

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

John Floberg, Chair • John Small, Vice-Chair
Gordon Bradley • Tom Early • Leif Fixen • Matt Mega • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Peg Staeheli

The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle

July 10, 2013

Meeting Notes

Seattle Municipal Tower Room 2750
700 5th Avenue, Seattle
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attending

Commissioners

John Floberg (JF) - chair
John Small (JS) – vice-chair
Peg Staeheli (PS)
Tom Early (TE)
Matt Mega (MM)
Erik Rundell (ER)

Absent- Excused

Gordon Bradley (GB)
Leif Fixen (LF)
Jeff Reibman (JR)

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader (SPdB) - OSE
Phyllis Shulman – CM Conlin’s office

Public

Lance Young
Ruth Williams
Steve Zemke
Rick Swing

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Call to Order

Public comment

Ruth - as a forest steward with projects that have been vandalized, I want to stress that information and education to bring the public on board are crucial. It would be a good thing to extend SDOT’s tree ordinance to private property and create a similar ordinance. Over time there have to be penalties that would give the ordinance teeth.

Steve –Questions to Portland UFC, I would like to hear about the implementation of their tree ordinance; what their budget situation is, their involvement with the UFMP. On their website they have a 2012 annual report. Maybe read it to get background before next week’s call. Have 11 commissioners to advise the City forester that oversees trees.

There is an urban forestry group on linkedIN. Join discussion of people in different cities. Also get on POSA, parks and open space. Friend the friends of Seattle’s urban forest on Facebook. I put on a posting on why native trees. Arthur Lee Jacobson likes all trees, but I think that native trees are important for wildlife species that depend on native plants and trees. The future biodiversity is dependent on native

species. It's a very complex relationship between wildlife and native sources of food. It's not just planting native plants but also look at Climate Change for future planning.

Lance – there was a recent article on East Coast ash borer beetle. Human death rates have increased due to the loss of trees because of this pest. Wanted to continue with the issue of ROW trees. Hoping to have someone in the UFC for next steps to take regarding power line ROWs. Maximum vegetation height is 12 feet. Gives more than the 10 feet for power clearance required. Spoke to Nolan, he said that 25% of area of the city is in the ROW. If SCL could be approached...They are making an effort to be green (they are Line City USA) to ask and see if they can change their standards. I'm after guidance from the UFC on how to proceed.

JF – are you continuing to work with SCL? Do you feel you have stated your case?

Lance – Website is in direct conflict with standard practices. Website says 20 feet clearance and the standard is actually 10 feet. I'm hoping UFC might be able to help out with this issue.

Approval of June 5 and June 12 meeting notes

ACTION: A motion was made to approve the June 5 meeting notes as written. The motion was seconded and carried.

ACTION: A motion was made to approve the June 12 meeting notes as written. The motion was seconded and carried.

Letter of support for City Fruit – continues and possible vote

JF – went through the changes he made to the letter based on comments done at the last meeting.

MM – how does City Fruit fit into the UFMP.

JF – CityFruit plays a key role in bringing a new way of looking at trees and tree resources. Is this the highest priority?

JF – my impression is that the UFC was in favor of supporting this specific non-profit effort.

MM – I'm in agreement to support this letter. As we move forward, it will be important to prioritize support to these types of efforts based on their helping the City support goals in existing plans.

JS – Maybe a way to be more explicit. I see City Fruit providing a valuable service providing maintenance to City properties. We don't know that they are doing more efficiently. GSP can do the work more efficiently thanks to their large volunteer base.

We could ask Council to fund an element of City fruit's program that is relevant to City priorities. What's the value to the City?

MM – you have asked to quantify some of those maintenance costs.

JS – they have not accounted benefits. They have been talking about the cost of the services they are looking at providing. Fruit trees require annual maintenance and that is not in Parks' work plan.

Urban Forest Stewardship Plan presentation

Sandra and Phyllis walked the UFC through the changes to the 2012 UFMP that made it the 2013 UFSP.

PLUS Committee 8/14 for discussion and 9/11 for vote.

Feedback to IDT – reLeaf to be the one-stop place to find tree related resources.

Phyllis – Process-wise, the Resolution is coming from OSE. Council/Mayor will be concurring on the adoption of the Plan. Council might change the resolution to bring out priorities or departments be called to do certain things.

A parallel thing is that I'm starting to look at funding priorities, looking at the plan, this is a discussion she would like to have with the UFC at a future date. First threshold is support for the plan. Third week in September Council receives budget proposal from Mayor.

MM – Council may choose something out of the Action Agenda to highlight in the Resolution.

Phyllis – important thing of letter is whether you support plan or not, make extra statement of something you might want to see elevated.

JS – I have a lot of thoughts about what I'm expecting to see in Chapter 4. Stewardship of the entire community. What I liked about the old version is that it went through the UF management based on the management units.

Phyllis – that could be handled through implementation strategies. The UFC might give a list of gaps.

Reaching out to Portland UFC – questions review

JF – they seem to have more influence and they have a little bit of a budget. They designate champion trees. A lot of these discussions can be off-line. We'll only have 30 minutes for this conversation. I'd like to talk about the 2-3 issues we should focus on during the call.

Shorten the list to explore questions 3, 4, and 5.

New business and announcements

Adjourn

Community input

From: Lance Young [mailto:l.clayton.young@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, June 17, 2013 4:43 PM

To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra

Subject: RE: Urban Forestry Commission

Mr. John Floberg Chairman
Urban Forestry Council

Dear Mr. Floberg

I appreciate the board taking some time last session to discuss the urban forest canopy preservation issues I have become aware of on public Right-of-way's near power lines. I am not sure what the appropriate next steps should be.

Is there anyone who might give me some guidance on how to get some help with this issue.

This issue affects not only Seattle but all of the urban communities served by Seattle City Light. The land involved is public right of way so could provide a reasonable method for expanding forest canopy in the city, and regionally through city owned/managed property.

Thank you
Lance Young
206-363-0859

From: Lance Young [mailto:l.clayton.young@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 19, 2013 1:42 PM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Subject: Urban Forestry Commission 6/19 meeting

To: Mr. John Floberg and the Urban Forestry Commission
Subject: Forest Canopy enhancement in public right-of-ways

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the forestry commission earlier this month. I would like to pursue this issue further to perhaps a beneficial outcome for Seattle and surrounding communities.

A single 25-30' tree reduces annual residential heating and cooling costs by 10%. A 30'-35' tall tree can produce nearly 300 lbs of oxygen per year. A typical adult consumes about 386 lbs. per year. So each tree we plant can provide almost enough oxygen for a person. Cooler air temperatures created by tree canopies reduce smog levels by up to 6% producing savings in air clean-up campaigns. A medium sized tree absorbs from 120 to 240 lbs of small particulates and gases from the air, improving air quality. Another study showed that a 32' tall street tree intercepted about 327 gallons of storm water runoff annually. Because of these and the many other benefits we need to enhance and expand our urban forest canopy. (figures from Professor Kathleen Wolf-UW)

In Seattle public right-of-way property makes up 25% or more of the total surface area of the city. This is a major component of the urban environment. If we can enhance the canopy here by planting more trees and appropriate taller trees wherever possible, this could have a major influence on quality of life in the city and city costs for stormwater recovery, and air pollution cleanup.

I would like to request the forestry commission's assistance with this issue, and would like to make an initial proposal. Would the commission consider addressing a letter to Seattle City Light suggesting that SCL revisit some of their right-of-way clearance issues. Seattle City Light has recently been awarded "Tree Line USA" status for their efforts at replanting trees. So the community knows from this, and SCL's website that they are striving to be one of the greenest Power Utilities in the country. We wonder if they might be interested in reviewing and updating their Transmission and Distribution right-of-way tree clearances in cooperation with Seattle's effort to increase Forest Canopy. This partnership could produce a greener city, and a greener and more efficient electric power system.

Thank You for your assistance with this important matter!

Lance Young
206-363-0859

From: Irene Wall [mailto:iwall@serv.net]
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2013 10:49 PM
To: Oslund, Janet; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Cc: ted.holden@comcast.net
Subject: DO NOT ISSUE AN OCCUPANCY PERMIT Still more problems with following the tree rules at "Braceface" development on Phinney Avenue

Janet,

I would rather not have to bring up this sore subject yet again but see the attached photo. After months of going round and round about failure to protect large native trees on this development site, DPD finally required that the developer substitute *Pinus contorta* for the destroyed Western Red Cedar.

Today Ted Holden, our PRCC president and landscape architect, identified the newly planted trees as Pyramidal European Hornbeam - the very tree that you **REJECTED** when it was first offered as a mitigation. You then agreed to the *Pinus*. See your email copied below. What are we to make of this? Even after our meeting about this project at the Urban Forest Commission, it appears that DPD is still not paying attention to compliance with permit conditions.

Sandra, please bring this to the attention of the Commission... again.

Janet, please let us know how this will be corrected and when.

thank you

Irene Wall

PS - notice that the trunk of the WRC remains in place so that the two substitute trees are crowded together rather than given some room to grow. Is this good Green Factor practice?

From: "Oslund, Janet" <Janet.Oslund@seattle.gov>
To: "iwall@serv.net" <iwall@serv.net>
Subject: Tree replacement at Phinney Avenue site.
Date: Wed, 6 Feb 2013 15:00:38 -0800

Hello Irene,

Thanks for the phone call, sorry I wasn't able to answer earlier.

The trees replacing the Cedar that was removed are two, 2-inch *Pinus contorta* (also known as Shore Pine) which do grow to be large trees.

They are planting them in the area the Cedar was removed.

I hope this is helpful.

Thanks,

Janet

West Side Hornbeams not Pinus Contorta:

