

# STAFF REPORT

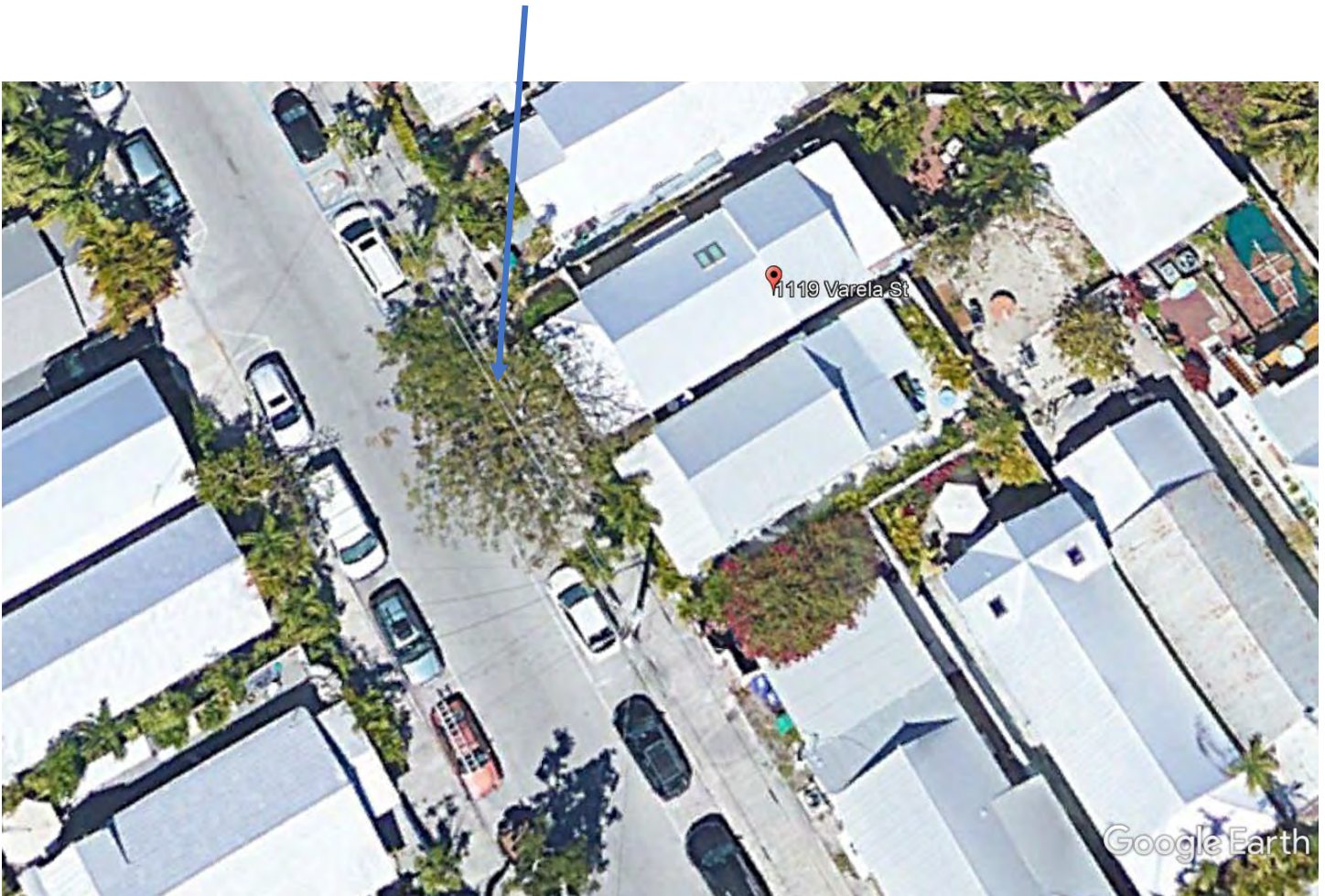
DATE: November 25, 2019

RE: 1119 Varela Street Right-of-Way (ROW)  
permit application # T2019-0536

FROM: Karen DeMaria, City of Key West Urban Forestry Manager

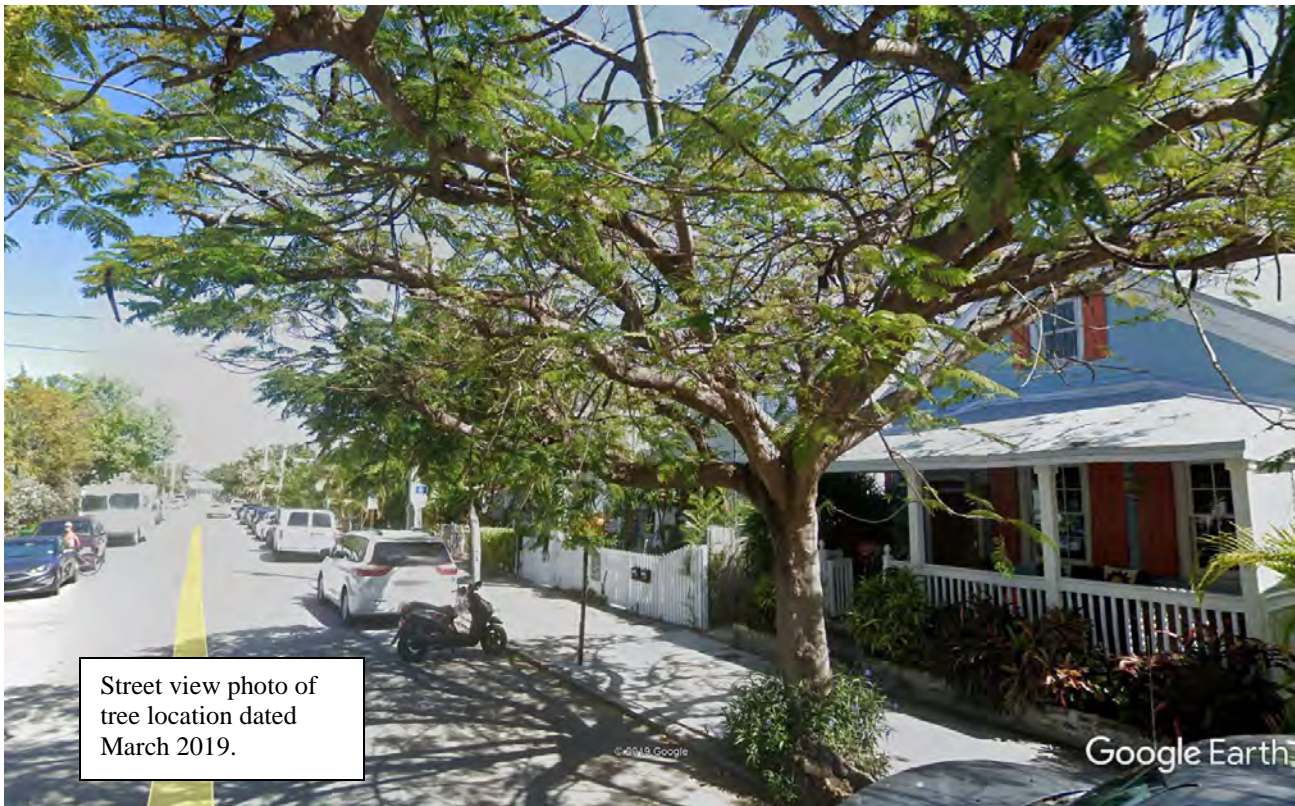
An application was received requesting the removal of (1) Royal Poinciana tree. A site inspection was done and documented the following:

Tree Species: Royal Poinciana (*Delonix regia*)



Aerial photo dated February 2018 of tree location.





Street view photo of  
tree location dated  
March 2019.



Photo from September  
2019 showing location of  
first dropped limb and tree  
damage.





Photo of existing tree canopy, view 1.

Termite frass



Photo of damaged tree branch, view 1.





Photo of  
existing tree  
canopy,  
view 2.



Photo of  
entire tree,  
view 1.





Photo showing tree location and sidewalk.





Photo of  
existing tree  
canopy view 3.



Photo of base  
of tree, view 1.





Photo of base of tree, view 2.



Photo of base of tree, view 3.





Photo of whole tree, view 2.

Diameter: 17.5"

Location: 60% (roots impacting sidewalk)

Species: 100% (on protected tree list)

Condition: 50% (fair to poor, tree has termites in canopy-frass observed in old cut, tree dropped two large branches in the road-half of the canopy currently exists, evidence that tree branches have been hit by vehicles)

Total Average Value = 70%

Value x Diameter = 12.2 replacement caliper inches



# Application





T2019-0536

RECEIVED

NOV 20 2019

CITY MANAGER

TC

## Tree Permit Application

Please Clearly Print All Information unless indicated otherwise. Date: 11-18-19

Tree Address 1119 Varela St ROW

Cross/Corner Street

List Tree Name(s) and Quantity 1- Royal Poinciana

Species Type(s) check all that apply ( ) Palm (X) Flowering ( ) Fruit ( ) Shade ( ) Unsure

Reason(s) for Application:

(X) Remove (X) Tree Health ( ) Safety (X) Other/Explain below

( ) Transplant ( ) New Location ( ) Same Property ( ) Other/Explain below

( ) Heavy Maintenance Trim ( ) Branch Removal ( ) Crown Cleaning/Thinning ( ) Crown Reduction

Additional Information and Explanation

in September 2019, the tree dropped a large branch (1)  
in October another large branch fell (2). A city  
crew without proper supervision trimmed the tree  
near the breaks (improperly). Tree is now one-sided

Property Owner Name City of Key West

Property Owner email Address

Property Owner Mailing Address

Property Owner Phone Number

Property Owner Signature

PO Box 1409  
Key West, FL 33041

Representative Name

Karen Sullivan - Urban Forester

Representative email Address

Representative Mailing Address

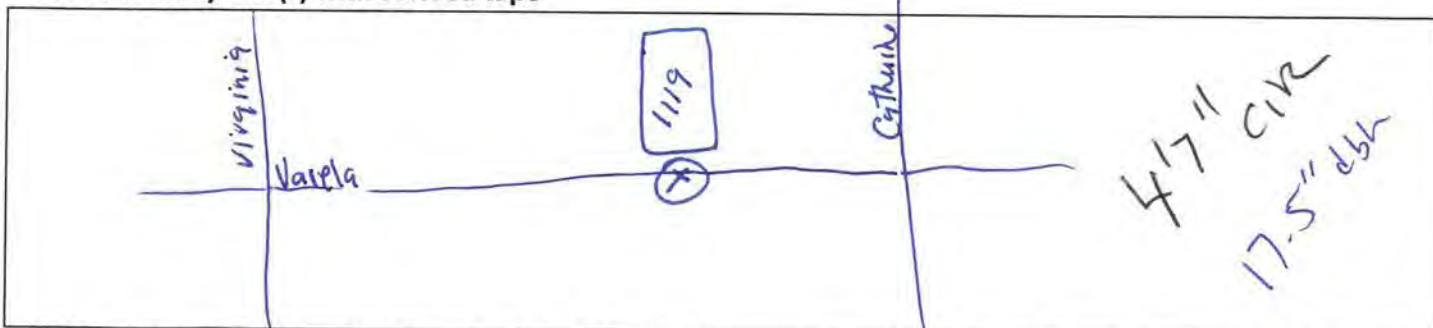
Representative Phone Number

305-809-3768

NOTE: A Tree Representation Authorization form must accompany this application if someone other than the owner will be representing the owner at a Tree Commission meeting or picking up an issued Tree Permit. Tree Representation Authorization form attached ( )

Sketch location of tree in this area including cross/corner Street

Please identify tree(s) with colored tape



If this process requires blocking of a City right-of-way, a separate ROW Permit is required. Please contact 305-809-3740.



# UNOFFICIAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF THE 1100 BLOCK OF VARELA STREET

October 23, 2019

Karen DeMaria  
Urban Forestry Manager  
City of Key West  
1300 White Street  
Key West, FL 33040



Dear Karen:

As you know from your site visits, the Royal Poinciana tree on City property in front of 1119 Varela Street is in a rather sorry state. Because of some perhaps deferred maintenance by the City (pruning), the canopy has become dangerously unbalanced, and recently dropped several large limbs into the street. In the first occurrence, one of those limbs caused minor damage to a parked vehicle; in the second one, a neighbor walking her dog was nearly hit. Subsequently, almost half the canopy is now gone, and the other half is perilously overextended over the sidewalk and porch of 1119 Varela Street.

I understand that the folks from the City who are responsible for trimming believe that as damaged as this tree is, it should be taken down. It is horribly unbalanced, and the amount of trimming required to make it safe will result in a cartoonish eyesore of what was once a beautiful specimen. Of course, I know that you would prefer not to take such drastic action with respect to any canopy tree – much less a tree like the Royal Poinciana, a protected tree, and the official City tree species – without sufficient community involvement. To that end, I have reached out to my neighbors on the block to see how they feel, and they overwhelmingly believe the tree needs to be removed, and something else planted in its place.

I have circulated this letter through the neighborhood for our little community to acknowledge their desire to have the tree removed, and their signatures and addresses are attached hereto. The only caveat is that all of us strongly insist if this tree is indeed removed, it will be replaced by a specimen worthy of the spot, and we would greatly appreciate future input as to what that replacement might be.

Please let me know if you need anything else from us as you make your decision.

Thanks very much –

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack Anderson'.

Jack Anderson  
1109 Varela Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
(917) 847-6005



Address	610-805-8315	1121 Varela St
Signature		<i>Anna Hillman</i>
Email		Breezy Rose 915@gmail.com
Address	337-254-4495	1119 Varela St
Signature		Bryant Kountz c/o Anna Hillman
Email		allied 234@aol.com
Address		1111 Varela
Signature		<i>Melodie Gaul</i>
Email		mcgill@eastlink.ca SE.
Address		1111 Varela St
Signature		<i>Peter Gaul</i>
Email		902-441-8222 PETER GAUL KEYSMETALART@HOTMAIL.COM
Address		1113 VARELA ST.
Signature		<i>Bridget Dawson</i>
Email		1113 VARELA ST. BPDAWSON @BELLSOUTH.NET
Address		1117 VARELA ST.
Signature		<i>Suzanne Gessay</i>
Email		sgessay@gmail.com
Address		1115 CATHERINE ST
Signature		<i>Kim Gell</i>
Email		1114 Varela St. RK Gilbert@Verizon.net.
Address		Dale Steiner D.E.
Signature		1118 Varela St Key West
Email		djemmetre@gmail.com
Address		1124 Varela St
Signature		<i>Alison &amp; Yann Findlay</i>
Email		yannfindlay@yahoo.com
Address		1119-B Varela
Signature		<i>John Kubicek</i>
Email		(c/o Jack Anderson) kubicekjohn@hotmail.com



## Karen DeMaria

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**From:** Jack Anderson <jandersonnyc@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 31, 2019 11:12 AM  
**To:** Karen DeMaria  
**Subject:** Fwd: Royal Poinciana

Hello Karen!

I was just writing to make sure you got the signed petition I dropped off yesterday.

I am also taking this opportunity to include an email string among several of the neighbors so that you can see the depth of interest (including the front and rear inhabitants of 1119, where the tree overhangs the porch).

Cheers and thanks -

JA

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** John Kubicek <kubicekjohn@hotmail.com>  
**Subject:** Fw: Fw: Royal Poinciana  
**Date:** October 30, 2019 at 11:39:46 AM EDT  
**To:** Jack Anderson <jandersonkw@gmail.com>

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**From:** Anna Hillman <breezyrose1121@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 30, 2019 11:17 AM  
**To:** John Kubicek <kubicekjohn@hotmail.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: Royal Poinciana

Hi John,

.I spoke to Bryant by phone, and he agreed to removing it. Everyone in the neighborhood is afraid to walk anywhere near. This is after neighbor Deb was out walking at 4 am when the whole front canopy fell just as she had passed under it.

The guys who came to clean that mess up said that the tree is full of termites.

While the termites might be treatable, I don't see the city taking that in, and given the age of the tree, it makes more sense to remove it and get a new tree started rather than limp along with this one. So far, all of the neighbors are in complete agreements. Not one neighbor has dissented or even questioned it. 10 signed off last I know.

All are anxious to get a new tree planted ASAP.

On Wed, Oct 30, 2019 at 11:10 AM John Kubicek <kubicekjohn@hotmail.com> wrote:  
Hi Bryant and Anna-

Based on the pics you sent, Anna, this seems like a good move but we wanted obviously to get your thoughts. I let Jack know I would be reaching out to you both in that regard. Let me know and I'll pass that along?



J

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From: Jack Anderson <[jandersonkw@gmail.com](mailto:jandersonkw@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2019 10:12 AM  
To: John Kubicek; Robert Arrowood  
Cc: Kevin Broomell  
Subject: Royal Poinciana

Hello Boys!

Hope all is well wherever you are in the world.

Our friends were SOOOOOO appreciative of your hospitality-in-abstentia!! I know Kevin sent you a pic of us all enjoying your yard, and as a thank-you there is a little surprise waiting for you upon your return... ;-)

I don't know if you're at all up to date with other neighborhood goings-on, but the big old Poinciana tree in front of the house has begun dropping limbs. The limbs came down on the street side, so the tree is now wildly unbalanced and hanging over Bryant's porch. The City Facilities Dept. (or whatever dept. actually handles such things) thinks the tree should come down. Karen, the urban forestry manager for the city, doesn't want to take it down without community support (the Royal Poinciana is the official species of the City, and therefore causes great consternation among the tree-huggers when one is removed). I've spoken to her at length, and put together a letter of support for taking the tree down and replacing it with something else. Melodie (1111 Varela) had a little weekend gathering the other day, and I took the opportunity to get a bunch of folks from the 'hood to sign off. I'd now love to get your opinion. I'm attaching a copy of the letter I circulated to see if it meets with your approval. If you guys agree the tree should come down, and you don't mind my being your advocate in the matter, I'll sign your name to it and move forward with Karen. Of course, if you don't want it down, I'd want to know that, as well.

In any case, please lemme know what you think!

Looking forward to seeing you!!

xoxo

JA

—  
Xoxo Anna



## Karen DeMaria

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**From:** Jack Anderson <jandersonnyc@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 22, 2019 11:24 AM  
**To:** Karen DeMaria  
**Subject:** Royal Poinciana at 1119 Varela  
**Attachments:** Prelim Letter to Karen D re Poinciana.docx

Hey Karen -

After talking to you about the decrepit Poinciana on Varela, I spoke to several neighbors about what they'd like to see happen (trimming vs. removal). So far to a person, they all would like to see it taken down. However, they feel equally strongly that they would like to see a replacement that is worthy of the spot (no offense, but they are hoping for something other than a palm tree!) Of course, that is something that could be hashed out later...

Anyway, I remember that you said you did not want to move ahead without some input from the community. I drafted the attached letter for the neighbors to sign so that you would have a political CYA for when the tree-huggers who DON'T live on this street offer their unwelcome opinions. Please see if it meets with your approval. If so, I will distribute for signatures, and get it back to you. Hopefully, we will be in time for the next commission meeting.

Thanks very much!!

JA



# Untitled Map

Write a description for your map.

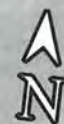
## Legend

📍 908 Trinity Dr

📍 1119 Varela St



Google Earth




80 ft



# Untitled Map

Write a description for your map.

## Legend

 908 Trinity Dr



Google Earth

© 2019 Google

8.61 ft





9-4-19

① 1<sup>st</sup> large branch  
broke off and  
fell.





1719 Varel  
canopy trim

9-4-19

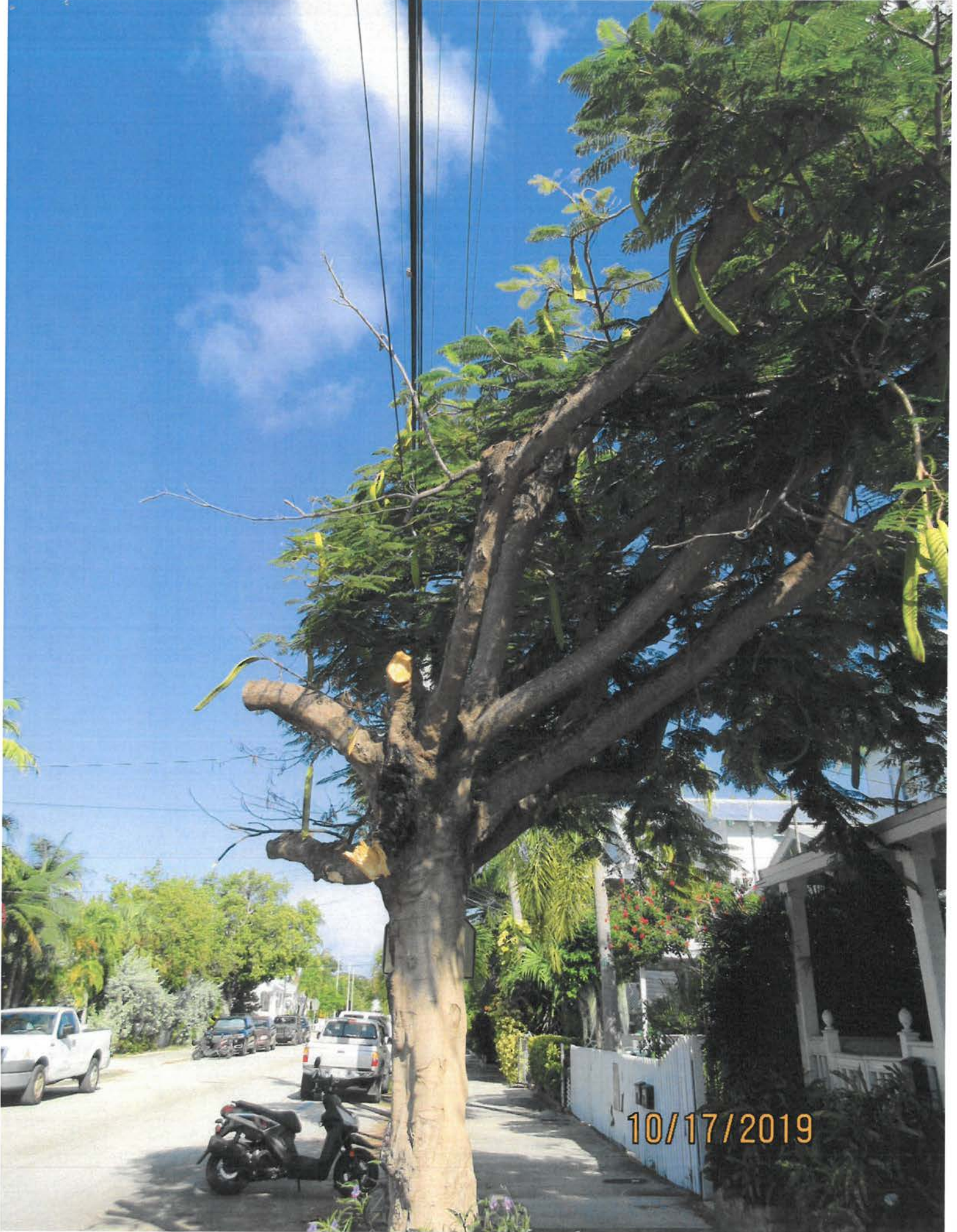
Damage to  
another area of tree





10/17/2019





10/17/2019

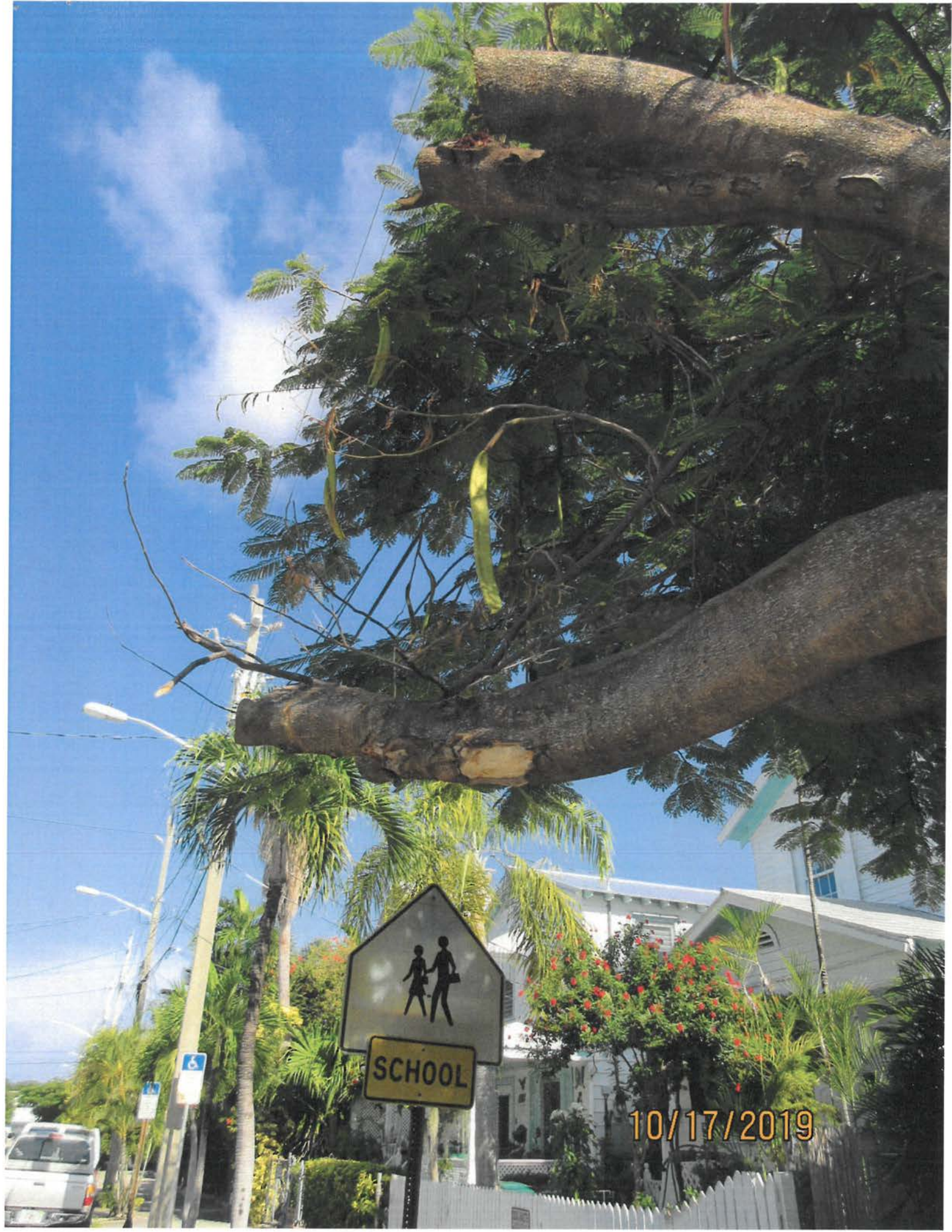












10/17/2019







