

**From:** Ted Burney <burney.ted.tb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 24, 2025 8:17 AM  
**To:** Peter Domine  
**Cc:** John Lattimer; Carol Grimwood; Bill Dixon  
**Subject:** SWAN comments on cluster cottage variance Schurman and Gilbert TRV-DAP25-01

To: Peter Domine, Planner II  
City of Salem, Planning Division  
355 Liberty Street SE. Room 305  
Salem, Oregon 97301

From: Southwest Association of Neighbors (SWAN)

Re: Comments from the Southwest Association of Neighbors regarding four tree regulation variances for development of a cluster cottage for the 1000 block of Schurman Drive S.  
Permit Case Number TRV-DAP25-01

The Southwest Association of Neighbors is opposed to the granting of a variance for removal of three of the four trees requested to be removed in this permit application.

The three trees we are opposed to removal include tree 1012, a 26 inch DBH significant white oak, tree 1013, a 32 inch DBH significant white oak and tree 1011, a 51 inch DBH significant white oak.

The applicant notes the cluster cottage development does not meet the criteria for a tree removal permit and the applicant is therefore applying for a tree variance permitting removal of these trees. A variance is usually asked for in the case where it is difficult to develop property due to its unique physical characteristics or where special conditions exist that create an unreasonable hardship or practical difficulty that limit the suitability of land for development.

Removal of these trees does not seem to meet this standard. Tree 1011 appears to be within the critical root zone of trees that are being maintained. It seems an easy matter to extend the noted CRZ to include this tree.

Trees 1012 and 1013 abut the edge of a parking area and a straight curb and walkway appear to be the reason for the request for their removal. Alternative design for the curb and walkway could accommodate the keeping of these trees. If there is concern for maintaining critical root zone for these trees, removal of a parking space could be an option. Fences, patios, other landscaping and irrigation could be constructed in its place and is permitted around the critical root zone of a tree.

Providing this type of design alternative and keeping these significant trees would also reduce the projects total square footage of impervious parking/pavement materials. This reduction in impervious pavement could have the benefit of requiring less stormwater drainage area to be set aside possibly creating a benefit for the project owner.

Economic hardship is often the case for a request for a variance for tree removal. However, SWAN believes the opposite will occur if these trees are maintained in a healthy condition.

Mature landscaping brings value to property. The shade component of these mature trees will provide shade coverage for the proposed parking area and possibly for some of the cottages as well.

This could be an attractive feature of the cluster cottages and create a sought after commodity for future residents thereby benefitting the owners.

The Southwest Association of Neighbors is not in support of granting the request for a tree removal variance for the proposed cluster cottage project in the 1000 block of Schurman Avenue.

Submitted on behalf of the Southwest Association of Neighbors,

Ted Burney  
Chair

John Lattimer  
Land Use Co-Chair

Carol Grimwood  
Land Use Co-Chair

Bill Dixon  
Land Use Committee