

Renaissance Ridge HOA  
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This report is in response to our several discussions regarding the tree health in the common areas of the Renaissance Ridge neighborhood.

**Observations:**

Renaissance Ridge is prone to high wind forces and storm damage events to their trees. As I have walked the property I have identified a number of trees that pose a hazard to property and/or a specific threat to life as well as general maintenance needs.

Western Hemlock, Western Red Cedar, Douglas Fir, Red Alder and Big Leaf Maple make up most of the trees in your development. Most of the clearing and home construction was done in the late 1990's and it is usual for most tree failures to occur in the first 12 years after a forested area has been disrupted. Also the undisturbed areas around the periphery of the tract have and will continue to have a higher rate of Red Alder failure. This is their normal life cycle. They establish nitrogen in the soil and then suffer root and leader decline and failure. The first three type of trees mentioned (Hemlock, Cedar and Fir) are evergreen and are geotropic, meaning they grow straight up (their trunks perpendicular to the earth). If one of these trees is leaning it is due to a root problem, wind damage or earth movement. The other two (Alder and Maple) are phototropic, meaning they grow toward the most available light. All of the trees in the greenbelt were part of a community of trees and when the clearing was done for the homes in the tract, this community was disrupted. Trees growing in a community of other trees are interdependent. The removal of the surrounding forest subjects the remaining trees to stress they did not have as they were developing...hence the increased failure rate in the first dozen years after construction.

**Methodology:**

Our evaluation of the trees in your neighborhood is based on our experience and training in hazard tree evaluation. A number of evaluation protocols for tree evaluation exist, we prefer to use the U.S. Forest Service raking system where 0-4 points are given for tree health and 0-4 points are given for target value. A totally dead tree in the open forest (4 points) with no target value (0 points) would not be removed. Conversely a totally healthy tree (0 points) with a fall pattern that could destroy a home (4 points) if it failed end up having the same rank. We have only ranked those trees with some potential for causing damage to the monuments, fences, residences, pedestrians on walk paths or roadways. Trees with a 7 or 8 ranking should be removed at you earliest convenience. Trees with a rating of 6 or over are trees that should be removed at owner's discretion. Trees with a rating of less than 6 should be left alone but watched over time to monitor future tree health.

When we examine a tree we look at factors such as:

- Size
- Vigor
- Crown ratio and health
- Density of needles
- Injury
- Insect activity
- Root damage and root collar health
- Dead wood and hanging branches

No one can predict with absolute certainty if a tree will or will not fail, we can by using this process assess which of the trees is most likely to fail and take appropriate action.

It is a common misconception to think that because a tree has not failed in a series of past storms, it is not likely to fail in the future. We have learned that trees accumulate stress internally. Stress and internal fractures from previous storms can cause an apparently healthy tree to fail even on a calm day. We provide you with an evaluation based upon training and experience. It is up to your personal comfort level as to whether you follow our recommendations or not.

Since we have had several large storms this past fall and winter, no one can accurately guarantee whether or not a tree is stable. We can, however, inform you that based upon our evaluation that the trees noted below are more likely to fail at some time in the future. Therefore, if structural cracks, weak forks or other defects were perceived to be severe enough, the tree is recommended for removal or habitated as a wildlife dwelling.

Trees can fail and fall in any direction but historically somewhere between 90 and 95% of all tree fall on the plateau fall in a Gaussian distribution between NNE and West.

### **Findings:**

General removal of Red Alders along selected common property fence lines is recommended. These alders are very fast growing 3-6 feet per year and since they are phototropic they will lean toward the open areas (streets, fences, walk paths etc.) It is best to remove them now when a permit isn't required and is inexpensive or remove them later when the expense level would be dramatically higher, special equipment would be required and cost will be prohibitive. These areas would include those areas marked in fluorescent pink.

1. Along SE 8<sup>th</sup> from the retention pond and along the back side of tract A lots 15-20. See map 1
2. All around tract N. Particularly along the east side of 240<sup>th</sup> Way SE. See map 5
3. All around tract O and G. Particularly along the west side of 240<sup>th</sup> Way SE, along SE 8<sup>th</sup> St. and along 242 Drive SE. See maps 9 and 10

4. All along the edge of tract P that borders 242<sup>nd</sup> Drive SE and all along tracts P, J, A, Q, and K that border SE 8<sup>th</sup> St. See map 11. Some clearing has been done but is entirely inadequate.

Item one above, the trees would be cut down and left in the greenbelt. On items 2-4 the trees would be chipped and the chips returned to the greenbelt. We could chip the trees in number 1 but the cost would be prohibitive (\$2000-3000). The trees in item one would be hidden from view and are relatively small since we removed them several years ago. The trees in items 2-4 are visible from the roadways and would be unsightly if left lying along side of the fence lines in the greenbelt.

Cost for all of the above recommendations would be \$2575.-

### **Specific trees**

A large number of people were not at home so I was unable to access every yard. I was able to view most trees from adjoining or near adjoining yards where access was not available. This method was not as desirable as evaluating each tree by standing next to it but the evaluation is still reasonably accurate.

1. 23961 SE 8<sup>th</sup> Place. An alder with a substantial portion of the crown dead. 7+ Cost to remove: \$255.-
2. The end of the cul-de-sac on SE 10<sup>th</sup> Street see map 7 of 17 Division 1. Three dead/dying (7's and 8's) trees exist that concern the homeowners. Tree # 1 is a dead 15 inch DBH maple 37 feet in from the edge of the sidewalk. Tree # 2 a dead 13 inch DBH alder 63 feet in from the edge of the sidewalk and tree # 3 a dying 14 inch DBH alder 83 feet in from the edge of the sidewalk. Tract FF as well as the city easement is only 20 feet wide so these three trees belong to the owner of KCSP 1180016R. The property owner should be notified if the homeowners wish removal. No action required by the HOA.
3. 1107 240<sup>th</sup> large maple with dead and dying multiple leaders. Many of the home (lots 44 -48 and lots 31-36) back up against private property. Most of the homeowners along this street (240<sup>th</sup>) think that their fence line is 10 feet inside of their property line. We used our laser measuring device that is accurate to 1/10 of an inch and found their fence is actually 8-10 feet out side of their property line if the maps are accurate. This may create future problems for all of these homeowners and probably should be verified by survey. Any trees falling out of the undeveloped private property would damage only their fences. They should be encouraged to contact that tract property owner KCSP # 1180016R if they have any concerns. Liability for a falling tree is classified as an act of God unless they have notified the property owner by registered mail if they have concerns. See map 1 of 7 Division 2. The homeowners association would not be liable for any of the homes along this street except those that back up against tract L, see number 3 below.
4. Home owners (lots 37-44 that back up against tract L are substantially above the surrounding trees in tract L so damage from any failure would be fence damage only and cost to repair a fence is substantially less that the cost to remove any of the trees.

- Several of the trees in this area are in the 6+ category. I was unable to find any of these 8 home owners home so observation was cursory. See map 1 Division 2
5. No trees in tract R exceeded a 6 rating. There is one snag that is not dangerous and should be left for wildlife habitat.
  6. Three homes that back up against Tract M in Division 2 Map # 7. Addresses 1441, 1438 and 1434 have a total of 11 dead/dying alders leaning toward their property. These trees are a level 7 and 8 and should be removed as soon as practical. Cost to remove would be \$2210.-
  7. Two home owners 24207 and 24212 SE 14<sup>th</sup> Court should be encouraged to notify the unplatted property owner they back up against to remove the dangerous trees that threaten their property. Tract U about 10 feet wide runs along the back of these homeowners property but the dangerous trees behind these two homes seems to be outside of tract U. It is not clear if their fences are on the property line or not. The dangerous trees could potentially be just inside of tract U where liability would be Renaissance Ridges'
  8. On 242<sup>nd</sup> just 5 feet inside the west fence line in tract G is large cedar tree that is leaning north. A geotropic tree should not be leaning. Rated a 7 it should be removed. If it fell it would damage the monument. Cost to remove \$235.-
  9. On the east side of tract O just off the edge of the gas line easement are two dead trees. One a 15 inch DBH alder and one 13 inch DBH cedar. Cost to remove them both is \$240.-
  10. On the east side of 242<sup>nd</sup>, 16 feet behind the monument (Tract P map 11 Division 1) there is a 13 inch DBH dead alder leaning toward the monument. Rated an 8 if it fell it would damage the monument and fence. Cost to remove \$135.-

There will also be the cost to obtain the permits and a possible requirement of a tree for tree replacement that the city sometimes stipulates. We did not have to replace any of the trees the last time we did this so it is possible we may not need to replace any this time.

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