

URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

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**URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2013

Lovejoy Room, City Hall

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- Commission Members present:** Kris Day, Igor Lacan, Michael McCloskey, Ricardo Moreno, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Stephen Peacock, Chair Meryl Redisch, and Dianna Shervey
- Commission Members absent:** Joe Poracsky
- City Staff present:** Jennifer Karps, Bureau of Environmental Services; City Forester Jenn Cairo, and Anne Kroma, Parks & Recreation (PP&R)
- Guests present:** David Porter, Gay Greger, Linda Morrow, and Jim Sjulín of Leach Garden Friends; Michael Hayes, and John Warner
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**Call to Order and Public Comments:** Chair Meryl Redisch called the April 2013 Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) meeting to order at 7:35 am.

**Review and approval of February and March UFC Minutes**

Secretary Catherine Mushel supplied a corrected hard copy of the February 2013 minutes and Chair Meryl Redisch gave the commission a few minutes to review them. Review of minutes was not included in the shortened business meeting prior to the retreat in March. Igor Lacan moved to approve the February 2013 UFC minutes as revised and submitted. The motion was seconded by Catherine Mushel and approved unanimously.

Igor Lacan moved to adopt the March 2013 minutes as prepared by City Forester Jenn Cairo and edited by Secretary Catherine Mushel. Ricardo Moreno seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The March retreat meeting notes, included as a separate item in the document packet, neither required nor received a vote of approval, nor inclusion in the public record.

The Chair recognized Secretary Catherine Mushel who requested authorization to proceed with plans to thank members of the E&O Committee for Arbor Month work.

### **The Urban Forestry Report - City Forester Jenn Cairo**

Jenn reported on budget related information first:

- Title 11 implementation for July 1, 2013 (or for the Title 11 Coordinator position, now held by Mieke Keenan) is not included in any bureau's budget.
- BDS and Parks staff will continue to assume the code change will be implemented and have been going forward on the areas not impacted by funding: customer service (through the new phone tree and online permits), tree protection during development, and compliance or enforcement.
- The earliest an announcement to delay Title 11 could be expected is when the Mayor's Proposed Budget is released the week of April 29th.

Jenn continued the update with the following:

- Angie DiSalvo will be out on maternity leave for three months and Danielle Fuchs (in a seasonal position as the Elm Monitor) will be able to fill in temporarily. TRACS changes will wait until Angie returns.
- Urban Forestry has applied for two AmeriCorps interns: one in education and outreach work and the second for tree inventory and database work. The \$15,000 per year stipend is a great value for highly motivated and educated workers.
- Jenn announced that there will be more training offered soon to staff and partners in recognizing the Asian Long Horned beetle. This invasive species is a high threat to maples and other street trees with three interceptions in Oregon so far. The proximity of the Port of Portland makes us vulnerable to these and other invasive bugs, since only 2% of incoming cargo is inspected by TSA (Transportation Security Administration) or APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) staff. The training will be widely communicated and open to everyone interested.
- Kelly Marie Griffin has been covering intake at Urban Forestry (UF) and helped set up the phone tree (a system for separating messages into different voice mail boxes) and has enhanced customer service and emergency response process.

### **Committee and Partnership Reports**

#### **Policy Committee - Igor Lacan**

The revived Policy Committee is going over the Comprehensive Plan Update and newly installed committee Chair Igor Lacan expressed his concern that in a 250 page document, there is only a page and a half about trees. He felt that you could insert “planting or maintaining trees” into almost any section of the document and it would be applicable to the plans for dealing with future growth. He pointed out that although Roberta Jortner and Sallie Edmunds referred to Natural Resources in their update presentation to the UFC, natural areas are treated as a separate kind of asset. Heritage trees (or any large mature trees) are not even mentioned.

Michael McCloskey asked about purpose and how this plan fits into all the other plans. In summary, the Portland Plan is the big picture plan and this is the land use planning portion. It may be aspirational but does include language about environmental justice issues.

### **Education & Outreach Committee – Catherine Mushel**

Education & Outreach (E&O) Committee has been very busy executing the plans for the Arbor month events, especially this Saturday's celebration. Catherine Mushel continued:

- Saying thank you to everyone that responded to the committee's requests to volunteer even more time by attending or leading events.
- Catherine stated she learned something new with each event but felt the connections with other participants was just as important as the information.
- There will be a full debrief, documented to help with future event planning.
- The specifics for this Saturday's event are to meet at music stage at Smith Hall, arriving at 9:45 for a ceremony scheduled for 10 am sharp. The suggested script is timed to coordinate with scheduled events before and after ours.
- 'Garry Oak' will receive honorary Heritage status for only one day at this Saturday's event, and the tree mascot will be touring the closest three Heritage Trees.
- Head counts have been done at the events this year, but contact information has not been gathered. The committee will look at providing sign-up sheets to add names to the Tree Bark newsletter distribution list.
- Confirmation of our scheduled events on partners' and city calendars will be considered for improvement.
- The committee is tracking their additional time to include in volunteer statistics.
- The committee will update its procedural materials.

UFC Chair Meryl Redisch thanked Catherine for doing a wonderful job.

### **Heritage Tree Committee – Michael McCloskey**

Michael reported on his long-planned Heritage Tree presentation to the Villa Garden Club. Approximately 150 people attended to hear about Heritage Trees, coincidentally the focus of our Arbor celebration.

Michael reported that there is paperwork in process to re-measure the Austrian Pine at SW 20th and Jefferson. It is a Heritage Tree in our system but the application is being submitted to make it an American Forestry Association Champion Tree.

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

Chair Meryl Redisch reminded the group that at the retreat it was decided to move the regular agenda item of Old and New Business to the middle of the meeting to ensure that agenda topics are raised. Requests for follow-ups, updates, and new subjects can be included in upcoming meetings.

Kris Day asked for an update on the sequoia removal in Pier Park that gained a lot of attention. PP&R staff will be meeting with interested neighbors and citizens. The

intersection is a T and on railroad property. Until the funding is secured for the next phase, the issue will be to discourage people from cutting through the sequoia grove before the trail is complete.

Michael McCloskey said we ought to give further thought about how to improve the process so that a routine consultation (as in the Pier Point Park case) does not explode out of control and produce bad publicity to our program. It was suggested that Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, who provided process information at the retreat, be invited to come and speak on this specific project and the outreach done.

UFC members were asked at the retreat to select three or four priorities they wished the UFC would focus on. Meryl expressed the hope that the committee work could help in accomplishing priorities. With staff analysis, work such as research, could be assigned to the appropriate committee and then brought back to the full commission.

With committees working with staff throughout the year, they potentially could become better advocates during the budget process. They could work on bigger picture ideas, like finding a sustainable, long term funding strategy. A UFC committee could be helping to analyze ideas like road frontage fees, or carbon offset market. Environmental work is not done in a vacuum. It was noted that many of the discussed goals appear to be Policy related, but the current committee structure could change. There will be time committed to this subject at the next meeting.

### **Leach Botanical Garden - David Porter**

David Porter, Executive Director, introduced Leach Garden Friends President Gay Greger, Vice President Linda Morrow and Jim Sjulín, retired Parks employee and long time Leach Garden volunteer and tree expert. The group came to brief the UFC on the Upper Garden Plans and resulting tree removals.

David Porter reported:

- Leach Botanical Garden will celebrate the 100th Wedding Anniversary of John and Lilla Leach on 9/13/13. This year marks the 30th anniversary for the friends group.
- Lilla, a trained botanist, and John-- pharmacist, muleskinner, and metal crafter-- were widely traveled and well suited to creating an amazing garden. They originally bought the property in 1931 and built a stone cabin and outdoor kitchen to use on weekends. They then built and moved into the Manor House, and lived on the site until the 1970s. With no children, the couple left the property to the City under the condition that it be used as a botanic garden and museum. After using it as a rental property, Parks was about to sell it when Director Charles Jordan decided to visit the site. He recognized this hidden jewel and it's potential.
- The non-profit group, Leach Garden Friends, has about 130 active volunteers working with the collection on research, conservation, display and education.
- The original 4.5 acres was increased with a joint Metro and City purchase of 16 acres. The Master Plan was written in 2008 and adopted in 2010. Development, permitting, fundraising and construction will take place now through 2015.

- Besides a sorely needed parking lot, the plans add an entryway, a visitor's center and offices to be shared with Audubon. There will also be a multipurpose community space (perfect to hold a UFC meeting) and a room for propagation.

Jim Sjulín continued the presentation with slides showing drawings and plans:

- A written policy for tree management has been prepared, using the Desired Future Condition (DFC) approach. DFC is planning that acknowledges the human part and needs--both maintenance requirements and needs for use—at play in setting desired ecological goals over time.
- A complete inventory has identified non-native trees and plants, with about 88 trees considered nuisance species.
- The approach will be to manage the trees with a program permit to result in a riparian naïve forest with alder, willow, Oregon ash and cottonwood.
- There will be a planted native buffer for screening around the perimeter.
- Canopy calculations (1375 trees over 15.85 acres) work out to about 58%.

Linda Marrow asked to leave three thoughts with the UFC about Leach:

- Appreciation for the importance of the property and its critical role in the SE community.
- That approximately 125 hours of work has gone into the Tree Management Plan, including the inventory and policy documents.
- The development plan will make this a stellar garden and allow it to maintain 48% tree canopy. The plan ensures that one goal does not cancel out another.

Leach Botanical Garden will have open house on two days: May 10th and June 14th, 10:30 - Noon and 4:30 to 6. Anne will forward the invitation to the commission when received.

While there will be over 100 trees removed, many are invasive, some are the remnants of residential use like nonnative cherries and many are not in prime shape as there has never been thinning done on the property. The trees that will be added in the parking lot have not been counted in mitigation, so the net count could be more trees, including additions to the botanical collection.

Jenn Cairo spoke about the permit process and how Title 33 and 20.42 govern this. Removal of trees will require inch for inch mitigation, except for invasive or trees in bad shape, which can be valued less. Replacement for those could be one for one or payment into the trust. This would be captured in development permits for the project. A programmatic permit is being developed to allow for on-going management of the trees on the property, such as pruning; this will likely be separate from the permits for the development project. A programmatic permit would capture the approved forest management goals and techniques for the property.

David Porter felt that Leach Botanical Garden is going to be a wonderful oasis in the far eastern reaches of the city and shows the local history from the Missoula flood layers to the Johnson sawmill on the creek that came to bear that name. It was a WPA project and witnessed bootlegging in the 1920s. The urbanization that has surrounded it is being

understood to a greater degree. We've learned to appreciate the watershed in a different way. Catherine commented that the planners and educators coming after them, in dealing with the riparian zone next to Johnson Creek and the upland forest zone above that, have the opportunity to instruct the public on the kind of gardening maintenance that is required to keep ostensibly wild ecological zones in tact in a world of invasive species and ecological change.

The design plans tried to keep the Douglas firs, especially the substantial sized ones. There will be re-use of the fir and cedar in new buildings, where possible.

The business meeting adjourned at 10:17 am.