Am not sure how soon he will do this work, but he said if you wanted several limbs taken off you side of the tree as well (there were several that he recommended removing) he would do this for about \$250.00 while he was there.

His cell number is 649-6721 and his home phone is 995-4090.

Wanted to make sure it was OK with you that he remove the limbs on my side, and also OK that he drives his equipment up under the or near the tree.

Would be glad to answer any questions. Thanks !

Sue

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