

Getting your view back and keeping it is probably the most important work we do.

The value of a view can add tens of thousands of dollars to your property, and conversely, losing it will devalue your property by a like amount. Value is more than the price of your property. It is, more importantly, the enjoyment you receive from watching life's activities, endless weather, light, and seasonal changes occur in front of you.

With my many years of experience in settling the view vs privacy conflict, I offer the following advice:

- Always approach the owner of the tree you want to prune politely. Introduce yourself and exchange pleasantries before broaching the tree issue.
- Everyone knows why you want to maintain your view, be honest about your wishes.
- Never assume they do not care about the tree that is an eyesore in your opinion.
- Always try to invite the tree owner over to your house to see the view problem.
- Always hire a professional tree service to prune the tree once permission is gained, and expect the tree owner to benefit by the work performed. The cost of routinely paying to prune your neighbors tree for your view pales in comparison to the cost of regaining that permission once it is lost because of damage caused by a cut rate, subpar service.

- NEVER call your neighbor after a few cocktails to discuss their \$#@&ing tree.
- Always try to prune trees before they enter your view line.
- Limit your discussion to what your goal is and neighbor chat. Have an expert discuss particular concerns with the tree owner and processes for solving problems.
- If you are uncomfortable with dealing with your neighbor, leave a note in their mailbox suggesting you are having work done and would like to have your Arborist contact them. Then have your Arborist do your leg work. Set a budget with them for this service.
- Who pays? Most often the view holder pays for view pruning work even if some of the work performed is not in their view. Keeping the view is much more important than the principle that neighbors should maintain their own property. I often recommend that neighbors share the cost by having the view holder pay the cost of work to maintain the view and the tree owner the balance of the work. I recommend that the tree owner schedule the work after the view holder has paid their share to them, that way they control the quality of the tree work and clean-up.
- If you live in Tiburon or Belvedere, call for a consultation with me before you seek permission to prune your neighbors tree, I will likely already have some insight for your particular situation and can save you time and money.