
URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2017

City Hall, Lovejoy Room

Commission Members present:	Chair Mark Bello, Vice-Chair Barbara Hollenbeck, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Damon Schrosk, Vivek Shandas, Gregg Everhart, Thuy Tu, Daniel Newberry, Meryl Redisch
Commission Members Absent:	Brian French
Urban Forestry staff present:	Jenn Cairo, City Forester; Brian Landoe, Asst. Program Specialist; Dan Gleason, Development Tree Inspector; Larry Maginnis, Operations Supervisor; Daphne Cissell, CSA II; Lizzie Sords, CSA II; Kasie Auger, CSA II, Carrie Black, CSA II; Mason Wordell, CSA II
City staff present:	Art Hendricks, PP&R; Nicole Blanchard, PBOT
Guests present:	Doug Klotz

Call to Order and Public Comments: UFC Chair Mark Bello

- Doug Klotz provided public comment concerning an apartment development at 14th and Burnside and the removal of several street trees.
- Mr. Klotz said there should be a process for requiring developers to reduce the footprint of the building, while allowing additional floors, in order to preserve existing trees.

Urban Forestry Report: City Forester Jenn Cairo

- The presentation on the Street Tree Inventory and need for Street Tree Task Force was very well received by City Council.
 - Council determined a work session will be held in late September to discuss the formation of the task force.
- Urban Forestry is excited to welcome new staff and promotions.
 - Jerome Johnson and John Watkins, currently Arborist IIIs, have been promoted to Arborist IV.
 - Dan Gleason joined Urban Forestry as a Development Tree Inspector nearly a year ago, though this is the first UFC meeting he has been able to attend.
 - Seasonal staff--Daphne Cissell, Lizzie Sords, Kasie Auger, Carrie Black, and Mason Wordell--will be working on the Park Tree Inventory as well as other projects.
- **FY 18 Budget Updates**
 - The DED Realignment, wherein adjacent property owners will be responsible for removing infected elm trees and staff time will be devoted to park trees, will be in the adopted budget.
 - UF permit fee increases for FY 18 will go to City council for approval.
 - Fee increases will be used to offset a reduction in general fund support.

- Nearly all of the fee increases involve development permits.
 - The fee in lieu of planting will increase from \$300/inch to \$325/inch.
- Title 11 Audit
 - The city is auditing Urban Forestry's and the Bureau of Development Services' implementation of Title 11
 - The primary points so far have been staffing challenges, increase in permit volume, and the timeline for updating the Forest Management Plan.
- Equity training by the Office of Equity and Human Rights has been scheduled for the June UFC meeting.

Chair Report: UFC Chair Mark Bello

- Mark thanked Daniel for testifying at City Council in support of the Street Tree Task Force
 - Noted that Commissioner Saltzman was fully supportive of the idea.
- Meryl provided a brief overview of the Policy Committee's work on the Task Force.
 - Meryl, Jim Labbe, and Roberta Jortner are working as a sub-committee on this issue.
 - Moving forward, the group will be preparing for the Council work session likely convening in late September.
- Mark asked the Commission if they would be interested in holding a workshop to discuss the UFC work plan and bylaws.
 - Barbara recommended a workshop in October to facilitate the drafting of the annual report.
 - Damon recommended adding 60 to 90 minutes to the October 19 UFC meeting for the workshop.
- Updating bylaws
 - Tony Garcia recommended finding a time in a future UFC meeting to go over the current bylaws, even though the city attorney working on the by-law templates for all commissions to use did not provide a delivery date for the templates before taking a leave of absence.
 - Mark volunteered to begin working on the bylaws with the understanding that they may be updated again once the templates are complete.
- Mark also recommended that the Committee Chairs send updates on the progress made towards their work plans in June/July.

Committee Updates

- Gregg provided the Commission with an update on Heritage Tree nominations.
 - A record 86 trees were submitted, which is a big increase in nominations.
 - Depending on the quality of the trees nominated, as few as a couple or as many as 15 trees have been approved as Heritage Trees in past years.

PP&R Bureau Equity Plan: Art Hendricks, Equity & Inclusion Manager

- Art presented Portland Parks & Recreation's bureau equity plan to the Commission.
- Art highlighted that the bureau's goal is for 35% of full time staff to be people of color by 2021. The current percentage is 26%, which is up from 12% just a few years ago
- Also mentioned the Urban Forestry Arborist Apprenticeship Program, which will focus on populations historically underrepresented in the field.
- Full PowerPoint of the presentation is available on the [Urban Forestry Commission website](#)

DED Update: Larry Maginnis, Operations Supervisor

- Larry provided an update on Urban Forestry's Dutch Elm Disease program.
- UF inoculates roughly 450 elm trees every year.

- Beginning in FY 18, the responsibility to remove of Dutch Elm Disease infected trees will revert to the adjacent property owner. In the past, Urban Forestry has removed these trees.
 - DED infected trees will follow the same BDS nuisance abatement process as other dead, dying, or dangerous street trees
- This change will free up Urban Forestry resources to fulfill other activities required by city code, including Heritage Trees on city property and the maintenance of park trees when they are accessible during the summer months.
 - There are currently 150 Heritage Trees in city parks and rights-of-way. UF will proactively prune all of them on a 3-year cycle.
- UF will continue to monitor, test, and inoculate elm trees.
- Mark asked if there is a program to assist low-income property owners with the cost of removing an infected tree
 - Jenn responded that BDS does work with low-income property owners on nuisance issues.
 - The city also refers property owners to REACH, a low-income housing non-profit, when owners cannot afford the cost of removal.

Development Case Study: Rick Faber, Assistant Program Specialist

- Rick presented two case studies concerning street tree retention in development situations
 - Provided an overview of street tree preservation requirements and development permit procedures
 - Detailed the case history, decision, and outcome of two development situations:
 - 80 NE 14th Ave
 - 9000 NE Hoyt St.
- Mark noted that these may be situations where it is appropriate for the Commissioner’s office or the Urban Forestry Commission to become involved in developing solutions that allow for tree preservation.
- Catherine added that it’s important to have representatives from each bureau (PBOT, BDS, etc.) that is involved in applying City Code in development situations at these types of conversations.
- Daniel encouraged Urban Forestry to bring more case studies to the Urban Forestry Commission. There is a perception that, within development situations when there is competition for space for infrastructure, trees are not considered as important as other assets.
- Jenn added that Title 11 requires consultation between the developer and Urban Forestry; it does not require retention of trees.
 - Rick and Jenn noted that Heritage Trees are given higher protection in City Code, which can lead to building solutions which lead to tree preservation (e.g. the PSU Library)
 - Further, the mitigation fees for removing trees can serve as a disincentive to tree removal. The current levels of mitigation are rarely a disincentive.
- Gregg cautioned that inadequate tree preservation standards put the city at risk of losing the next generation of Heritage Trees.
- Full PowerPoint of the presentation is available on the [Urban Forestry Commission website](#)

The meeting adjourned at 11:05am.