

From: john Doe ripnbud@gmail.com
Subject: Burien Tree regulations and findings
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All lot owners:

I just saw a request forwarded by Lee from Dale requesting trimming the Cedar that lies on the corner of my lot, though it could also be the cedar on Parcel-B. I looked into the impact of the new Burien 2022 tree regulations on my lot last year in-response to a tree cutting request from Dale involving the large big leaf maple 10' from my house, after learning a neighbor to the north was fined by Burien for unpermitted tree work. In the past I've allowed neighbors to pay for tree work on both the maple and cedar for view enhancement, but had concerns this Maple looked sickly and should be given time to recover due to the severe cutting Bryce/Thundering oak did summer 2021. There were various email exchanges with Dale and Chuck on this.

I contacted Burien city arborist Josh Petters to determine how the new regs apply to me and learned the following that apply to many lots on our street that everyone should be aware of. The full dialogue with Josh is [here](#) which also includes a link to a [doc](#) I shared showing the tree situation on my parcel. Key things to know related to covenant tree cutting requests and/or tree work on your respective properties:

- My lot and many others on our street are either wholly or partially in landslide critical areas as shown in this [link](#).
- Joe Swanzy recently mentioned there was a landslide back in the late 80's early 90's on the 15101 property (Kevin Carl) adjacent to my lot. I commissioned a pre-purchase 15101 geotech evaluation in 1998 where there was evidence of an earlier slide, so I pulled my offer. There have been other landslides to the north as well. My lot is at risk, as are others on our street.
- Burien regs require an approved veg mgt plan before cutting or removing trees in landslide critical areas, and work on exceptional trees they call out.
- "Exceptional Trees" including my Big Leaf maple, Madrone, and Cedar in-general cannot be topped or removed. See Josh dialogue for details.
- Josh reviewed our SWA covenants to determine compatibility with the new Burien tree regs and determined covenants have provisions for lot owners to deny tree cutting requests if the **proposed alteration will produce a hazard or irreparably harm the tree** (see Josh dialogue). Current covenants are compatible with new regs.
- I needed and obtained a Burien veg mgt plan for my lot. It cost ~\$1400 that included a \$366 plan review fee, and hiring [Arborist Josiah McCauley/SpringTreeExperts](#) to create and submit the plan. Expect to pay roughly this amount before doing any tree work on your lots
- Holly trees are called out on the [KC noxious weeds link](#) and are generally ok to cut back as they have good root systems and are very difficult to kill. Josiah cut back one on my lot to help improve Swanzy's view and reduced another below my decks. Most of the trees Eric cut are Hollies.
- Pruning work not involving exceptional trees seems to be permitted without a veg mgt plan, though I recommend you scrutinize Burien regs first

My take on these Burien regs is they are useful in my situation but may not be something others on our street want to deal with. Your call. The effect of these regs is a continuing loss of views over time since they often restrict tree topping and removal. Take a look at my tree situation [doc](#) link and notice you can see the sound from just above the turn-around and compare that to what you see today.

Figure-3: Alternate view as seen in 2007:



Google 2007 street level view 2680 SW 151st Place

In the past many on our street have used ThunderingOak (Bryce Lundgren) for tree work. I've used him before and he did good work but his recent 2021 work on my maple killed significant portions of the tree and he left nearly all the cuttings on the hill creating a fire hazard (ref Palisades and Oakland CA fires) while making future work more difficult. Eventually I'll need to remove this mess. More recently Bryce did work (said he would but didn't get permits) on Kevin's place and left another huge mess above my lot and Swanzy's. I'm planning to use Josiah for all future tree work and don't plan to bring Bryce back.

Regarding my trees that Josia/SpringTree worked on this past Dec/Jan...

- They reduced the canopy of the large Madrone that previously crashed onto my house. Burien regs have provisions for hazard mitigation. I hope this cutting improves the view for uphill neighbors.
- They did pruning work on various trees below my house cutting them back to previous cuttings which apparently is permitted
- Josiah did note that once my Maple recovers he plans to cut back the 5-6 ~30' dead spurs and work on the canopy for tree health. I'm fine paying for this since I cannot have this tree crashing into my house. If there are opportunities for additional cutting for view enhancement I'll notify affected neighbors.

Jay