

May 1, 2015

Chairman Lloyd Jordan
441 4th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
Room 220 South

Re: Case Number 18992 (Application of Congressional 1015 E Street, LLC)

Dear Chairman Jordan,

Casey Trees' mission is to restore, enhance and protect the tree canopy of the nation's capital. We do this because trees transform spaces for the benefit of residents, businesses owners and the city. We are also committed to helping the District achieve its ambitious 40 percent canopy coverage goal by 2032. Protecting mature trees like the American elm (over 130" in circumference) living on 1011 E Street, SE is critical to the success of this goal.

Large stately elm trees once graced many communities throughout the U.S., but now their numbers are shrinking. Healthy mature trees are difficult to replace. Compared to small-stature trees, large canopy trees produce quantifiable benefits by reducing energy costs for home-owners and mitigating the City's urban heat island effect. They also work to reduce stormwater runoff and improve our air quality in ways that newly planted trees will not be able to match for decades. When it comes to trees, size really does matter.

In D.C., a tree's critical root zone (CRZ) must be protected during construction activities. This means that no trenching is permitted within the tree's CRZ because root disturbance are the biggest threats to trees during construction.

In this case, the elm has a CRZ of 42". With a mature tree of this size it's not uncommon for its root system to extend beyond property lines, so when digging begins it may be too late to preserve it. While a property owner is permitted to trim the braches and roots of a tree on a neighboring property that crosses boundary lines, that property owner is not allowed to do any pruning that would harm the health of the tree or destroy it.

Based on the authoritative findings of the ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) certified (and highly respected local) arborist Keith Pitchford, it is abundantly clear that any construction work on the adjacent properties (1015 and 1013 E Street, SE) that requires cutting the elm's roots will seriously jeopardize the health of the tree, or even contribute to its demise. Therefore, we respectfully ask that the Board deny any request that involves harming this magnificent tree or its roots system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact me at ssazawal@caseytrees.org or 202 349-3472. Thank you.

Suraj K. Sazawal
/s/ Suraj K. Sazawal

Advocacy Associate, Casey Trees