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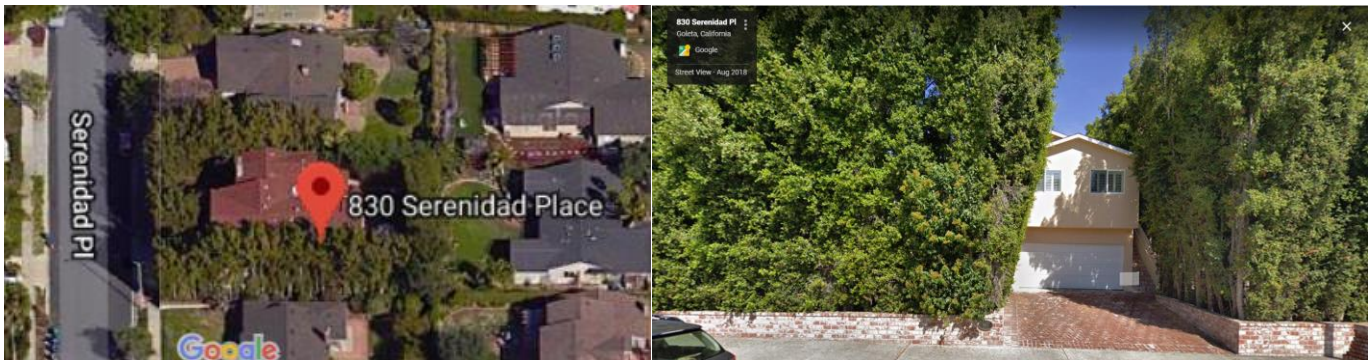
Subject: RE: New zoning code on hedge heights

Dear City of Goleta representatives:

I would like to bring your attention to a portion of your new zoning code (17.24.090) regarding hedge height regulation, and our encouragement and affirmation that you enforce such a height restriction. As you may or may not be aware, we have been "complaining" about the hedges around the property at 830 Serenidad Place for several years. These Eugenia hedges, while quite nice hedges at a modest (6'-8') height, are an atrocious eyesore and health and safety hazard at their current 40' + height surrounding the property. I will pinpoint some of the obvious problems they present on our neighborhood:

- *Their extreme height blocks the sunlight from adjoining properties; the property at 840 Serenidad has already lost all vegetation on their side yard, including the loss of a fine old willow tree, because of the lack of sunshine, and black mold has infested the property (again because of the blocking of the sun).*
- *These trees are unkempt and drop their leaves and red berries all over the sidewalk, causing pedestrians to use the street to walk (rather than slip on the berries); if these berries are "tracked" on the soles of shoes, they cause nasty stains on concrete and carpeting as well.*
- *The extreme height of the trees blocks the view of the back hillside at the top of Serenidad (this hillside is of prime fire concern and is constantly monitored during fire season by the Fire Dept); because residents at the foot of Serenidad are blocked from observing the hillside, they are at a great disadvantage, should there be a fire.*
- *The extreme height of the trees (and the absence of a setback from the sidewalk –they are flush against the sidewalk) blocks the street traffic from cars backing out of their driveways and thus creates a potential traffic and accident problem.*
- *These trees are ill kept and their root base is invading the property at 820 Serenidad, causing damage to their fences and their property (check out the retaining wall between 820 and 830 Serenidad and the way in which these trees are pushing over the wall). The leaves at the base of the trees are never cleared and have promoted a habitat for rats, skunks, and other creatures that are generally not seen in our neighborhood.*
- *During windy days, these extremely large branches have been known to fall on adjoining property roofs and in their yards.*
- *Because of the nature of these solid hedges all around the property, I have been told that it presents not only a fire hazard but also an indefensible space, as fire trucks could not get access to the property, thus jeopardizing all of the houses on this street.*

These are just a few of the primary reasons that I believe that a hedge height ordinance is needed in Goleta – it is not just a matter of aesthetics, but also a matter of safety and protecting the quality of life for all residents. I encourage you to drive by 830 Serenidad Place and witness this for yourself. I believe a hedge height ordinance is good for everyone!



Respectfully,

Kathy

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