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DRAFT

9/13/2017

RE: Design Review Board changes – CB119057

The Urban Forestry Commission commends the intent of the design review board changes, a city should continually re-examine its procedures in order to efficiently meet its goals. Unfortunately, the proposed changes are unlikely to help meet the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan (UFSP) goals for tree canopy coverage but the UFC recommends two updates to the current permit review procedures. These updates are intended to aid the monitoring goals within the UFSP and provide an off-site approach to mitigate a projects tree canopy coverage loss.

The first update to permit review procedures would track tree removals per project. This would help the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan in its monitoring efforts. We suggest tracking significant tree removals, exceptional tree removals and removed canopy coverage in square feet by having the permit applicants report the information on the application form as a requirement of a complete application.

The second update to permit review procedures would be an optional fee in lieu requirement for projects unable to replant replacement trees equal to the number of trees removed for a project. There is a lost public benefit associated with the removal of public and private trees which impacts human psychology, ecosystem services and public health. A tree removal fee in lieu option should be similar to stormwater fee in lieu yet deposited in an urban forestry account to be focused on long-term, healthy trees in the City of Seattle.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the potential Design Review Board changes described in CB119057.

Sincerely,

Urban Forestry Commission