

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland



• Nick Fish, Commissioner • Mike Abbaté, Director

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2013

Lovejoy Room, City Hall

- Commission Members present:** Kris Day, Igor Lacan, Michael McCloskey, Ricardo Moreno, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Stephen Peacock, Joe Poracsky, Dick Pugh, Chair Meryl Redisch, Dianna Shervey and John Warner
- City Staff present:** City Attorney Harry Auerbach; Jennifer Karp, Bureau of Environmental Services (BES); City Forester Jenn Cairo, City Nature Manager Deborah Lev, and Anne Kroma, Parks & Recreation (PP&R)
- Guests present:** Bryan Burch, Michael Hayes, Ken Armstrong, Pacific Power; Patrick Donovan, Portland General Electric (PGE); Ruth Williams of Davey Research
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Call to Order and Public Comments: Chair Meryl Redisch called the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) meeting to order at 7:31 am.

Meryl introduced the Commission's newest members, Kris Day and Igor Lacan, and asked them to share a little of their background. Kris Day, a Certified Arborist, works for Friends of Trees (FOT) as a Community Tree Planting Organizer. She has been serving on the Education & Outlook (E&O) committee. Igor Lacan, also a Certified Arborist, is an assistant Professor of Urban Ecology at Portland State University. His interest and research has been in urban forestry. These appointments were approved by City Council and the new UF Commissioners will be sworn in later this morning.

Chair Meryl Redisch recognized Bryan Burch, a Neighborhood Tree Steward (NTS) and member of the E&O Committee, for general public comments. He wished to go on the record expressing neighborhood concerns and bring to the UF Commission's attention the plans to build a bike trail roughly paralleling Fire Lane 5 in Forest Park. City Forester Jenn Cairo suggested having someone from Parks Planning and Development department come to address this at the April or May meeting.

Joe Poracsky pointed out this continues the long standing conflicts between different park users. He expressed concern that once a bike trail is opened, riders don't always stay on the designated trail and may contribute to erosion and other problems.

Review and approval of December UFC Minutes

There were several minor changes and corrections requested in the minutes, in addition to those provided in advance of the meeting. Secretary Catherine Mushel will confirm that all requested revisions are included.

Joe Poracsky moved that the December 2012 UFC minutes be approved with the changes described. Catherine Mushel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The Urban Forestry Report - Jenn Cairo, City Forester

Neighborhood Tree Inventories:

- Urban Forestry has received nine applications for this year. Some have familiar and auspicious names such as Lou Phemister, Dianna Shervey, and Kris Day, willing to lead the effort in their respective neighborhoods.
- Continuation at the current pace would take 62 years for citywide completion.
- This year's targeted areas are close in or continue previous efforts.
- SW and outer Eastside neighborhoods have not been targeted yet, due to the often hilly streets, many without sidewalks or clear Right of Ways (ROW).
- The goal for this spring is to develop a usable method of neighborhood inventory for those variable circumstances. At that time volunteer leaders would be solicited.

Continued Urban Forestry update:

- So far the winter has been mild, and crews have been called in for less emergency work than expected on ROW trees. Everyone is knocking on wood for a continuation of that.
- The root barrier demo will be the morning of Friday, February 8th. The UFC and other partners will be invited. Karl Dawson is working on the details and it will be filmed to allow viewing by those not able to attend.
- Jenn provided a hard copy of the Bill Naito Award application and asked for submissions. The application deadline is March 1, 2013.

Jenn reported that Parks & Recreation has hired Barrett Anderson as the new development manager. He is asking that all grant applications first come to his desk so that he can discern how to proceed if he determines that staff, partners, and friends groups are all vying for funding for the same project. It was pointed out that the Parks Foundation is a non-profit with a modest overhead and can receive tax deductible donations.

Harry Auerbach explained that the City of Portland is qualified to receive direct charitable contributions for government purposes but often donors prefer to use a related non-profit as a

conduit. In some instances it gives the grantor additional security that their money will be used for the express purpose it was donated.

Committee and Partnership Reports

Heritage Tree Committee – Michael McCloskey

Michael reported that he re-photographed one of the three trees currently nominated as Heritage Trees that will be presented to the UFC at the next meeting. It is hoped that the designation will get Council approval in time to have a ceremony timed with the Arbor celebrations.

Nominations Committee - Joe Poracsky

Joe has a very rough draft of a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation to be used at neighborhood associations to invite and entice citizens to send in nominations for new Urban Forestry Commission members.

Education & Outreach Committee – Meryl Redisch

Education & Outreach (E&O) Committee has been working on the Naito Award:

- UFC members are being asked to nominate candidates for the award, especially from the business committee, to broaden it.
- Mike McCloskey pointed out that nominations of companies need careful consideration to ensure that the Naito Award would not help "greenwash" a company -- that is, merely abet their marketing strategy to make them seem more supportive of community efforts to enhance a healthy urban forest than they actually are.

The committee is working on the Arbor Month celebration:

- There are plans to have an event for each day of the entire month.
- There will be plantings at Sitton and Beverly Cleary Elementary schools.
- Forest supporters, ranging from FOT and BES to State Heritage Trees, will have staffed information tables at the PSU Farmers Market Arbor celebration.

BES Grey to Green (G2G) - Jennifer Karps

Jennifer reported the program is on track to plant approximately 1900 street trees this season. Current planting is in Centennial/Glenfair and will move next to Cully and Brentwood-Darlington neighborhoods, where root barriers will be installed as part of the pilot project.

G2G staff will contribute to the Arbor celebration with educational programming, a table at the PSU Farmers Market event, and a brown bag presentation on State Heritage Trees. Lea Wilson, an AmeriCorps worker, reached out to Multnomah County Library to arrange for her and her fellow tree stewards to offer a tree ID class.

Although plans for the summer canvass and the planting season are being made, Jennifer cautioned that budget decisions may significantly affect these plans. Jennifer will provide updates as they become available.

Appeals Committee - John Warner

John reported the document packet is now usable for appeals both under 20.40 and 20.42. They can be revised when Title 11 is implemented or a new committee chair is installed.

Kris Day and Igor Lacan took their oath of office, as administered by Assistant Council Clerk Sue Parsons, making them voting UFC members.

FY 2013-2014 Urban Forestry Budget - Deborah Lev and Jenn Cairo

Chair Meryl Redisch explained that she had not been able to attend the most recent BAC (Budget Advisory Committee) meeting when introducing City Nature Manager Deb Lev. Deb started by saying she would be coming back for more updates as the process continues. The projected \$25 million budget shortfall would result in about a 6.5% general fund cut if spread across the board. Previous smaller cuts in Police and Fire Bureau budgets needed to be offset by other bureau's budgets.

Deb continued by explaining that general fund Bureau Directors are being asked to submit modified zero based budgets. Instead of cutting 10% of the current budget, they will start from zero to build up to 90% of current funding for core services. Rate based bureaus are being asked to submit budgets using the same method, but may not be cut to the same degree.

The timeline is abbreviated due to waiting for the new Mayor to take office. Parks Bureau objectives are to avoid long term damages while maintaining equitable access and safe parks. There may be cuts that are the result of pass-through funds no longer being sent to other bureaus or coming into ours to continue work.

There was a question about the elimination of the DED program and what that would mean. It could mean no inoculations of Park's elms, no licensed support for neighborhood association inoculation efforts, new requirements on the adjacent homeowner for removal and stump grinding, and no Parks funding for the elm monitor. It might result in losing elms that could be viable for thirty five years but might need replacement in five.

Deb explained how BES has contributed money towards a tree inspector position held vacant due to construction slowdown. It may never be filled and permanent staff may move to cover work done by Seasonals. BES G2G money has been funding Autumn's temporary position and may mean a reduction in staff work on public events and school plantings.

General fund cuts to the Natural Areas budget by Parks include cuts to Hoyt Arboretum, trail maintenance, and a horticulturalist position. BES is considering cutting all three positions in the Protect the Best program to save \$250K.

It is not currently known how this budget cycle will impact implementation of Title 11, currently delayed until July 1, 2013. The new position to coordinate the work was included in the reorganization but the planned 2.5 Parks positions and 2 BDS positions could be

changed. If Council decides to request further delay, steps would be taken to maintain 'life support' for the proposed program, perhaps with a half time coordinator.

- Parks & Recreation has cut just under 15% over the last four years.
- Budget proposal summaries may be available online by the end of the week.
- The UFC will have a number of opportunities to comment: suggestions can be passed to Meryl to take to the BAC, the UFC could send a letter to City Council, there will be public budget meetings scheduled, and there will be instructions for sending written comments.

Old / New Business:

Chair Meryl Redisch expressed thanks to Catherine Mushel and Joe Poracsky for working on the Annual Report.

The business meeting adjourned at 9:42 am.

Appeal for 120 NE Knott St

Appeals Committee in attendance: Chair John Warner, Dianna Shervey, Stephen Peacock and Michael McCloskey.

Staff in attendance: City Forester Jenn Cairo, Tree Inspector Jim Fields and recorder Anne Kroma

Appeals Chair John Warner started the appeal at 10:08 am by explaining the appeal process to the appellants. Inspector Jim Fields described the three site inspections on 3/28, 10/25 and 11/9/12 as a result of a removal request. The large tulip tree is approximately 70 feet tall, 33" DBH, in good condition and one of the largest trees in the neighborhood. It does have a co-dominate trunk but with a strong union. There is no visible decay, fruiting, insects or structural issues.

Jim showed used PowerPoint to show photos of the tree, sidewalk and intersection. There are power lines behind the tree and PGE has cleared branch tips on the back side. The tree is in a 9.5 x 20 foot tree well and there is some current sidewalk damage and evidence of past repair.

Jim explained that in a consultation, the sidewalk inspector reported a belief that ramping and grade fill on the back (south) side would permit the tree to remain, level the sidewalk, and retain the required ADA radius.

Appellants Robert Belcher and Gerald Caldwell explained that the tree, planted in the early 1980's, would not be allowed to be planted as a street tree now. It was installed under a special grant as an experiment in shorter pedestrian crossing. The Church has feelings for trees, but believes this one is in the wrong place. They expressed willingness to plant replacement trees, if available ROW. They felt the cost of continued sidewalk repair (every 7 or 8 years) is prohibitive with the last repair in 2005.

The sidewalk has not been posted and no permits have been issued for pruning or root pruning. Chemical treatment and lady bugs have been used to fight aphid infestations. No maintenance pruning has been done for many years, the last root pruning was approximately 1997, and a limb dropped in September.

Dianna Shervey expressed concern about intersection visibility at this busy site. Stephen Peacock warned a smaller tree could cause the same problems and would need to be planted in the same location. Michael McCloskey felt this tree had 3 issues: wrong tree, wrong place, too close to the intersection, and too close to power lines. Because of this unusual set of circumstances, this appeal need not constitute a precedent, though there was disagreement on the precedent question. Other Appeals Committee members felt that either the circumstances were not unusual or that the tree was not in the wrong place.

Stephen Peacock moved to deny the appeal. There was no second. Michael McCloskey moved to grant the appeal; it was seconded by Dianna. The vote was 2 -1 in favor.

The appeal concluded at 11:08 am.