

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

FACILITIES SERVICES

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720-1528

January 30, 2008

Ms. Beth Pollard
City Administrator
City of Albany
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706

Dear Beth:

As a follow-up to the concerns expressed by the City of Albany, a site visit was conducted on Thursday, January 24, 2008 to review the condition of the Monterey Pines at the Gill Tract. Participants included the campus and city arborists, UC Berkeley Landscape Architect, and City Councilmember Wile. City staff confirmed the university's findings that there is clear evidence of pitch canker, poor structure, beetle and fungi infestation which, in the interest of public safety, requires the removal of 184 Monterey Pines located within the Phase I boundaries. In addition, following the site visit a wildlife biologist, Mr. Ted Robertson, from the Lawrence Hall of Science, conducted a nesting survey on the site and reported finding no active Cooper's hawk nests in the area. We will continue to monitor the site for nests as tree removal proceeds.

The university began Phase I staging on January 28, 2008 and will complete the project within two weeks, depending on weather conditions. As stated previously, we will only remove Monterey Pines. Phase II, which would remove the remaining 133 vulnerable trees on the site, has yet to be scheduled and the university will provide the city with at least two months advance notice before proceeding with these plans.

As you know, the 2004 University Village Master Plan must guide our consideration of all future uses on the Gill Tract site. However, we assure you that UC Berkeley is committed to working with the City of Albany on future plans to re-landscape the area along the San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street frontages, including the planting of new trees, providing it is consistent with this Master Plan. At this time however, following removal of the trees, the campus will be seeding wildflowers and grasses to restore the meadow that was originally located in the area and to discourage new weed growth. We are willing to discuss with city staff your request to use a portion of the property, on a temporary basis, to store nursery stock trees for future use in city parks and streets.

With regard to an easement on university property to establish a Class 1 bicycle path along Buchanan Street, you may recall, in December 2006, the university sent a letter of support to the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency when Albany applied for funding to study the proposed bicycle path. We are ready to discuss with city staff any issues regarding the path.

Ms. Pollard
January 30, 2008
Page 2

Finally, concerning testing for the presence of tritium and carbon 14, which are naturally occurring in the area, the university plans to test for these elements in the soil and trees at the Gill Tract following Phase I.

The university looks forward to working with the city staff and the Albany community on these and other matters. Our immediate concern, however, is to address the public safety hazard in a timely and appropriate manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward J. Denton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "D".

Edward J. Denton, A.I.A.
Vice Chancellor - Facilities Services

cc: Assistant Vice Chancellor Hewson
Assistant Vice Chancellor Marthinsen
Director Hegarty
Campus Landscape Architect Horner