

Tree Topping, Surfside, Ocean Park, WA

[February 1, 2020](#) [Site Administrator](#)



Currently Surfside has covenants that require only people on the west side of J Place to top their trees to various heights. These seem to be random heights and we have not been able to get an explanation of why those heights. Two neighbors who live next to each other may find that one is required to top their trees to 16' yet the other can let theirs grow to 24'. J Place is about 30' to 50' above most of the other street. The houses on "Ocean Front" properties like G and F Streets can all keep theirs at 24'. What is the logic of topping trees between the Ocean Front properties shorter than those on the Ocean Front properties. In reality most of the trees between G Place and J Place, could grow to their full height and not interfere with the views of the J Place Members. The cost to the properties that have to top their trees is high and and is the damage to the appearance of their properties. What solutions could we find to solve this problem?

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7 thoughts on “Tree Topping, Surfside, Ocean Park, WA”

1.  [Site Administrator](#) says:

[February 23, 2020 at 11:31 am](#)

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2.  says:

[February 16, 2020 at 12:50 pm](#)

A CC&R Section 5, Section 6, and Exhibit “A” tree language improvement solution for all members needs to be done. At a minimum, the tree heights in general need to be evaluated and reassessed for consistency and reasonableness.

Since the homeowners association was the one who planted all the trees originally, the homeowners association has an obligation to maintain CC&R tree language for all members. The homeowners association, using \$10 of each member’s annual dues and assessments, must hold a tree lottery once or twice a year for tree replacements or new trees which meet the requirements of the homeowners association. The lottery is first come first serve.

3.  [Site Administrator](#) says:

[February 10, 2020 at 7:34 am](#)

The last three comments were copied from George Miller blog to summarize a discussion there.

Oooooohhhhh my gosh. An actual discussion. A friend told me this was happening! I just had to come and see. Awesome guys!

Steve, I put answers to your objections/questions below.

Steve said... I believe that the sighting pole is to be positioned on the road crown lined-up with the center of the lot on the westside of J Place. There is certain to be a house several feet taller than the sighting "tube".

Patrick responded... The complaining party would have identified a tree. The idea would be to shoot as close as possible down either side of the house to 24' above G Place. If there is a 24' house on G, great, if not, another person would need to be on G Place with a 24" pole with the tip painted with red and white stripes to make it easy to see.

Steve said... 1) All of the lots between J Pl. and G St. would need to be assessed for tree height.

Patrick responded... No, not necessary, just one tree at a time due to a complaint from a J Place property owner.

Steve said... 2) Heights of houses on the westside of G St. vary, though many MAY be right at 24 ft..

Patrick responded... well, per CCRs they can't be more than 24 ft, but can easily verified by use of the 24' pole.

Steve said... 3) While a transom could probably sight this accurately, it can't see through houses or objects. Crosshairs are needed for accuracy.

Patrick responded... Easy enough to put crosshairs on the pipe. You are not looking through the house you are looking next to the house. There is always a way to come up with a solution, if you want to. This is a pretty simple task.

Steve said... 4) We are talking about an invisible line, so sighting would only determine where trees are in the line of sight, or objects. It could not be determined how much more trees could grow and still be in compliance.

Patrick responded... True, but it is either over the line or not. I suppose one could estimate or from the person's property use a third pole to measure.

Steve said... 5) It would be challenging to mark the tree in the distance where it needs to be cut.

Patrick responded... third pole with chalk or measure the pole height.

Steve said... 6) Slight inaccuracies would be greatly magnified by distance from the sighting point.

Patrick responded... Actually, it would be pretty accurate. What could be inaccurate, the height of a four foot pole, or the height of the 24' pole? Thing of the geometry. If the 4' pole is off by one inch and the height of the 24' pole is correct, the measurement of the tree in the middle will be less than an inch.

Steve said... 7) J Place varies in height by at least 15 feet.

Patrick responded... Yes, but we are just looking at the view from the complaining property. Thus, no problem.

Steve said... If this could be modeled in 3-D, it could probably work. Otherwise it is a lot of guesswork, in my opinion.

Patrick responded... You are misunderstanding something. I am not sure what. This is very simple, very inexpensive and very easy. Cost of broom stick \$5, cost of one foot piece of plastic pipe, I can donate a 1 ft piece, metal parts for swivel hinge, under \$5. 2, twenty four foot extendable poles, \$70 each. Elimination of tree problem, PRICELESS!

Steve said... Better to get rid of the policy. The community no longer owes anything to J place owner's views. It really ended when the word "views" was removed from the covenants years ago.

Patrick responded... Lets not be like them. Let's make things good for everyone. That is the job of a TRUSTee.

4.  [Site Administrator](#) says:

[February 10, 2020 at 7:32 am](#)

Cora Said:

Steve. I just talked about the plan Johansen suggested, not how to achieve the measurements, my error.

His plan seemed easy. Take a four foot stick, put a pipe on the top with a swivel type hinge so it could rotate vertically. Stand in the middle of J Place and look through the pipe just over the top of the existing 24' houses. If the "invisible line" crosses any trees, they need to be topped. If you cant see around the house from the street well enough to satisfy the J Place owner, have someone stand at the west side of the property with a stick and mark the stick where that "invisible line" from J Place to the top of the roof on the Ocean front homes intersects the stick. Do this on both sides of the home. From the marks on the sticks, look through the pipe to the top of the 24' homes on G or F Street, 30 degrees south from the southern stick and 30 degrees north from the from the northern stick. If that line crosses any trees those trees need to be topped. Easy 15 minute process. I wont be exact to the millimeter, but probably within a few inches.

After identifying the tree, one person would need to go to the tree and with help of cell phones or family radio, communicate with the person looking through the pipe, mark on the tree the

allowable height, maybe with chalk on a stick, or just about any other means, or measure the height from the ground, record it at the HOA, and give a copy to the owner. Pretty easy, should take 15 to 30 minutes per complaint. I don't see where there would be a high cost.

As most of the trees then could be over 24' and rarely to shore pines grow that tall, there would be few complaints, so again, not very much cost involved.

Johansen had some other rules that went with this to solve a variety of issues that he realized could arise, I would have to go find what he had written or contact him and ask him to add the other conditions to this conversation.

5.  [Site Administrator](#) says:

[February 10, 2020 at 7:31 am](#)

Cora said...

Years back, Johansen suggest what I thought was a very good plan. He didn't feel it was right to force everyone to top their trees to random heights, but also didn't feel that the views should be taken away from the people on J Place that bought their properties for the views. He suggested that there be an imaginary line drawn from four feet above J Place to 24 feet above G St and F St. All trees could grow freely until they past that point. Any J Place property owner could file a complaint if the trees past that line, 30 degrees north and 30 degrees south from the center of the west side of their property, and then it would be required that the tree be topped to clear the line.

Most of the shore pines would never grow tall enough to pass that line except maybe on the west side of G and F Streets. This would protect the J Place views, decrease the tree costs for everyone, improve the overall appearance of Surfside, increase property values, decrease the cost of the shredder site, and make it easier for us to all live with each other.

I think it was an excellent idea. He was very good at coming up with win-win situations. He had a lot of good ideas.

Brenda DenAdel, what would be wrong with this idea?

6.  says:

[February 9, 2020 at 4:28 pm](#)

Check out how other homeowners associations regulate trees.

7.  says:

[February 2, 2020 at 1:37 pm](#)

This covenant needs to end. Not only does it kill the trees, it also divides the community.

Comments are closed.