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**LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Dilworth

**PROPERTY ADDRESS:** 815 Berkeley Avenue

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:** Tree Removal

**OWNER/APPLICANT:** Jean Davis

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**Details of Proposed Request**

*Existing Context*

The existing structure is 1.5 story Colonial Revival brick house constructed in 1932. Notable architectural features include a large three-light front gabled dormer, one-story sun porch, and side wing. Adjacent structures are two story single-family homes. Lot size is approximately 75' x 175'.

*Project*

The proposal is to remove a 50" Willow Oak in the rear yard. A letter from a ISA TRAQ Certified Arborist is included for the Commission's review.

**Design Guidelines –Trees, page 8.5**

2. When tree removal is needed (due to disease or other reasons) or desired, a Certified Arborist must be consulted and the written recommendation must be provided to the HDC before removal is granted. This guideline includes trees in front, side, and rear yards.
5. New construction that impacts healthy trees must be reviewed by the HDC. Mature trees that are unhealthy or causing significant structural damage to historic structures may reviewed by HDC staff. Replacement trees may be required.
6. The HDC may require the planting of additional trees to replace a mature canopy that is removed.

**Staff Recommendation**

1. Minor revisions may be reviewed by staff (such as review/approval of replacement tree).



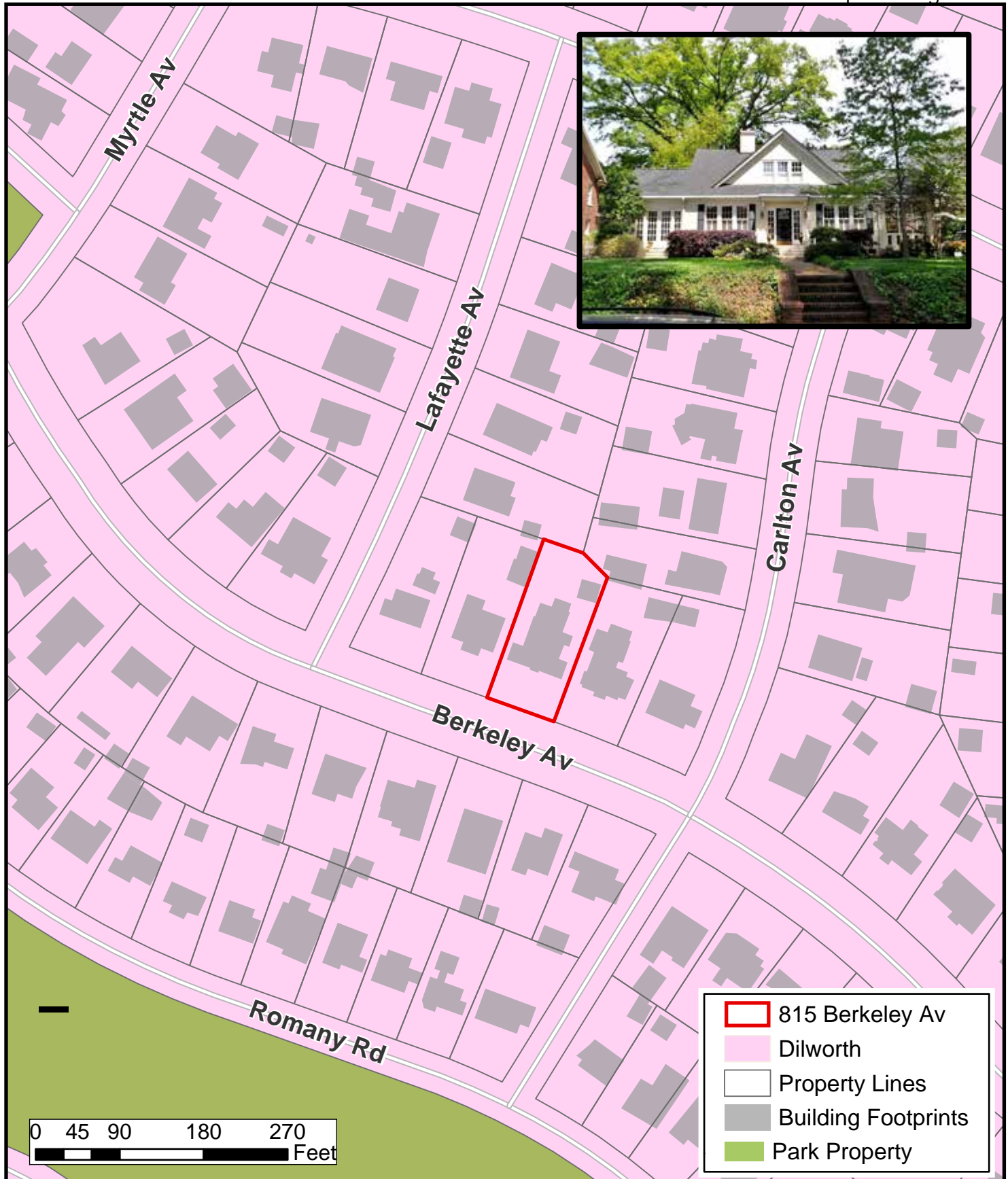
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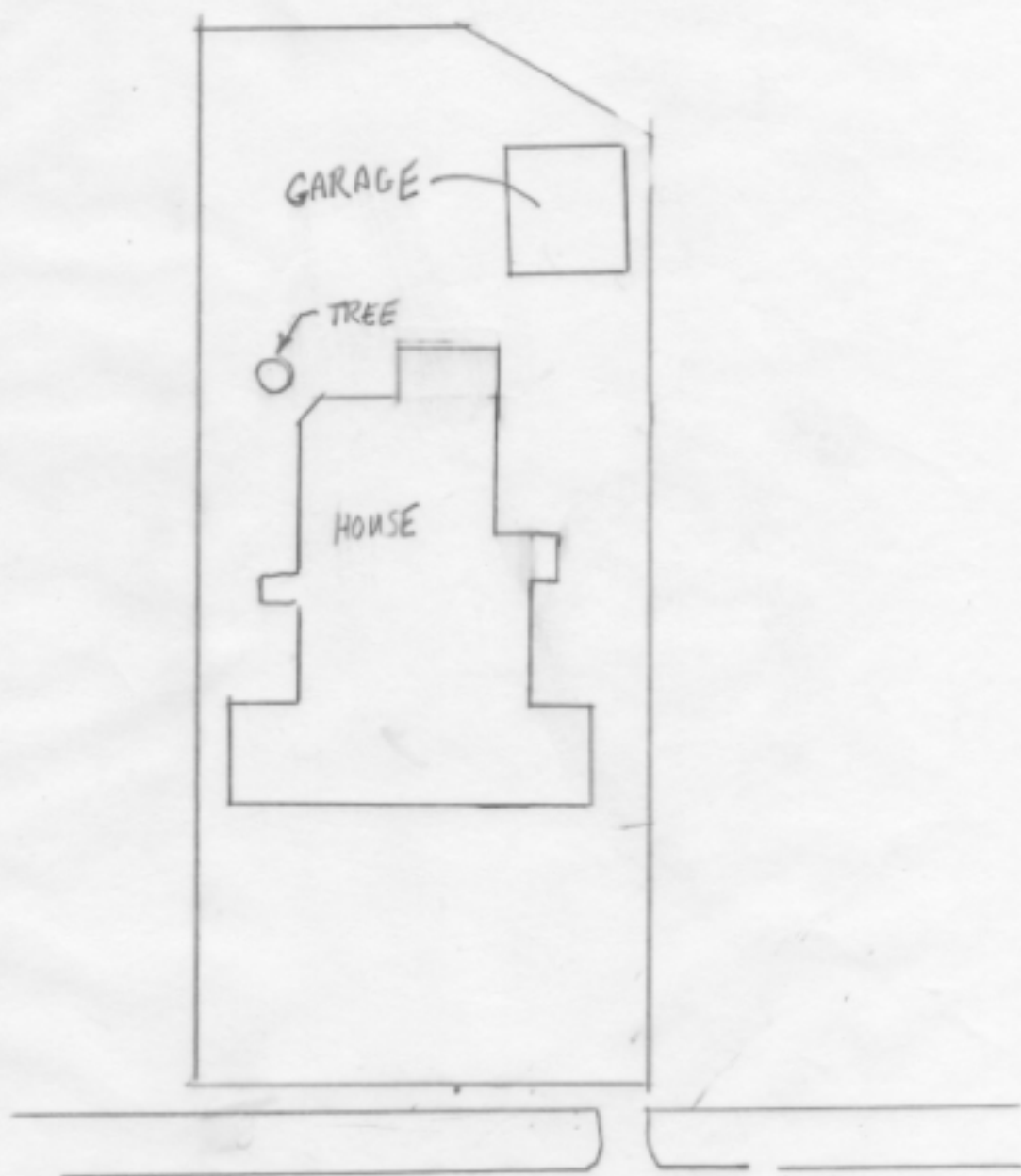
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LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT: DILWORTH

PROPOSED PROJECT: TREE REMOVAL

April Meeting 2019





BERKELEY AVENUE!



10/29/18

Dear Kristina Harpst,

I am writing this letter to officially document the health and structural integrity of a 50" Willow Oak growing along the left rear perimeter of 815 Berkeley Ave, 28203. The homeowners (The Metzger's) have hired Heartwood Tree Service to monitor and manage tree's health and structural integrity, and the following describes Heartwood's service records regarding the mature Willow Oak:

- **4/26/10** - house clearance, weight reduction, and deadwood removal 2" diameter and larger
- **3/15/12** - deep root fertilization to support bloom/leaf expansion and increase vigor
- **4/20/12** - growth regulator ("Cambistat") application to maximize (long-term) resource efficiency
- **11/10/16** - resistograph assessment/investigation of structural integrity of structural root system at root collar (passing result according to current industry standards)
- **4/13/17** - aggressive canopy weight reduction towards houses and deadwood removal (2" diameter and larger)
- **4/19/17** - deep root fertilization to support bloom/leaf expansion and increase vigor

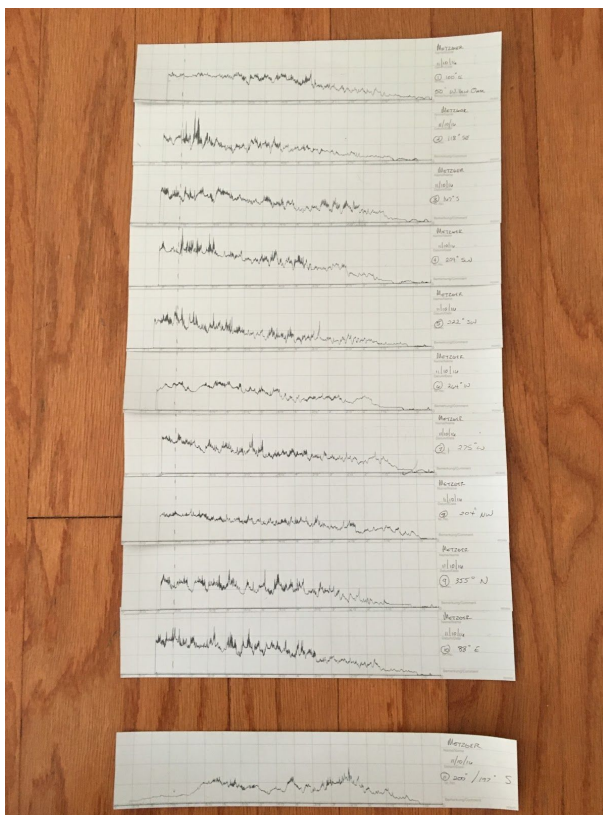
While under my attention, this mature Willow Oak has withstood multiple storm events within last 3 growing seasons with wind forces exceeding 60 mph, of which all (live) structural limbs have remained in tact. The tree continues to display vigorous health/production on a seasonal basis, expressed by dense growth expanding uniformly to exterior canopy/towards sun. There is evidence of exposed decay in structural wood throughout the canopy where previous limbs had either been pruned or failed from previous weather events. Maintaining exterior canopy weight via reduction pruning will mitigate risk of branch/stem failure. This tree has a history of root decay fungal blooms (*Inonotus dryadeus*) of which was determined (through resistograph assessment in fall 2016) that the fungal pathogen had not compromised the structural integrity of the root collar according to current industry standards. Despite the Metzger's investments in managing the tree's health and structural integrity, they wish to schedule the tree's removal. I've attached a photo to document the current tree and site conditions, as well as the graphs produced during the 2016 assessment. Please review at your convenience and advise me with any questions, concerns, or how to move forward.

Best Regards,

Santigie ("Tig") Kabia

ISA TRAQ Certified Arborist & Municipal Specialist (#MA-4553AM)





Mr. Robert A. Metzger, Jr. and Jean E. Davis  
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Ms. Kristina Harpst  
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City of Charlotte  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center  
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Dear Ms. Harpst:

The purpose of this letter is to ask for approval to remove a very old and very large Willow Oak tree from our back yard. At our request, Mr. Santigie Kabia with Heartwood Tree Service sent you a letter dated December 18, 2018, expressing our concerns about the tree and providing his analysis of its health and structural integrity. What follows is more information detailing our concerns about the risks of this tree.

As background, our home was built in 1920. We purchased it in 2002. At that time, there were two sister Willow Oak trees in the back yard. Both of the trees were very mature, and had probably been planted many, many decades before, likely close to the time the home was built. One of the two had to be removed in 2004, possibly because a pond installed at the base of the tree by the prior owner weakened its root system. But prior to its removal, its presence in the yard stunted the growth of the canopy of the remaining tree on the north side, leaving an imbalance in the current canopy's growth pattern that is one of several concerns to us.

From 2004 until 2006, our house underwent a renovation. We modified the plans for the back of the house and laid a special foundation in order to protect the tree and its root system. We even "catty-cornered" a back den to give the tree more space. The architect was Kraig Magat at Don Duffy Architecture; he can be reached at 704-358-1878.

Over the last 16 years, we have continually brought in tree specialists to help us maintain the health of the tree and have pruned to mitigate the risks of branch failures. We've kept a soaker hose at the base of the tree as needed to supplement rainfall during warmer months of the year. Worthy of note, Patrick George, owner of Heartwood, told us in 2004 or 2005 that he thought the tree had an additional expected life of 3 – 7 years. We are well past that.

As time has passed, we have become more and more concerned about the health of the tree. In the 2010-11 timeframe, a large limb with the ability to do significant damage dropped between our house and our neighbor's. Mushrooms began to grow on the base of the tree. In the fall of 2012, we hired Joe Cadieu to inspect the tree because of our concerns. In January, 2013, a resistograph test was performed by Arborguard. That was followed by aggressive pruning by Mr. Cadieu in the spring. Heartwood also performed resistograph testing in November, 2016.

By November of last year, new mushrooms were appearing in multiple locations at the base of the tree. One has now also appeared 45 feet up on a large limb in the canopy over the back of our house. There are many massive limbs, many as big as tree trunks, any of which could do significant damage when they give way. Resistograph testing of the main trunk tells us very little if anything about the structural integrity of these limbs.

In addition, approximately 80% of the canopy is growing directly over the trunk or to the south, over our house and our neighbor's house. Our neighbor's daughter has expressed her concern about sleeping in her upstairs bedroom with our tree hanging over her roof.

Mr. Kabia with Heartwood noted that if the tree falls, it is going to fall directly onto our and the neighbor's houses, because of the way the tree grows and because there is nothing in the way to break its fall other than the houses. We are attaching a photograph to give you a clearer understanding of this risk.

We do not make this request to remove the tree without considering all of its benefits. It has been a lovely tree and provides great shade. We've made significant investments of time and money to keep it healthy. Removing the tree will cost us out-of-pocket a substantial 5-figure sum of money. But the risk to our home, to our neighbor's home and to the children who play in our yards are very real to us. We've watched trees of similar age or younger fall by the dozens in Dilworth, some during storms and some without any known provocation. It is time for this tree to come down. If we wait long enough, we or our neighbors or both of our families will have to move out due to structural damage to one or more houses or something even worse will happen.

Because we have known this tree was nearing its end, we have been cultivating young trees in our back yard to grow and eventually take its place.

Ms. Harpst, please let us know what else you need in order to give us the approval to hire a firm to remove the tree. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Jean Davis and Robert Metzger



# 815 Berkeley Avenue

Existing Conditions:  
Houses and Willow Oak Canopy



809

815

821



815 Berkeley  
Avenue

Existing Conditions:  
Houses and Willow  
Oak Canopy





# 815 Berkeley Avenue

Existing Conditions:  
Houses and Willow Oak  
Canopy





# 815 Berkeley Avenue

Existing Conditions:  
Willow Oak and Pine Tree



Mushrooms



One mushroom



Pine tree