

# URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland



• Nick Fish, Commissioner • Mike Abbaté, Director

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## URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2012

Lovejoy Room, City Hall

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**Commission Members present:** Brian Krieg, Michael McCloskey, Ricardo Moreno, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Stephen Peacock, Chair Joe Poracsky, Dick Pugh, Meryl Redisch, Dianna Shervey, and John Warner.

**City Staff present:** City Attorney Harry Auerbach; Mieke Keenan, Title 11 Coordinator; Jennifer Karpis, Bureau of Environmental Services (BES); Morgan Tracey, Bureau of Planning & Sustainability (BPS); Deborah Lev, Angie DiSalvo, Autumn Montegna and Anne Kroma, Parks & Recreation (PP&R).

**Guests present:** Ellen and John Nesbitt of Portland Lions Club; Scott Fogarty, Kris Day, Greg Tudor of Friends of Trees; Bryan Burch.

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**Call to Order and Public Comment:** Chair Joe Poracsky called the meeting to order at 7:39 a.m. with a statement about this volunteer board and their purpose. There was no public comment offered.

**Review and approval of Minutes:** Chair Joe Poracsky requested review and approval of the March 2012 UFC minutes. Dick Pugh moved to accept the minutes as written. Stephen Peacock seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

### Urban Forestry Report – Deborah Lev

Deborah thanked everyone that was able to attend Arbor Week activities. The Urban Forestry report explains that the saturated soils resulted in some recent spectacular tree failures around the area and in the South Park blocks. Urban Forestry inspected the trees and identified 7 trees that will be removed and others that will be monitored. It may be time for Parks Planning and Development staff to review the Historic Planting Plan for the South Park Blocks in the context of canopy plans and historic landscape designation. There were also trees that came down in the southwest hills and the emergency tree crew had their hands full.

The Urban Forestry Commission members each recounted the Arbor Week events that they were able to attend and their impressions:

- Ricardo Moreno enjoyed the bicycle tour despite a little rain and also the maintenance class at Holladay Park.
- Meryl Redisch was impressed by the number of different Magnolia species in Portland and Mart Hughes's guided tour of the ones at Hoyt Arboretum.
- Dianna Shervey agreed the bike ride was cold, but beautiful.
- Stephen Peacock marveled at Phyllis Reynolds' knowledge of the trees of Laurelhurst and encouraged anyone with an opportunity to hear her give a tree talk her to count themselves very lucky.
- Brian Krieg attended the social event with Neighborhood Tree Stewards at his very local Lucky Lab pub.
- Catherine Mushel was impressed with the class on mature tree care that also demonstrated the teaching ability of Larry Maginnis. She also commented on how moving it was to hear that Bill Naito's call to service in Portland was encouraged by travel to other wonderful cities around the world.
- John Warner felt that staff had made a tremendous effort to allow everyone an opportunity to participate by spreading events out over the week.

Deborah announced Jenn Cairo will start filling the position of City Forester on April 26<sup>th</sup>. She also gave a brief outline of the organizational structure, including the City Forester responsibilities, over the years. This position will also work with Horticulture and Community Gardens. High climbers have been replaced with the new Arborist classifications. Jenn is excited about continued learning in the form of becoming a certified arborist within six months. She has experience as a crew leader for Friends of Trees. The Urban Forestry Commission will be hosting a reception in May at Audubon to welcome her.

The budget process continues, waiting for the release of the Mayor's budget.

*UFC will form a committee of interested members to work on a planting plan for the Historic Park Blocks and the issue of elm replacement.*

### **Tree Amendment Update - Mieke Keenan**

Mieke also came before the UFC in February for a briefing on the process. The May Urban Forestry Commission meeting will allow the public a chance to comment on the proposed Title 11 amendments. The public will also have an opportunity at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> Planning Commission hearing. All public testimony will be shared with both Commissions and after each makes their recommendation on the amendments, it is expected to go before City Council in June or July.

There was discussion about whether any changes were more than 'housekeeping.' The inter-bureau implementation work has continued (with representatives of PP&R, Bureau of Development Services, BPS, and the Commissioner's office) and showed four categories of needed changes:

- Technical changes (such as referencing the wrong page)

- Clarification of intent
- Changes needed because administering the policy as written will be an issue
- Unintended consequences of enforcement as written

There was discussion about thresholds for required trees and the signal that may be sent regarding large trees. It was noted that requiring permits provides statistics on replanting, but may take too much time and resources. The 3 inch standard conforms to the federal definition, but may have unintended consequences. Including all Right of Way trees under UFC jurisdiction may be a policy that becomes overwhelming. The goal is to have an acceptable system for public compliance, make it easy enough to administer, and that encourages replanting the right trees in the right places.

Urban Forestry Commission members should call Mieke if they have any questions as they are reading the amendments and commentary. The May meeting will have a short regular session, public hearing and deliberation. It will be determined whether the UFC will have time for further consideration before making a recommendation at the June UFC meeting. There will be UFC members in attendance at the Planning Commission evening hearing.

### **Pride of Portland Award – Downtown Lions Club presentation to Friends of Trees**

Ellen Nesbitt, Lions Club president, explained this well deserved award was even more appropriate as we start to celebrate Earth Day. She presented Friends of Trees with the Pride of Portland Award recognizing their great work for Portland. Scott Fogarty, Kris Day and Greg Tudor of Friends of Trees were on hand to accept the award. Scott accepted the award and the congratulations of the entire Urban Forestry Commission and City staff.

## **Committee and Partnership Reports**

### **Appeals Committee – John Warner**

John reported on the work in finalizing the new forms and letters for the appeal process.

### **Policy Committee – Brian Krieg**

Brian updated the UFC on a meeting with Mike Abbaté, the new Parks Director. Policy Committee members Joe, Brian, and Meryl felt it was a positive meeting and there will be more engagement between the Parks Director and the UFC.

### **Education & Outreach Committee – Meryl Redisch**

Meryl reported the Committee had not met during Arbor week, but would meet in May.

### **Nominations Committee – Dianna Shervey**

It was reported that additional member applications had been received and will be considered. The Committee also hopes to have officer election for Vice Chair. The current vacancy will go through the full interview process.

### **Arbor Week Debrief – Autumn Montegna**

Autumn reported receiving good feedback from the Arbor week surveys. The E&O committee will meet next week to begin planning for next year. There were lots of calendar events this year and great support from partners. Approximately 40 people joined the guided tree walk in Laurelhurst by Phyllis Reynolds. It was requested that the mature tree care class be offered again, but on a Saturday. The classes may also be video taped to have on our website. Chair Joe Poracsky expressed thanks to Autumn and Karl Dawson for their hard work.

### **Grey to Green update – Jennifer Karps**

Jennifer reported:

- planting is still happening
- upcoming planting events include traffic calming site on SW Broadway Drive
- another hundred street trees planted in the NW Industrial area (matching last year)
- Parks, PBOT and ODOT are working together on the second year of a project adjacent to an I-5 sound wall.
- Novel, under-planted, low maintenance species are being used and evaluated during summer drought conditions.
- Interest in canvassing in Central Eastside has resulted in about 200 street trees

Scott reported that Friends of Trees has planted more than 4100 street trees this season.

### **Old / New Business:**

Dick Pugh expressed concern for the completion of the I-205 project in terms of ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) staff turnover. Planting on their property will continue to request approval on a case by case basis until there is an overarching policy.

Brian Krieg expressed hope that state legislation (recognizing public health, nursery's economic impact and water quality efforts) may eventually get us there or partnership with the Oregon Community Forester. He explained that there have been legislative attempts to redirect federal dollars to greening highways. All Oregon delegates agree on it, similar to the way highway beautification received funding previously.

Joe Poracsky mentioned the Cully Neighborhood Main Street project which will include street trees.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 am.

## APPEAL FOR 2729 SE TIBBETTS

Committee attendance:

Dianna Shervey, John Warner, Michael McCloskey and Stephen Peacock

The Chair, John Warner, called the Appeals Committee to order at 10:02.

Nick Hess of Pacific NW Arborist spoke on behalf of the appellant, Clifford Krum, regarding the circumstances of the Pin Oak. The tree has previously caused damage to the sidewalk, driveway and stone hardscape, but has not been posted.

Inspector Ned Sodja presented photos documenting his belief the tree does not meet the criterion for removal. The owner did not understand the size of the mature tree when he planted this species and is willing to mitigate the removal with other street tree/trees.

The vote was 2 to 1 in favor of granting the appeal, if the owner will work with Urban Forestry to determine a proper replacement.