

**URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2018

City Hall, Lovejoy Room

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<b>Commission Members present:</b>	Chair Vivek Shandas, Vice Chair Barbara Hollenbeck, Secretary Catherine Mushel, Lorena Nascimento, Damon Schrosk, Gregg Everhart, Megan Van de Mark, Daniel Newberry, Thuy Tu
<b>Commission Members absent:</b>	Anjeanette Brown, Brian French
<b>Urban Forestry staff present:</b>	Jenn Cairo, City Forester; Brian Landoe, Budget & Program Analyst
<b>City staff present:</b>	Tony Garcia, City Attorney's Office
<b>Guests present:</b>	Bruce Nelson, Lance Schamberger, Starr Hogeboom

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**Public Comments**

- Bruce Nelson, a Neighborhood Tree Steward from the Cully neighborhood, provided comment on Renaissance Homes single family homes not planting approved street trees:
  - Visited about 30 different addresses,
  - Most trees were planted, but many not on the approved list. Many maple trees.
- Megan: Have you noticed when the houses were built, if maintenance was being done?
  - Bruce: the landscape installation was complete.
- Jenn: Thank you Bruce for all of your energy on this effort. We hope the code is being administered properly:
  - There are species requirements on all permits for street trees and these are administered by Urban Forestry, not Bureau of Development Services (BDS); BDS is responsible for on-site trees.
  - Compliance is an issue due to staffing and financial limitations. The City Auditor echoed this concern in its recent Title 11 implementation audit, which noted that insufficient compliance is one of the most significant issues.
  - In regards to BDS, we have asked if BDS building inspectors could conduct compliance checks for street trees at the final inspection, since those staff are already on-site. BDS expressed that they would not be able to take on that responsibility.
- Damon: I was approached by a member of St Johns tree team who called in an illegal removal of a large Douglas Fir to Urban Forestry. They were told that Tree Inspectors place these on their list and it can take weeks to respond. I understand that Inspectors have a very full plate, but I also feel that these reports should be prioritized.
  - Daniel: The burden is on community members to make sure compliance happens. The only real solution is to hire more Tree Inspectors to provide more bandwidth for enforcement and compliance. There are some models that shift that burden.



she was told that since the initial permit was already signed off on, tree planting can no longer be required. It's difficult for a neighbor to follow the permit and development process to ensure that the trees are being planted as required.

- Catherine: Having neighbors report on neighbors for compliance issues can damage the social fabric of our city. It's important that we advocate for increased funding to support more services to address compliance issues.

### **City Forester Report – Jenn Cairo, City Forester**

- Jenn thanked everyone for their public comments and began her report with remarks on compliance, noting that Urban Forestry is frustrated by the lack of compliance as well. In contrast to Urban Forestry, BDS has an entire team focused on compliance issues. Urban Forestry has 10 inspectors to process all 12,000 permits each year. The same staff who respond to tree emergencies, public works permits, non-development removal, etc. are responsible for compliance. This is not enough staff. It's important that concerns about compliance are elevated above city staff to decision makers.
  - The City Budget Office has informed Parks & Recreation will take a 1% cut in general fund support across the board next year. This will be on top of any additional cuts. City priorities right now are housing and police.
  - Parks as a bureau is overspent by \$ 1 million for the 2018 fiscal year and did go to City Council to request additional funding.
  - Urban Forestry closely manages its budget and was not overspent.
- Parks is working on a financial stability plan and this will come to the UFC in the next few months.
- In the past, Meryl was the UFC rep on the Parks Board. It would be valuable to have another member of the UFC fill this role especially as we get towards the budget season.
  - Daniel: what is the time commitment?
    - Jenn: It meets once a month on Tuesday afternoons from 4:00 to 6:00. That time will likely change though.
- Kia Selley, PP&R Interim Director is coming to the August meeting. Please be thinking about any questions you may have for her.
- With the heat, we're seeing a lot of tree emergencies across the city. This is keeping our Tree Inspectors, who also issue permits, very busy.
- Michael Pina, one of our original Tree Techs, took a promotion position with PBOT.
  - Matt Majors has been hired from BDS to fill the vacant Tree Tech position. He is currently being trained.
- The Park Tree Inventory is continuing and many of you have been involved as volunteers.
- Dutch-Elm-Disease season is under way and this season has been similar to last year. One Heritage Tree and 22 street trees have been identified as DED-positive so far.

### **UFC Committee Discussions**

- Vivek: The City and Parks & Recreation have set broad goals to promote equity and inclusion. These goals are primarily about access, which is an important part of the Urban Forestry Commission's mission. This discussion is about how the UFC's committees can be structured in order to pursue these goals. To what extent do we want to systematically organize our committee structures?

- Gregg: The City Attorney's Office had initiated a process to provide city commissions with a bylaws template. The Heritage Tree Committee has held off on updating its bylaws until that project is complete. Is that project still moving forward?
  - Tony: It is still moving forward but a status update is needed. A new position is going to be hired to support that effort.
  - Jenn: Our understanding is the project has moved to the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. It's intention is to give some consistency to how all of the city's commissions are organized to ensure they are diverse groups providing advice to the city. The city does not have the intention of going to the level of detail that we're discussing here, but the template should be followed.
  - Tony: It is up to the UFC to decide whether it wants to move forward on its own or wait for the ONI bylaws template to be rolled out.
- Catherine: Since the role of the UFC is to be advisory to the City, should we expect the committees to be advisory to the Commission? How do we organize the committee structure to be effective in its advisory role?
  - Barbara: The committees used to develop their own bylaws and then the full UFC would vote on them.
    - Jenn: Yes, it has functioned that way in the past. The current bylaws though have not been updated since Title 11 was implemented.
- Megan: What is the process for reaching out to recruit people to these committees? And what is the goal of that process? We need to be thinking about what community organizations are involved and how equity and inclusion are prioritized. If the policy committee is making recommendations to the UFC, and if that is not happening through an equity and inclusion lens, then we're not serving our community aptly.
  - Vivek: Would like to see an explicit process for how that is done at the committee level. The committees would then bring that process to the UFC which can evaluate it for whether it aligns with the bureau's equity and diversity goals.
- Daniel: My recommendation would be to not go through the process of creating their own bylaws if the city is developing a template. Recommends we wait to see what the city comes out with, particularly given how long of a process it can be. Additionally, in order to do this correctly, you need to spend a lot of time on outreach. Otherwise, if you don't do that groundwork, you'll end up with the same types of applicants year after year.
  - Vivek: To add to this, waiting for the city to issue the templates does not preclude the UFC from beginning this type of outreach process. With that in mind, I would ask the committees to develop descriptions of a recruitment process that we bring back to the Commission as a whole for discussion.
- Vivek: It sounds like there is a desire to explicitly document the recruitment process that the committees will adhere to. He will be reaching out to the committee chairs to begin putting some structure around these processes.

*Meeting adjourned at Noon.*