

# STAFF REPORT

DATE: December 28, 2022

RE: 1701 Von Phister Street ROW  
(permit application # T2022-0462)

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

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

Tree Species: Mahogany (Swietenia mahagoni)



Photo of whole tree showing location.





Photo of whole tree.



Photo of base of tree and main trunks in relation to house.





Photo of tree canopy over house.





Photo of base of tree and main trunks.



Photo of main canopy branches.





Photo of tree canopy.



Photo of base of tree, view 1.





Photo of base of tree, view 2.



Photo of base of tree, view 3.





Photos of tree root are next to house. Property owner recently exposed the roots, view 1.





Photos of tree root are next to house. Property owner recently exposed the roots, view 2.



Photo of tree showing location in relation to pool and deck, view 1.





Photo of tree showing location in relation to pool and deck, view 2.



Photo of crack in pool tile closest to house.



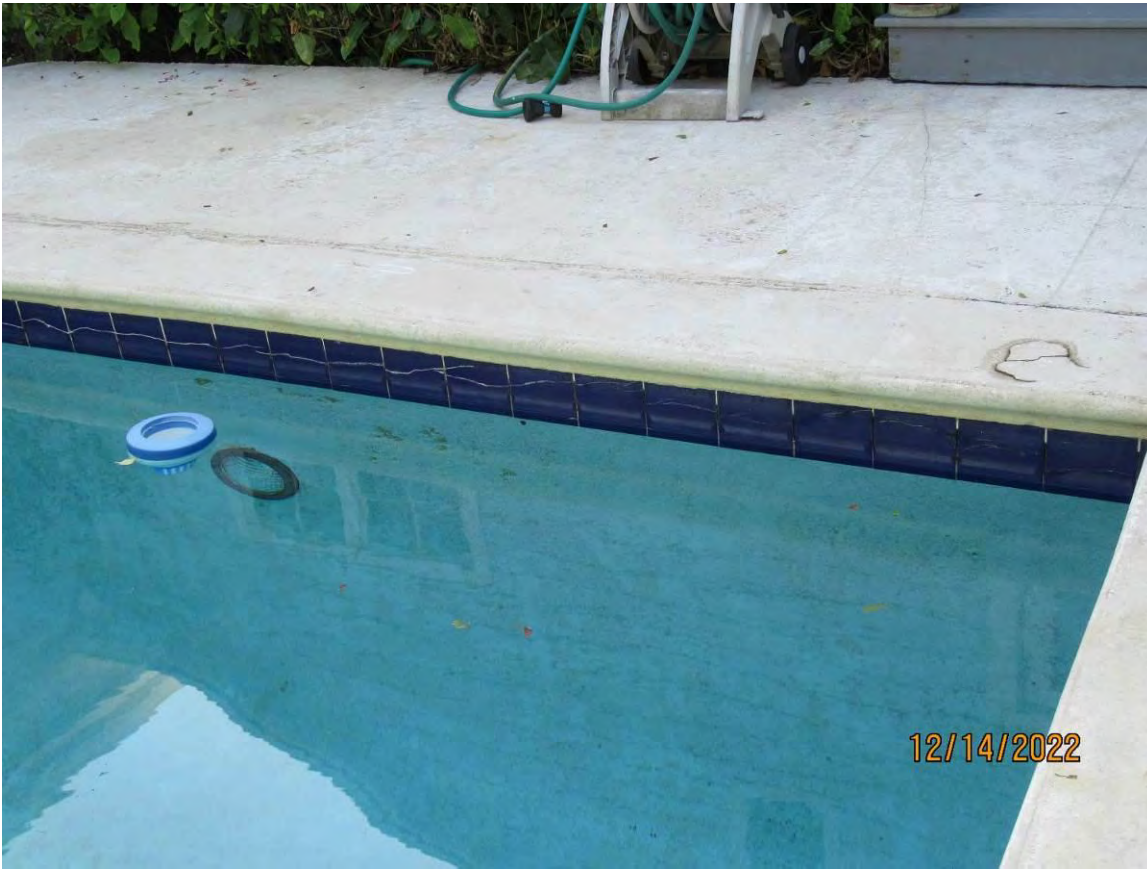


Photo of crack in pool tile closest to street.

August 2022-canopy was trimmed over house (second time). City trimmed canopy over the road in March 2022 (see photo below).





Photo below are five photos from 2020 when property owner cut the roots.







09/22/2020





09/22/2020





Diameter: 55.7"

Location: 60% (very visible tree growing on City right of way, property owner concerned about roots impacting house)

Species: 100% (on protected tree list)

Condition: 80% (overall condition is good. Tree is healthy. In the past two years two different certified arborists have trimmed the canopy and stated that the tree was in good condition.)

Total Average Value = 80%

Value x Diameter = 44.5 replacement caliper inches

\*additional documentation and photos requested from property owner, for the file.

NOTE: Can the roots be trimmed and a root guard installed to prevent future root impacts to structures?



# Additional Information



January 3, 2023

To:

From: Eric Denhart  
1701 Von Phister St.  
Key West, FL 33040

As you know my name is Eric Denhart and I reside at 1701 Von Phister Street for the past 30 years, living alongside a city owned mahogany tree.

With guidance from the past city arborist Cynthia Snell, tree commission members and Karen DeMaria I have struggled to co-exist with this tree. By removing damaging roots and limbs it has proven costly to me, but manageable.

Unfortunately, in recent years the tree has been doing a great deal more damage. It has grown to over 15' in circumference and is close to 60' tall. It sits just six feet from my home.

It is probable that after the installation of eight storm water drains ranging from 35-100' from the tree, that soil hydrology has been affected in the trees surrounding area.

The tree and root system now rely almost entirely on moisture from its closest source, my cistern and pool area under my house just six feet away. This is causing a dramatic increase in damage to the pool deck, tile work, foundation, plumbing and sewer pipes. The repairs to the pool area alone will cost in excess of \$20,000.

In addition, massive limbs weighing in excess of 4000 lbs. hang over my property and threaten the safety of my family and home.

Experts agree that the removal of root structure destabilizes this tree and could cause complete failure in a storm.



I have been insisting the city correct this obvious liability for many years. The continuing threat to the safety of my family and home is unacceptable.

I respectfully demand that the city take appropriate action and have the tree removed. As a tree advocate, I fully support the planting of as many native trees and plants as appropriate next to my home.

This tree poses great danger to both life and property. It is negligent on the city's behalf to allow this threat to continue.

Furthermore, the tree is on city property and is the city's responsibility entirely.



























































