

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Peg Staeheli, Chair • Tom Early, Vice-Chair

Gordon Bradley • Leif Fixen • Donna Kostka • Joanna Nelson de Flores • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Steve Zemke

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

September 10, 2014

Meeting Notes

SMT 2750

700 5th Avenue, Seattle

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attending

Commissioners

Peg Staeheli - chair

Tom Early – vice-chair

Leif Fixen

Joanna Nelson de Flores

Erik Rundell

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader (OSE)

Guests:

Kristine Kenney (UW)

Public

None

Absent- Excused

Gordon Bradley

Donna Kostka

Jeff Reibman

Steve Zemke

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

Chair Peg Staeheli called the meeting to order and read today's agenda for those listening to the digital recording.

University of Washington Urban Forest Management Plan – Kristine Kenney

Kristine presented the UW's Management Plan and the overall strategy on how the UW manages its forest. She would like to get feedback and guidance from the UFC. The UW started this plan many years ago by doing an inventory of the trees on campus.

UW campus has 655 acres, 65 of which are water and 62 are the ROW. To figure out the true capacity of the campus they exclude building footprints (they have 344 buildings).

Have very robust GIS mapping system. Have Asset Mapper which is used as a communication tool for community access. It uploads the GIS info and people can do searches.

GIS mapping – initiated 10 years ago to inventory trees on campus. This work has been done by students. They tag all trees on campus and put them in the Database (data points capture whether they are deciduous or conifer, size, condition, etc...) to help understand the bio-diversity of the campus.

Grounds Management- 34 staff covers the 655 acres. They have 8,274 trees representing 417 species. The campus has an ISA certified arborist who manages all the trees in the campus. Don't have a policy in place but do implement a 1:1 tree replacement practice. They put up signage when removing trees. This is new practice that was required by SDOT for ROW trees.

The Urban Forest Management Plan, currently in progress, is an effort to update this resource while expanding the scope of the document.

Tree preservation and removal:

The University has two different processes for identifying trees for removal. The ultimate goal of these processes is to identify options for preservation rather than removal.

1. Hazard or diseased tree removal
 - Campus arborist and gardeners regularly monitor trees looking for hazards and potential disease.
 - Prior to removing a tree, it is inspected using the U's Tree Hazard Evaluation Form.
 - Removal is the last option after considering pruning, cabling, treating, or transplanting.
 - The U's arborist removes all trees on campus unless there are unique circumstances.
 - The stumps of trees that have been removed are ground to be used as mulch.
 - A permit is not required for this type of tree removal.
2. Removal due to development
 - First, an outside arborist is hired to conduct an evaluation of the trees within the area of the project.
 - The arborist provides a tree condition report
 - A site plan for the project is developed that attempts to save as many trees of significance as possible.
 - Tree removal plans are submitted to DPD along with all other required permits for the project.
 - There are three tree removal review boards:
 - o University Landscape Advisory Committee
 - o City/university Community Advisory Committee, and
 - o DPD

Tree Classification – the UW has developed a form for evaluation of the significance of trees on campus.

Sustainable Management Practices: UW has:

- Integrated pest management program to minimize use of toxic sprays
- Inoculations to help keep trees protected from devastating diseases.
- Tree Campus USA annual planting
- Mulch partnership with local arborists that allow them to dump their woodchips on campus to be used in landscaping
- Salvage wood – this program takes trees that need to be removed and harvests them for student furniture making or art pieces.

Wherever possible they try to preserve snags for their habitat value.

Canopy cover:

Forest canopy cover 28.6%. (total acreage minus building area. With building area they are at 19%). They are thinking of establishing different canopy cover goals for different campus areas. Calculated value of campus trees is \$35M. Need to better communicate what does that mean. UFSP goal for this land use is 20%.

Urban Forest Management Plan Goals

- Communicate the value of urban forestry
- ID canopy cover goals
- Become better stewards
- Increase general knowledge and awareness
- Maintain a current and dynamic tree database
- Implement management strategies.

UFC question:

What would be the impact to the campus' overall canopy cover if the 409 invasive trees were removed.

Answer:

They haven't quantified the canopy that would be represented by invasive trees.

Current Major Projects:

Denny Hall remodel – have done assessment of all the trees and are proposing removal of seven trees.

Life science building – this is a new development that was changed in order to preserve trees.

North Campus Housing – currently in conceptual design.

Future goals:

- Establish realistic goals and policies related to tree and landscape management
- Develop a stronger relationship between students, the local community, and the university
- Strengthening existing activities while exploring new means of engagement and education
- Develop an endowment fund

Q&A

- This level of detail might not be inside the Mayor Institution Overlay or the Campus Master Plan, but they will influence the Campus Master Plan update process.
- Has the UW set a canopy cover goal? A: not yet
- Q: Maybe do analysis on layering of the urban forest. Pocket planting for long-term new growth and plant for succession. A: that's more like a density coverage goal.
- Q: Restoration of Kinkaid Ravine. A: there is a group currently restoring it working with Earth Corps.
- Q: is UW getting advice from GSP on this restoration? A: working with Earthcorps and there are forestry students involved.
- Q: Is the DB of trees available to the public? A: the Asset Mapper is the tool for those that are not GIS savvy.
- Q: one of the things that people enjoy is driving through the campus and seeing the street trees on the Montlake median. There are some waterline issues that might affect them? Is it possible to protect the tree roots during the projects.
- Q: Do you have a blanket permit with SDOT? A: no.
- Comment: you might want to explore that with SDOT's new regulations.
- Q: you have a 1:1 replacement and it's a practice. Have you thought of making it a policy? A: with new projects a 1:1 is often hard because there is less area available. Requiring anything more

than 1:1 will result in more trees being planted elsewhere in campus. They are working on a fund so that they can then plant strategically with those funds.

- Comment: further explain that this is part of the endowment fund so people understand what's happening. An endowment fund sounds more memorial and it doesn't sound specific towards trees.
- Q: 1:1 replacement. Are you replacing with same type of species? A: try to maintain broad array of species but have not a practice that talks about species. Hoping that this process will help provide a list for what they are looking for in tree replacement.
- Q: Is the whole UW campus being included in this process? A: they are independent but we are making these tools available to them.
- Q: invasive species besides invasive trees. Maybe set up a goal for being ivy free. Ivy free by 2023? A: that would be very challenging. The restoration process is removing ivy. Seattle Urban Nature (no longer exists) did a study of UW campus.
- Comment: when looking at assessing the campus would like to see alignment of goals with those of the UFSP Management Units. It would help the city as a whole to have similar terminology.
- Comment: looking at the condition... thought you would have more trees in good condition. People have the perception of UW trees being in better conditions. What can we do to raise the condition of trees in UW campus?
- Q: are there trees in the parking lot? A: no trees in the large parking lot. The cap on the landfill is very shallow. Would have to build the soil and then have sediment and settling issues.
- Q: does the institutional overlay include the properties downtown? A: only the campus, does not include the tower or properties downtown.
- Q: Have you tested comparable campuses' canopy cover? A: have looked at other campuses that have done tree management plans, Oregon and others.

NEXT ROUND OF UFSP UPDATE: Break down in more detail the Institutional MU.

Brainstorm media outreach opportunities/strategy

Move to next meeting.

Tree Grate removal letter of recommendation

ACTION: A motion was made to approve the letter of recommendation as amended. The motion was seconded and carried.

Public comment

None

New business and announcements

GSP Shareholders meeting – several Commissioners will attend
October 8 is the joint UFC/IDT meeting

UPDATE from Parks on Cheasty project. Specifically, what does the Parks/community group agreement look like.

Adjourn