
URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2014
Lovejoy Room, City Hall

- Commission Members present:** Kris Day, Michael McCloskey, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Stephen Peacock, Joe Poracsky, Chair Meryl Redisch, and Dianna Shervey
- Commission Members absent:** Ricardo Moreno
- City Staff present:** City Attorney Harry Auerbach; City Forester Jenn Cairo, City Nature Manager Deborah Lev, Angie DiSalvo, Jeremy Gratbo, and recorder Anne Kroma, Parks & Recreation (PP&R)
- Guests present:** Brian French, Oregon Champion Tree Registry Coordinator; Bryan Burch, UFC Education & Outreach Committee member; David Diaz, Ecotrust; Ken Armstrong, Pacific Power.
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Call to Order and Public Comments: Chair Meryl Redisch called the March 2014 Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) meeting to order at 8:19 am. She determined there was no request to make public comments.

Review of February UFC Minutes: UFC Chair Meryl Redisch requested a quick review of the February 2014 draft minutes. Joe Poracsky moved to accept the minutes with two minor corrections. Kris Day seconded the motion; the minutes were unanimously approved.

The Urban Forestry Report - City Forester Jenn Cairo

City Forester Jenn Cairo invited everyone to attend City Council on Wednesday, April 2nd for the Heritage Tree ordinance and the Resolution to proclaim Arbor Month. She encouraged a visit to the website to look at the amazing list of events scheduled for Arbor Month.

As previously reported, the horticultural nursery at Mt Tabor Yard is closing. Urban Forestry staff has been assessing available planting locations in parks. Metro is also using available stock and the remaining trees will be given away as a thank-you to volunteers. The details and an inventory list will be available online soon.

The media has been reporting on two large Capital Improvement Projects: the Mt Tabor Reservoir project and an expansion of the Japanese Garden. Project managers will be invited to present project information to the UFC as early as possible in the design process.

The UFC Chair Report – Meryl Redisch

UFC Chair Meryl Redisch referred to a recent Oregonian editorial regarding an initiative challenge to Portland's current water and sewer operations system. She suggested a visit to the Audubon website for more detailed information on the issue. City Attorney Harry Auerbach cautioned members; suggesting neutral statements regarding the subject unless it is clearly expressed as one's own individual opinion and not representing the Urban Forestry Commission, Parks & Recreation or the City.

Meryl Redisch continued her report with an update on efforts around the budget process. She has been serving on the Parks Budget Advisory Committee. Meryl met with Commissioner Steve Novick, both as follow up to the December 19th Title 11 Report to Council, and because it's important to keep in touch with all of the members of City Council. Both Mayor Hales and Commissioner Novick have expressed concerns over the increased regulation of private property under Title 11. Although there is general Tree Code support from Council, the anticipated budget 'surplus' has been estimated downward due to forces like a larger cost of living increase than expected, so there will be less one time funding available.

City Forester Jenn Cairo was recognized to add that Parks Director Mike Abbaté will be presenting bureau budget information at a March 31st presentation. An email with meeting details was forwarded and will be resent so that everyone is aware of the schedule.

Michael McCloskey made mention that it seems like the least supportive Commissioners were not in office during the long hard slog through the new code process. Jenn Cairo reported that there were many staff briefings even before the December 19th Implementation Delay report. Catherine Mushel felt there exists a tie-in to emergency preparation that Commissioner Novick would appreciate. City Forester Jenn Cairo reported that the Mayor loves trees (he was the Parks Commissioner at the time Title 20.42 was passed) but he asked what problem Title 11 is trying to fix. Jenn didn't have quantitative statistics to provide to him. The Policy Committee may work on further articulating the necessity and benefits of the revised code for the governance of trees.

Committee and Partnership Reports

Policy Committee – Kris Day

Chair Kris Day reported that the committee held a meeting discussing Title 11 the previous week that included UFC Chair Meryl Redisch and four new people. Kris described a slate of actions that the Policy Committee has decided to accomplish:

- Kris will have a one-on-one meeting with Commissioner Dan Saltzman.
- Jeff Moore is writing an email to working arborists regarding difficulties with the current code. Another general email on the subject will also be prepared. It is hoped that people might forward them with their own comments to elected officials.

- An article is being prepared to appear in Friends of Trees newsletter Growth Rings.
- Kris will testify before City Council on Wednesday, April 16th regarding private property concerns in the new Tree Code and the tree industry's need for code clarity.
- A talking points document will be completed and provided to UFC members.

Education & Outreach Committee – Catherine Mushel

E&O Committee Chair Catherine Mushel reported on Arbor Month planning that includes events sponsored by other organizations, such as the Westside Portland Tree Guild. This organization, recently helped to complete a neighborhood street tree inventory, and has an exciting set of events on April 19th. These include Phyllis Reynolds, the author of *Trees of Greater Portland*, leading a walking tour of trees in the downtown area and a tree planting in front of Lincoln Hall's new entry at Portland State University. A complete list of Arbor Month events are online and this year's theme of Stewardship will carry forward all year.

Appreciation of Service of Commissioners Shervey and McCloskey

Chair Meryl Redisch expressed sincere gratitude for the long tenure and hard work of Dianna Shervey and Michael McCloskey as Urban Forestry Commissioners. They both started serving on the Urban Forestry Commission in 2006 and have made their marks on committee and commission work. A plaque made from the wood of a downed Heritage oak tree was presented to each. Dianna characterized her time on the UFC as fun, rewarding, challenging and giving her the opportunity to meet and work with some great people. Michael McCloskey described the experience as a very rewarding one for a retired person.

Committee Assignments – Meryl Redisch

UFC Chair Meryl Redisch decided to postpone this agenda item to the next meeting when new members will be in attendance. She did ask if it was felt that any new committees were necessary.

A retreat was held last year in March and Meryl suggested that the UFC consider having another half-day, facilitated retreat soon. The item will be on the next agenda to discuss.

Nominations/Recruitment Committee

Committee Chair Joe Poracsky restated the difficulty in finding a qualified and diverse pool of candidates and receiving their applications for consideration as UFC members. He reminded the UFC that the committee structure is a strategy for commission work.

UFC Chair Meryl Redisch reported that Commissioner Fritz's office had notified the new UF Commission members and would like to be involved throughout the recruitment process. Meryl explained that these applicants have diverse skills, which were spelled out in the recommendation to Commissioner Fritz. City Forester Jenn Cairo stated that PP&R and the City in general are working to improve equity in hiring. Michael McCloskey reasoned that the federal employment guidelines require hiring staff that represents the community. He continued with the observation that our local community is predominately white northern

European. Especially in arboriculture, he felt it would be a struggle to represent current levels of community diversity, much less loftier goals. Both Meryl and Jenn expressed the desire to have systematic recruitment processes that routinely attempt to be inclusive.

Bill Naito Awards – Catherine Mushel

UFC Secretary and Education & Outreach Committee Chair Catherine Mushel summarized the five nominations that the E&O Committee considered for this year's Naito Awards: Jennifer Karps, Rick Faber, Phil Hamilton, Wilcox Estates Homeowner Association, and the World Record Tree Hugging event at Hoyt. The standards when evaluating nominations include innovation and broad reach in the community. The E&O Committee recommended Phil Hamilton, who has logged an incredible 21,000 hours of volunteer service at Tryon Creek State Park, for the individual award. The E&O Committee recommended that the work done by Hoyt Arboretum, Treecology Inc., and Friends of Trees to break the tree hugging world record be recognized with the Naito group award. Guinness World Records recently confirmed that the 936 people simultaneously hugging trees for one minute at Hoyt on July 20, 2013 now hold the record. Plans are in the works to repeat the fun and defend the record this summer on July 12th.

Joe Poracsky moved to accept the Education & Outreach Committee's recommendations and recognize Phil Hamilton (individual award) and the Hoyt Tree Hug (group award) as this year's Bill Naito Award winners. Presentation of the awards will be at the Arbor Day Festival event at the Portland Farmers Market on April 26th.

Heritage Tree Vote – City Forester Jenn Cairo

City Forester Jenn Cairo had referred earlier to being on the City Council agenda for April 2nd for three items. Besides the Report to Council that will appoint our new UFC members, there will also be a Resolution to Proclaim Arbor Month and an ordinance for Heritage Trees.

The three trees that will be designated as new Heritage Trees (a horse chestnut, a European beech and a silver linden) were unanimously approved by the UFC last fall. Additionally, document research showed a number of Heritage Trees that are no longer alive but were never brought before Council to have the designation removed. A list of nineteen removed Heritage Trees was provided to the UFC. There was a question about one tree, confirmed to be alive and well. A request was made to have the delisting portion of the Heritage Tree ordinance state clearly that the trees have been physically removed and no longer exist.

Joe Poracsky moved to approve the delisting of eighteen trees with revised language in the ordinance. Kris Day seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Discussion of Heritage Tree Committee Report - Michael McCloskey

Heritage Tree Committee Chair Michael McCloskey had provided a document to the UFC in February, but there had not been enough time to discuss it. The report, 'Evaluation of Current City Programs and Their Effectiveness in Preserving Larger Trees and Opportunities

for New and Better Approaches' is the completion of an assignment made to the Heritage Tree Committee at the March 2013 UFC Retreat.

The document details steps that might be taken in the course of preserving and encouraging large trees, some of which are nominated as Heritage Trees. Some of the recommendations impact the work of other bureaus besides Parks & Recreation. Comments on the report could be framed as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan comments by the Policy Committee.

City Forester Jenn Cairo welcomed the effort of the Heritage Tree Committee in providing a thoughtful report. She referenced the Compliance Report, presented by Angie DiSalvo in February, showing Portland's trend is toward bigger trees. The City Forester reiterated that she works closely with other bureaus and encourages communication. She did state that a statement from the UFC to those bureaus articulating their thoughts on this might be helpful.

Catherine Mushel asked for information regarding the number of trees removed from planting strips and replanted in swales as part of storm water control projects. There is concern that one bureau may be removing mature trees for a project that replaces them with young trees that will take a lot of time to reach the same level of contribution to the canopy.

Chair Meryl Redisch ascertained that about half of the current Heritage Trees are on private property and future nominations may increase that percentage. Many large street trees will be replaced by smaller species due to tighter current restrictions under transportation and utility guidelines.

Dianna Shervey pointed out the Trees of Merit list may provide future Heritage Tree candidates. Trees of Merit are evaluated by the Heritage Tree Committee but not recommended for designation, sometimes because they are private trees with limited public viewing access.

City Forester Jenn Cairo clarified that it is the Urban Forestry Action Plan (UFAP) that drives both her and Urban Forestry staff responsibilities and work priorities. She will have staff follow up to research the numbers on tree removals and replanting during projects.

UFC Secretary Catherine Mushel moved to accept the Heritage Tree Committee's evaluation report. The motion was seconded by Stephen Peacock and approved unanimously.

Street Tree Inventory report and plans – Angie DiSalvo

Angie DiSalvo gave her report as a PowerPoint presentation. She explained that all completed Street Tree inventory data is available on the Parks website. A Street Tree Inventory Summit held in November 2013 was a success. January was the deadline for neighborhoods to apply to do a street tree inventory in the next round.

Angie related how she receives phone calls from municipalities all over the country asking what the secret is to neighborhood participation in Portland. Other places find it difficult to get enough volunteers to do a single inventory, while in Portland 30,000 trees were

inventoried by volunteers this past summer. Some neighborhoods have taken full ownership of the process and are proceeding with implementing the tree plans that came from neighborhood input after the neighborhood inventory.

Angie related how some of the eight neighborhoods in this update had unimproved Right of Ways (ROW) and other challenges to the inventory process. It is planting spaces in those same unimproved road situations that may allow for planting large species trees.

Some neighborhoods are a little overwhelmed when they receive their inventory information. Angie works with them to understand things like stocking levels and species diversity and how to prioritize canopy plans. Each neighborhood is different, which is evident in their inventories and tree plans, available online. Cathedral and Woodstock have 7-9% evergreens. Downtown has a possible 397 tree spaces, if some concrete is removed. Brooklyn neighborhood lost thousands of trees to a TriMet project, but they are being replaced in the same numbers but with much greater diversity. New Columbia picked out tupelos and hackberry, with the neighborhood inventory now showing them as 3-5% of the population, a significant number.

Although the overall species rates remain similar to those of thirty years ago, current planting guidelines should result in more tree diversity throughout the city. The tree lists have been updated to include more species and do not list maples. The time-out in recommending maples is to help balance out this predominate species. Maples may be planted with tree inspector permission, but they are not an automatically approved species - as they were in the past. One factor is that as more homeowners and landscape architects request different tree species, the more those other trees will be available at local nurseries.

Angie DiSalvo outlined the work of Natasha Lipai, an AmeriCorps worker who is helping guide neighborhood associations in designing and implementing their planting plans. Natasha has made presentations, designed brochures and held open houses. Bryan Burch was recognized from the audience to mention inviting Neighborhood Tree Stewards to become involved with the street tree inventories and tree plans in their own neighborhood.

Angie stated that 25 neighborhoods will have completed the inventory by the end of this summer and staff will hold 24 inventory workshops during 2014.

Old/New Business

UFC Chair Meryl Redisch determined there was no other business to attend to. Dianna Shervey and Michael McCloskey were again thanked for their service and for returning for one more meeting.

The regular business meeting adjourned at 10:46 am.