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CITY OF SACRAMENTO

Tues. meeting 26
June 8/16

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To the Sacramento City Council,
I would like to speak briefly about the elm tree problem in Sacramento at next Tuesdays meeting. The enclosed article is one I wrote last year about the problem. This year the problem looks worse than ever downtown. I would like to offer a few words of support for the tree service in Sacramento and to make sure the city council is doing what it can to help.

I would like to speak for about five minutes. The opportunity would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Ben Davis Jr.

Ben Davis Jr.
Suttertown News
1800 1/2 L street
Sacramento, Ca.

448-1154

FILED

By the City Council
Office of the City Clerk

JUN 16 1980

Plight Of City's Trees

By Ben Davis, Jr.

The problems caused by the Elm Leaf Beetle are not new to Sacramento. The pest has been in our vicinity causing varying amounts of damage for the past 20 years. This year the largest infestation of beetles has been in the downtown and southeast areas of town. If you commute through town or reside in these areas perhaps you've noticed the problem.

In the middle of July an infested tree can look as though it's in the end of autumn. Its leaves, dried and transparent, will have fallen from either branches, and in the larva stage the beetles will often be evident at the base of the tree trunk. They can infest any elm tree, except the Chinese Elm.

Problem

When asked about the extent of the problem, Martin Fitch of the Sacramento Community Services tree department said that though many trees have been affected, proper care can restore them to health. Sacramento need lose none of its elms. However, Fitch also mentioned that, left untreated, the trees can die in a few seasons.

The beetles do most of their damage while in the larva stage (about 1/2 inch long), and remain in this stage about three weeks. Mature, they are a 1/4 inch long insect, light yellow to brownish green, and with several dots on the head or



Sprays can be purchased at most nurseries for residential trees. If you would like more information, the tree department can be reached at 449-5304.

An organic, non-pesticide approach to ridding a tree of the pests would be to put a sticky substance around the trunk like fly paper, or tar. When the larva go down the tree to the ground, which they must do to change into beetles, the sickness stops them from returning to the tree to reproduce.

The beetle problem is not to be confused with the much publicized Dutch Elm disease. Dutch Elm disease still hasn't

reached Sacramento, though it's prevalent in the Bay Area; and the potential of spreading still exists. This could be devastating, especially in a town like Sacramento, a town known for its abundance of trees. I've heard it said that Sacramento has more trees per capita than any other city in the U.S.

Mr. Fitch said he'd heard that, too, that we were second only to Paris for trees per capita in the world. "Though I don't know who verifies that," he said. And neither of us was sure just what a capita was, though we were glad they had so many trees between them.



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LORRAINE MAGANA
CITY CLERK

MEMORANDUM

TO: BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

FROM: LORRAINE MAGANA, CITY CLERK *LM*

SUBJECT: REFERRAL TO ITEM NO. 26, AGENDA OF JUNE 16, 1981

DATE: JUNE 16, 1981

Pursuant to Council action, the following subject matter is referred to your committee for hearing, report and recommendation:

Ben Davis, Jr., of Suttertown News, comments relative to the Elm Tree problem in Sacramento, and requested notification of meeting when this matter will be heard.

LM:sj

cc: Councilperson Connelly, Chr.
" Hoeber
" Pope
" Thompson
Wanda Lynch, Secretary
Gene Robinson, Tree Services