

CITY OF ALBANY  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT

Agenda date: December 13,2012

**TO: Park and Recreation Commission**

**FROM: Tony Wolcott, Urban Forester**

**SUBJECT: 929 San Pablo Ave.**

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The *Liquidambar styraciflua* (American sweet gum) should remain with the following advisory. The tree's visible roots should be inspected when concrete is demolished for sidewalk repair. It may be the case that necessary heavy root pruning would make the tree a high risk for complete failure. In that case the tree should be removed. If it is possible to take measures to expand the tree well, do minimal root pruning and still have a sidewalk, then the tree should remain. Overall this is a healthy tree and of considerable size. Liquidambar by their nature are higher risk for large limb failure. By pruning and monitoring health the risk can be lessened.

**BACKGROUND**

This tree has erupted the sidewalk with its extensive surface roots. The robust health of the tree has brought it in conflict with other infrastructure. In the past some repair of sidewalk has occurred, and repair is necessary again.

**ANALYSIS**

The benefits and appeal of large size trees are very important to Albany. We need to preserve these trees whenever we can. There is a delicate balance between acceptable risk and tree removal. This particular case is a tough call, hence the recommendation to look at the root system once the sidewalk is up.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Pruning of large Liquidambar on San Pablo run around \$800 each time. Cost of removal would be about \$1600.