

# Urban Forestry Council

## Landmark Tree Evaluation Form and Criteria

Pursuant to Ordinance 0017-06 and Public Works Code Section 810, the UFC has developed these criteria for evaluating potential landmark trees in San Francisco. When evaluating or considering potential landmark trees, please consider the context of the tree within its site location. For example, a tree on PUC land may not have the same community importance that a street or park tree would. Use comment sections, as appropriate, to explain or support evaluation. Attach sheets if more space is needed.

Evaluator's name: Rose Hillson

Date of evaluation: September 30, 2016; Date submitted: Oct. 6, 2016 at LTC meeting

Scientific name: Sequoia sempervirens

Common name: Coast redwood

Street address: 4 Montclair Terrace

Cross streets: Lombard

**Rarity**     Yes     Partially     No

**Rarity:**  Rare     Uncommon     Common     Other

Unusual species in San Francisco or other geographic regions.

Comment: The species is categorized as "rare" in sources on the Internet. Other sources say this species is "endangered." <http://www.conifers.org/cu/Sequoia.php> It is listed on the Red List. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sequoia\\_sempervirens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sequoia_sempervirens) See also under "Historical" & "Cultural Appreciation" below.

**Physical Attributes**     Yes     Partially     No

**Size:**  Large     Medium     Small

Notable size compared to other trees of the same species in San Francisco.

Comment: The base of the tree appeared at a distance to be at least 5 feet across. Per the application submitted, it was stated that the arborist would provide the dimensions. See also under here "Distinguished Form."

**Age:**  Yes     No

Significantly advanced age for the species.

Comment: The tree species is known to have a long life so the lower end of 54 years is not significantly advanced. This tree does not appear to be senescent.

**Distinguished form:**  Yes     No

Tree is an example of good form for its species, has a majestic quality or otherwise unique structure.

Describe: Majestic tall tree in the heart of San Francisco with good canopy. Appears healthy and not senescent. Color is very nice green, nice root structure above ground seen. The tree has one main trunk, nice tapering conical form, very dominant feature and in prominent position in the yard that is

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planted by lovely under-plantings of a variety of species. The feeling is that of being in a forest. The tree has a low center of gravity and has good vigor.

**Tree condition:**  Good  Poor  Hazard

Consider overall tree health and structure, and whether or not tree poses a hazard

Describe: Appears to be in good health, with many full branches starting approximately 12 feet from ground. The tree is growing straight up. The canopy is about 20 feet across at the wide section on the lower part and tapers to the top.

**Historical**  Yes  Partially  No

**Historical Association:**  Yes  None apparent

Related to a historic or cultural building, site, street, person, event, etc.

Describe nature of appreciation: Tree is very visible from the world-famous “crooked street” in San Francisco, Lombard, as it is on the first parcel adjacent to this street off of Montclair Terrace. Past history relayed to me include an international event with a twin sapling planted for peace. There was also a historical event with a tree blessing (see under “Cultural” below). A painter and photographer named Andrew P. Hill started to involve people in higher office to focus on the species. The species was discussed in preventing further logging by Assemblyman Crabb (per conifers.org website above) when the “Sempervirens Club” was formed to protect these trees. The species and the location are important in regards to this Club and the conservation movement for these redwoods and laws signed by the Governor including Governor Gage for the Big Basin Park. Per the property owner, the block of Montclair was also part of the Hearst family home and horse stables. The property on which the tree sits was a stomping ground were William Randolph Hearst and his playmates danced the Irish jig. Per the property owner, the connection with the redwood species and the campaigns to save it led to roads from Big Basin to the City and the southern reaches of San Jose with the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Mrs. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, a well-known San Francisco resident was also a long-time supporter of Big Basin Park which has this redwood species. This tree is a reminder of the importance of this species in the Conservation Movement even to this day. This tree species is part of San Francisco history and the CA state parks and the City’s role to protect the redwoods. [https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/21299/files/bb\\_final%20gp\\_web%20version.pdf](https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/21299/files/bb_final%20gp_web%20version.pdf)  
See “Neighborhood Character” below.

**Profiled in a publication or other media:**  Yes  Unknown

Tree has received coverage in print, internet, video media, etc. **Attach documentation** if appropriate.

Describe coverage: \_\_\_\_\_

**Environmental**  Yes  Partially  No

**Prominent landscape feature:**  Yes  No

A striking and outstanding natural feature.

Describe, attach photo if possible: The tree has received numerous comments from all the worldwide visitors to the Lombard Street tourist area. It is the only large sequoia on this block. I have not seen another one in this nearby area near the highest point of the hill of the crooked street. In a dominant featured location of yard.

**Low tree density:**  Low  Moderate  High

Tree exists in a neighborhood with very few trees.

Describe: There are other trees in the nearby parcels but not as big as this tree.

**Interdependent group of trees:**  Yes  No

This tree in an integral member of a group of trees and removing it may have an adverse impact on adjacent trees.

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Visible or Accessible from public right-of-way:**  Yes  No

High visibility and/or accessibility from public property.

Describe: Very visible from Montclair Terrace and from the crooked part of Lombard Street. The tree is periodically made available to the public. Undeniably viewable and accessible by the public and from the public streets around there.

**High traffic area:**  Yes  No

Tree is located in an area that has a high volume of vehicle, pedestrian or bike traffic and has a potential traffic calming effect.

Describe: The crooked part of Lombard Street was heavily trafficked until the recent closure to vehicles; however, per this criteria, it is still a high trafficked area for pedestrians. There is still lots of traffic around the crooked street. The calming effect would be that people cannot miss it and stop to gaze at this nice looking tree in this urban setting.

**Important wildlife habitat:**  Yes  No

Species has a known relationship with a particular local wildlife species or it provides food, shelter, or nesting to specific known wildlife individuals. Have been informed that there are many species of birds nesting in the tree throughout the years. Avian visitors include the famous wild parrots of Telegraph Hill including hummingbirds.

**Erosion control:**  Yes  No

Tree prevents soil erosion.

Describe: May prevent soil erosion from around the house though where it stands is fairly flat. But in the overall context of that neighborhood, the tree could be holding back some soil erosion for the rest of the downhill properties as it is located not too far from the top of the hill along Lombard Street.

**Wind or sound barrier:**  Yes  No

Tree reduces wind speed or mitigates undesirable noise.

Describe: There was no wind in the garden where the tree stood; however, near the top, I would assume there is some buffering of the wind. Once in the garden, there was little traffic noise or other noises heard. I would think a large tree with this canopy would have some wind buffering or sound buffering for the neighbors and the property.

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**Cultural**  Yes  Partially  No

**Neighborhood appreciation:**  Yes  None apparent

Multiple indicators such as letters of support, petition, outdoor gatherings, celebrations adjacent or related to tree, etc. Attach documentation:

Describe: I was informed that there is neighborhood appreciation and have been activities related to the tree in the past. See also "Historical" above.

**Cultural appreciation:**  Yes  None apparent

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Particular value to certain cultural or ethnic groups in the city.

Describe nature of appreciation: The tree is a native species of California. The species has been associated with the native American Indians. The story told to me was that this particular tree has been blessed in a special ceremony by an Indian chief. This tree may be the only sequoia blessed in the City by a native American – an instance in the City’s cultural and history of an indigenous people blessing an indigenous tree. The tree is also represented overseas by a twin sapling to represent peace between the City and that location. Various CA coast Indian tribes including the Miwok who lived in the City used the tree species for shelter due to its thick and insulating bark (<http://www.treegirl.org/coast-redwood.html>).

The species is also part of the building infrastructure and culture of the City as much of the initial homes built in the City was made with the wood from this species: “A magnificent species found only in California and a tiny sliver of Oregon, the coast redwood would provide more than a mammoth share to the infrastructure of the burgeoning populace of San Francisco, and in the process be nearly sawed and milled to virginal extinction.” (<http://www.trampsofsanfrancisco.com/blogs/>). See also “Rarity” above.

**Planting contributes to neighborhood character:**     \_X\_Yes            \_No

Tree contributes significantly to, or represents, neighborhood aesthetic.

Describe contribution: Trees are appreciated by neighbors per applicant. The large trees contribute to balance out a couple of the larger trees upslope with the smaller trees downslope and provides a mid-area location for this larger tree. Lombard Street is planted with understory greenery and the large sequoia offers a sense of being in a forest to complement this greenery on the street below. The juxtaposition of the colorful ground plantings with this tall indigenous tree of importance to the City and State as a whole contributes to the neighborhood character. See association to historic character with the Hearst family home and the connection to the redwoods.

**Profiled in a publication or other media:**     \_Yes            \_X\_Unknown

Tree has received coverage in print, internet, video media, etc. **Attach documentation** if appropriate.

Describe coverage: \_\_\_\_\_

**Prominent landscape feature:** \_X\_Yes            \_No

A striking and outstanding natural feature.

Describe, attach photo if possible: See pictures.

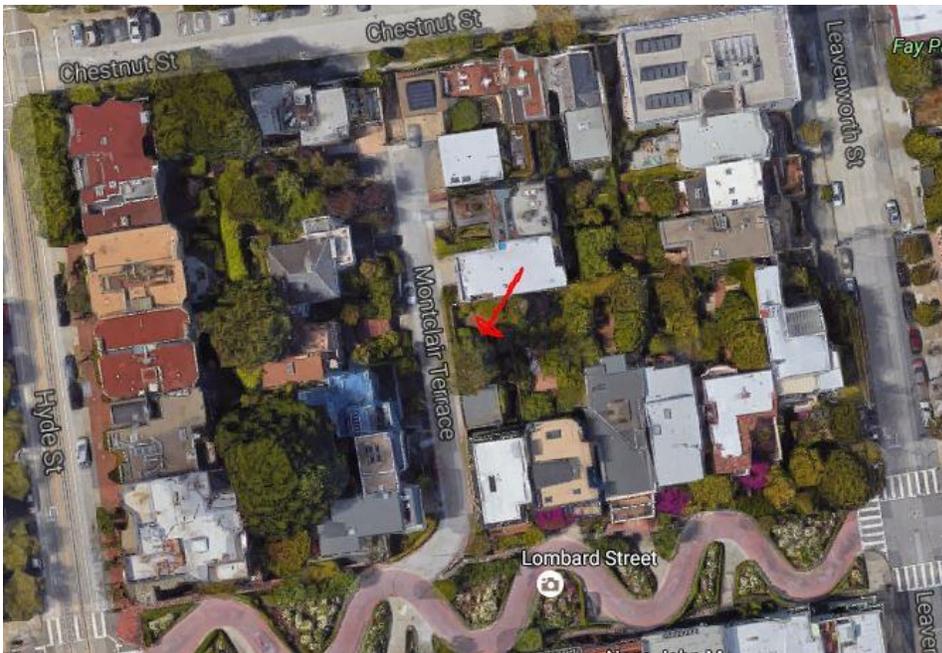
**Additional comments**

Environmentally, this large tree is better at carbon and storm water sequestration and produces more oxygen than smaller species trees or saplings. This tree was stated to have been planted in 1962 so it is at least 54 years old. Per the application, it is 90 feet tall and enjoyed by the many tourists who visit. No electrical wires overhead, clear sunny day for evaluation with little to no wind. See additional pictures.

**4 Montclair Terrace Coast Redwood Pictures**  
(*Sequoia sempervirens*)  
Evaluation Date: Friday, September 30, 2016



Pictures continued on next page.



Google Map