

# 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: Mei Ling Hui

Date of evaluation: September 30, 2016

Scientific name: *Sequoia sempervirens*

Common name: Coast Redwood

Street address: 4 Montclair Terrace

Cross streets: Lombard Street; mid-block of the curvy part of Lombard.

**Rarity**    \_\_\_ Yes     Partially    \_\_\_ No

**Rarity:** \_\_\_ Rare         Uncommon        \_\_\_ Common        \_\_\_ Other

Unusual species in San Francisco or other geographic regions.

Comment: Redwoods can be found in San Francisco, and while there are two other specimens on this block (one of which is in poor condition uphill), they are not so common that they are in every neighborhood.

**Physical Attributes**     Yes    \_\_\_ Partially    \_\_\_ No

**Size:**     Large        \_\_\_ Medium        \_\_\_ Small

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

Comment: This is an iconic tree species for California, due to the extreme stature that these trees can reach in coastal California forests. This tree in an urban setting cannot be compared to ancient specimens in wild forests. It is uncommon to find any tree of this size on a private residential lot. Measurements are approximately 200" circumference/63.66" DBH with a 30'+ canopy spread from North-South.

**Age:** \_\_\_ Yes     No

Significantly advanced age for the species.

Comment: This is an iconic tree species for California, due to the extreme age that these trees can reach in coastal California forests. This tree in an urban setting cannot be compared to ancient specimens in wild forests. The property owner, Mrs. Jaye, reports that she planted the tree in 1962 or 1963, making this tree 53 or 54 years old. While this is not an advanced age for this species of tree, a 50-year-old tree would be considered a very mature tree in a private property setting in San Francisco.

**Distinguished form:**     Yes    \_\_\_ No

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

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Describe: The tree appears to have been pruned to thin the branches, which are well spaced, and was also potentially pruned to narrow the canopy. The tree does, however, retain a natural shape and form and is quite lovely.

**Tree condition:**         Good         Poor         Hazard

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

Describe: The arborist report provided by the property owner finds the tree is in very good condition. The tree appears to be healthy. The property owner reported that she has been providing supplemental water to the tree during the drought, which may be contributed to the tree's good condition.

**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: I search the Main Library Historic photo database and found one picture that may include the tree, but

**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: I found a reference to garden spaces that remained from initial settlement and area development in the early 1900s on Russian Hill Neighborhood Association's website here:

<http://rhnsf.org/history/walks/russian-hill-ii-the-north-slope/>. This reference indicates that the garden spaces mid-block from Montclair to Leavenworth – where the tree is located – have possible historical significance related to Carl Henry and the Hearst family who lived on the block and installed the gardens. The property owner, Mrs. Jaye, has restored the garden courtyard on her property to include the rose variety that was first planted there in the early 1900s. Additionally, the provided link notes that in the 1960s a resident on Montclair Terrace led an effort to purchase a lot on the block to convert to a park; I was informed that this resident was the property owner Mrs. Jaye.

**Environmental**     Yes     Partially     No

**Prominent landscape feature:**  Yes     No

A striking and outstanding natural feature.

Describe, attach photo if possible: Trees of this maturity and stature are uncommon in private residential settings in San Francisco. This tree makes significant contributions to the area's celebrated garden aesthetic.

**Low tree density:**         Low         Moderate         High

Tree exists in a neighborhood with very few trees.

**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.

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

High visibility and/or accessibility from public property.

Describe: The tree can be seen from Lombard and the Montclair terrace steps, as well as further downhill on Lombard. It is visible in many of the photos I found online regarding Lombard street.

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**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: As a major tourist destination, the street has an incredibly high volume of vehicular, pedestrians, and small motorized vehicle (such as Segway tour) traffic. Traffic must move slowly due to the repeated street switch backs, and the tree itself is located on a small, dead-end street off Lombard.

**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.

Describe: Though we have not obtained photographic evidence, I think it's likely that this tree serves as wildlife habitat. The property owner, Mrs. Jaye, reported that many birds nest in this tree. During my site visit I observed parrots flying near the tree, but could not discern if the parrots were nesting in the tree or just flying by.

**Erosion control:**  Yes  No

Tree prevents soil erosion.

Describe: The tree is located on a steep hill, and the ground level for the tree is below the grade of the sidewalk that's immediately adjacent to the west of the tree. There is also a retaining wall that appears to be securing the hillside, so I don't think the tree prevents soil erosion.

**Wind or sound barrier:**  Yes  No

Tree reduces wind speed or mitigates undesirable noise.

Describe: It was notably quieter and less windy within in garden area beneath the tree than on street level next to the tree. There is an incredibly high volume of people on the street, with associated noise of vacationers enjoying the location. In the garden beneath the tree, I could not hear noise from Lombard.

**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: We have been informed by the property owner that multiple neighbors are planning to attend the hearings in support of the tree. Two letters of support have been submitted and I've received one call in support of the nomination and one call opposing the nomination.

**Cultural appreciation:**  Yes  None apparent

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

Describe nature of appreciation: Though the tree was blessed by a Native American Elder, I was not able to find details on this ceremony. The property owner also noted that a "sister tree" was planted in Japan, though I was not able to secure details on that before the Landmark Committee hearing either.

**Planting contributes to neighborhood character:**  Yes  No

Tree contributes significantly to, or represents, neighborhood aesthetic.

Describe contribution:

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

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Tree has received coverage in print, internet, video media, etc. **Attach documentation** if appropriate. Describe coverage: I found a reference to garden spaces that remained from initial settlement and area development in the early 1900s on Russian Hill Neighborhood Association’s website here: <http://rhnsf.org/history/walks/russian-hill-ii-the-north-slope/>. This reference indicates that the garden spaces mid-block from Montclair to Leavenworth – where the tree is located – have possible historical significance related to Carl Henry and the Hearst family who lived on the block and installed the gardens. The property owner, Mrs. Jaye, has restored the garden courtyard on her property to include the rose variety that was first planted there in the early 1900s. Additionally, the provided link notes that in the 1960s a resident on Montclair Terrace led an effort to purchase a lot on the block to convert to a park; I was informed that this resident was the property owner Mrs. Jaye.

**Prominent landscape feature:**  Yes       No

A striking and outstanding natural feature.

Describe, attach photo if possible: The tree is quite large, well formed, appears to be in good condition and adds significantly to the area’s garden aesthetic, which is a major contributor to the street’s status as one of San Francisco’s favorite tourist destinations.



1972 photo retrieved from SF Library Historic Photo Database on 10/4/16, which possible includes the tree (circled in red).

Photo description: View of crooked section of Lombard Street from Telegraph Hill

Photo taken: 1972 Feb. 23.

Photo ID Number: AAB-4488



Historic postcard that includes the tree, circled in red. The postmark notes that this card was mailed in 1976. Retrieved on 10/5/16 from <http://picclick.co.uk/Cal-San-Francisco-Lombard-Street-The-Crookedest-Street-182302330339.html>



Historic postcard that includes the tree, circled in red. The postmark notes that this card was mailed in 1983. Retrieved on 10/5/16 from <http://piclick.co.uk/California-Lombard-Street-The-Crookedest-Street-San-Francisco-182302330188.html>

**Additional comments**

Short list of some information and travel articles that include pictures where the tree is visible:  
<https://www.oyster.com/articles/54663-10-outdoor-attractions-you-cant-miss-in-san-francisco/>

<http://travel-tips.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/holiday-travel-tips-hotel-car-hire-USA-California-San-Francisco-p4.htm>

[https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction\\_Review-g60713-d106232-Reviews-Lombard\\_Street-San\\_Francisco\\_California.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g60713-d106232-Reviews-Lombard_Street-San_Francisco_California.html)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian\\_Hill,\\_San\\_Francisco#/media/File:Russian\\_Hill.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Hill,_San_Francisco#/media/File:Russian_Hill.jpg)

<https://authenticwinecountry.wordpress.com/2013/01/02/san-franciscos-lombard-street-the-crookedest-street-in-the-world/>

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/northern-california/san-francisco/enchanted-san-francisco/>

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Historical information about the block:

<http://rhnsf.org/history/walks/russian-hill-ii-the-north-slope/>

[http://www.sfcityguides.org/public\\_guidelines.html?article=1012&submitted=TRUE&srch\\_text&submitted2&topic=neighborhoods](http://www.sfcityguides.org/public_guidelines.html?article=1012&submitted=TRUE&srch_text&submitted2&topic=neighborhoods)

Some current postcards that include images of the tree:

[http://www.happymall.com/san-francisco/SF-SN10104-G909.htm?gclid=CjwKEAjwydK\\_BRDK34GenvLB61YSJACZ8da3pAMKasm4Xrz8BPfR3r5QvtM6LGy89A52NkXC\\_stgaxoCGEDw\\_wcB](http://www.happymall.com/san-francisco/SF-SN10104-G909.htm?gclid=CjwKEAjwydK_BRDK34GenvLB61YSJACZ8da3pAMKasm4Xrz8BPfR3r5QvtM6LGy89A52NkXC_stgaxoCGEDw_wcB)

[http://www.happymall.com/san-francisco/SF-SN10104-G909.htm?gclid=CjwKEAjwydK\\_BRDK34GenvLB61YSJACZ8da3pAMKasm4Xrz8BPfR3r5QvtM6LGy89A52NkXC\\_stgaxoCGEDw\\_wcB](http://www.happymall.com/san-francisco/SF-SN10104-G909.htm?gclid=CjwKEAjwydK_BRDK34GenvLB61YSJACZ8da3pAMKasm4Xrz8BPfR3r5QvtM6LGy89A52NkXC_stgaxoCGEDw_wcB)

[http://thumbs1.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/311691040692\\_California-CA-San-Francisco-Lombard-Street-Postcard-Old.jpg](http://thumbs1.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/311691040692_California-CA-San-Francisco-Lombard-Street-Postcard-Old.jpg)

Phot of street taken in the 1990s that includes the tree:

<http://gallery.moeding.net/AroundTheWorld/NorthAmerica/SouthWest/SanFrancisco/>