



SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Weston Brinkley (Position #3 – University), Chair • **Sarah Rehder** (Position #4 – Hydrologist), Vice-chair
Julia Michalak (Position #1 – Wildlife Biologist) • **Elby Jones** (Position #2 – Urban Ecologist - ISA)
Stuart Niven (Position #5 – Arborist – ISA) • **Michael Walton** (Position #6 – Landscape Architect – ISA)
Joshua Morris (Position #7 – NGO) • **David Moehring** (Position # 8 – Development) • **Blake Voorhees** (Position # 9 – Realtor)
Elena Arakaki (Position #10 – Get Engaged) • **Whit Bouton** (Position #11 – Environmental Justice - ISA)
Jessica Jones (Position # 12 – Public Health) • **Shari Selch** (Position # 13 – Community/Neighborhood)

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

Meeting notes

February 3, 2021, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Via Webex call

(206) 207-1700

Meeting number: 146-878-5528

Meeting password: 1234

In-person meeting are not being held at this time due to the pandemic. Meeting participation is limited to access by joining the meeting through a computer or telephone conference line.

Attending

Commissioners

Weston Brinkley – Chair
Sarah Rehder - Vice-Chair
Elena Arakaki
Whit Bouton
Elby Jones
Jessica Jones
Julia Michalak
David Moehring
Josh Morris
Stuart Niven
Shari Selch
Blake Voorhees

Staff

Sandra Pinto Urrutia - OSE

Guests

Toby Thaler – CM Pedersen’s office

Public

Scott Radford

Absent- Excused

Michael Walton

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: Weston called the meeting to order and did the UFC land acknowledgement.

Public comment: None.

Chair report:

- Sandra confirmed that Weston, Sarah and her will deliver the 2020 annual report and 2021 work plan to Council's Land Use and Neighborhoods committee on 2/24.
- Sandra is working on re-appointments for positions whose first term ends on 3/31. She will keep the UFC abreast of progress.
- Weston, Stuart, and Josh shared the discussion that was part of the deliberative session with SDCI and OSE staff about the Director's Rule on Exceptional trees. Staff shared that discussion with the City's Law department will likely impact the draft DR. Some of the items will likely need to be addressed as part of the tree regulations update (instead of within the director's rule, which clarifies current code). These items will be discussed at the next meeting. Sandra will reach out to SDCI to find out if there is a new draft of the director's rule and invite her to be available for questions during the discussion.

Adoption of January 6 and January 13 meeting notes adoption: Moved to next meeting.

2020 Annual Report final document review

Commissioners discussed the report and provided input to re-work the first page graphics. They agreed to adopt as amended.

ACTION: A motion to approve the 2020 annual report as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

Annual report transmittal letter – discussion and possible vote

Commissioners discussed the draft transmittal letter and made edits.

ACTION: A motion to approve the 2020 annual report and 2021 work plan transmittal letter as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

2021 UFC work plan - discussion continues and possible vote

Commissioners discussed the revised 2021 work plan and agreed to adopt as a living document.

ACTION: A motion to approve the 2021 work plan as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

Racial equity and UFC work

- **UFC Bylaws revised for discussion**
- **Protocols for letter writing and briefings – revised for discussion**
- **UFC membership recruitment practices and barriers**
- **How can UFC apply environmental justice to its work?**

The UFC began discussion of the Bylaws and asked Sandra to provide more information on the City's Ethics Code for the group to review and determine whether it's relevant to the UFC (given that members are volunteers and not City of Seattle employees).

Public comment: None

Adjourn: Weston adjourned the meeting.

Public input: (see next page and posted notes)

From: Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>

Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2020 1:34 PM

To: Postlewait, Christina <Christina.Postlewait@Seattle.gov>; Larsen, Shauna <Shauna.Larsen@seattle.gov>

Cc: An, Noah <Noah.An@seattle.gov>; Dawson, Parker <Parker.Dawson@seattle.gov>; DOT_SeattleTrees <Seattle.Trees@seattle.gov>; Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>; Weston Brinkley <weston@streetsoundsecology.com>; J. Terrell <3terrell@gmail.com>

Subject: Fw: Healthy Sycamore tree (150 years old) scheduled to be removed

I have looked through the EDMS files on this project referenced by J. Terrell and have concerns and questions. Can you please have SDCI and SDOT respond before the City owned exceptional tree in question is removed?

In light of the lack of adequate publicly available supporting documents concerning imminent exceptional tree removal, I suggest that it would be appropriate for SDOT to request a delay by the applicant before action is taken to remove this irreplaceable-in-our-lifetime public asset.

My specific concerns and question:

- I cannot find an arborist's report in the file. The document "SDOTTREE0001040" refers to an arborist, but there is no report supporting tree removal. The DR package contains no explicit information about tree retention or removal, although it is clear from a careful reading that the project plans call for removal of the exceptional public tree.
- The ADR decision does not consider or address two relevant Design Review Guidelines:

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-1. On-Site Features: Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. ...

and

DC3-CDesign

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. ...

- Does SEPA apply to this project? I do not see a checklist or any reference to SEPA in the documents in the publicly available files.

Thank you,

Toby Thaler

Legislative Aide to

City Councilmember
Alex Pedersen, [District 4](#)
Seattle, Washington
Office: 206-640-8804
Direct: 206-256-6267
E-Mail: toby.thaler@seattle.gov
www.seattle.gov/council/Pedersen

Note: Any e-mails received on this account may be subject to public disclosure.

From: J. Terrell <3terrell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 30, 2020 12:17 PM
To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>
Subject: Healthy Sycamore tree (150 years old) scheduled to be removed

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Council Members,

On Harrison Street between Queen Anne Avenue North and 1st Ave North, three trees are scheduled to be removed, (Record SDOTTREE0001040) (attached as a PDF). They are being removed to enable a private construction project. One of the trees is a Healthy Sycamore tree (London Plane) with a diameter of 48 inches and is over 150 years old. They live for 600 years. They have a wide leaf canopy. The trees scheduled to be removed are less than one block from the Climate Pledge Arena.

The notification from SDOT (attached) states incorrectly that it was posted on December 18, 2020. I walk by these trees daily. The notice was posted on the 28th of December 2020. The notice states incorrectly that the tree is unhealthy. The tree is not unhealthy as you can see from the google photo taken in May 2019 (attached). The notification states incorrectly that it cannot be retained due to public construction conflict. This construction project parcel # (DV0337418) is private for profit, not public.

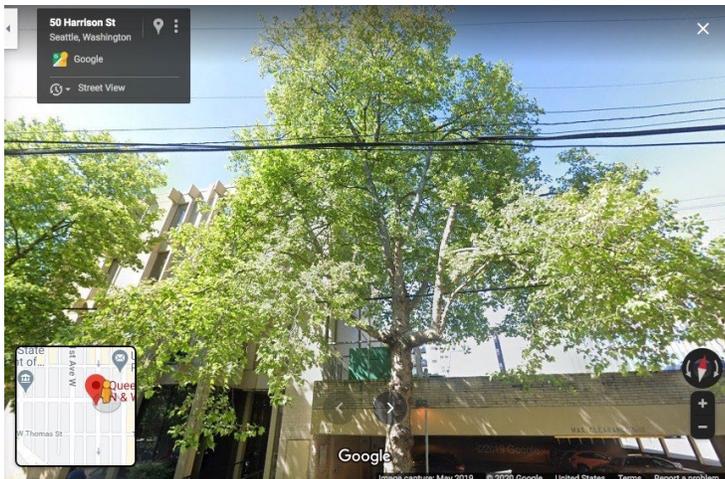
This tree can and should be retained for the people of Seattle and their descendants.

Each of these trees can absorb more than 48 pounds of air pollution and produce at least 260 pounds of oxygen per year. They provide much needed shade in the summer. It would be a great loss to the people of Seattle and all the visitors to the Climate Pledge Arena if these trees are removed.

Can you please help, or forward my email to someone that can help.

Thank you,
Janice Terrell

For further information, please see project (3033479-LU) and (3033395-EG)



From: Janelle K Jacobs <janellej2727@comcast.net>

Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 5:20 PM

To: PRC <PRC@seattle.gov>

Cc: TreesforSeattle <TreesforSeattle@seattle.gov>; Pedersen, Alex <Alex.Pedersen@seattle.gov>

Subject: 2720 Eastlake - Project Number: 3036447-LU

CAUTION: External Email

Please see attached letter with comments on this project.

Thank you.

Janelle Jacobs

Janelle Jacobs
Cell 206-660-7931

Attachments:
Comment letter on 2720 Eastlake project

Photo of the alley



Janelle K. Jacobs
2727 Franklin Avenue East, #101
Seattle, WA 98102
H - (206) 323-0893 Cell - (206) 660-7931
janellej2727@comcast.net

January 4, 2021

PRC@seattle.gov
Department of Construction & Inspections
ATTN: Public Resource Center
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124 - 4019

Re: 2720 Eastlake
Project Number: 3036447-LU

Hello,

These are my comments on the 2720 Eastlake project. I have submitted comments previously. I am opposed to the project as described for the following reasons:

- Out of scale with the neighborhood

The building as proposed will be 7 stories, much higher than the surrounding area, which contains buildings 2-4 stories high. I live directly across the alley from this site. The proposed building will tower over my condominium, taking all light and sun from the current residents. I have lived here for more than 30 years. The building was not allowed under previous zoning, but is a result of the Seattle City Council's rezone in 2019. My neighbors and I had no way to know that a building of this size and footprint would be built on this site when we purchased our homes.

I am aware that other projects already in the pipeline for Eastlake Avenue East may be of similar height. However, the project on the 2500 block is across from a playground and will not affect any residents' views or light. The project pending on the 3100 block of Eastlake Avenue East is across from the I-5 freeway and will not block any residents' views or light.

- Destruction of vegetation and habitat for urban wildlife

As I read the documents, it appears that every stitch of vegetation on the site will be destroyed and mature street trees will be replaced by saplings at the end of the project. This will not support the numerous birds and animals that now frequent the site. (See Addendum for list.) Previously the city allowed the 2701 Eastlake project to destroy and not replace a stand of mature evergreen trees on the north boundary of that property, directly across Eastlake Avenue East from this proposed building. Seattle's tree canopy is disappearing, and projects such as 2720 Eastlake and 2701 Eastlake are exacerbating the problem.

- Commercial space is not needed in the neighborhood

There is no need for additional commercial and retail space at this time. All one has to do is walk on Eastlake Avenue East to see commercial space that has been vacant for years. (2300 block, 2701 Eastlake, 2849-2851 Eastlake)

- Alley is in deplorable condition

The alley to the east of this site is already narrow. The proposal would place a brick wall mere feet from my deck. The alley is used as a thoroughfare by garbage trucks (multiple times per day), construction vehicles, and delivery vehicles because Franklin Avenue East and Edgar Street are too narrow to provide easy access for these vehicles.

The alley is prone to flooding. There is inadequate drainage. Water pools in the alley every time it rains, and seeps through cracks into the present parking lot on this site, making the land unstable.

Parking garage access as proposed on the southern border of the property will increase the already heavy traffic in this narrow alley.

Sincerely,

Janelle K. Jacobs

Addendum:

I observed the following wildlife on this site during 2020:

Hummingbirds
Crows
Robins
Flicker
Seagulls
Swallows
Black-capped chickadees
White-crowned sparrow
Rabbits
Squirrels
Butterflies
Dragonflies

From: R Kelley <rkelley@halcyon.com>

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2021 5:48 PM

To: 'David Moehring' <dmoehring@consultant.com>; Carlson, Jamie <Jamie.Carlson@seattle.gov>; PRC <PRC@seattle.gov>; DOT_LA <DOT_LA@seattle.gov>; Huey, Betty <Betty.Huey@seattle.gov>

Cc: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>; McGarry, Deborah <Deborah.McGarry@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; alex.petersen@seattle.gov; zs.pasztor2011@gmail.com; Juarez, Debora <Debora.Juarez@seattle.gov>

Subject: RE: Public meeting needed for 49 trees 11350, 11344 and 11342 23rd Ave NE (3036857 et. Al)

CAUTION: External Email

I live next door to this proposed development. The property owner: 1) Cleared out all 10" or smaller trees, hedges and 2) Left the detritus on the property. It's been there through several fire seasons. Waiting to burn down the single-family homes the Dev needs "removed." ????

From: David Moehring [<mailto:dmoehring@consultant.com>]

Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2021 1:35 PM

To: Jamie.Carlson@seattle.gov; PRC; DOT_LA; Betty.Huey@seattle.gov

Cc: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra; McGarry, Deborah; Toby Thaler; alex.petersen@seattle.gov; zs.pasztor2011@gmail.com; Debora.Juarez@seattle.gov

Subject: Public meeting needed for 49 trees 11350, 11344 and 11342 23rd Ave NE (3036857 et. Al)

Dear Seattle authorities having jurisdiction to clear-cutting trees from properties,

Please address with a public meeting 49 trees at risk for new houses at 11340, 11342, 11344 and 11350+ 23rd Ave NE. Included to be removed is an Exceptional **71-inch diameter (DBH) Western Red Cedar** because the arborist stated the tree was in the way of a new access road and the arborist could not find any other way to keep the tree. In a large area of land of nearly 45,000 sq feet, is the City is accepting there is no other way to provide access or to configure the boundaries within?

The Department, the city's arborist, the owner, the owner's architect, and the owner's arborist has not demonstrated what lot boundary configurations along with proposed access would meet the criteria to maximize the retention of existing trees. A public meeting is therefore necessary... some three years after the initial request has been made.

With prior requests from 2017 and 2018, please do not delay any further and provide a virtual public meeting regarding the use of a Lot Boundary Adjustment converting 5 lots created by short plot #8806691 (March 1990) into 6 lots... and totally ignoring the criteria per SMC 23.24.

At a very minimum, in addition to the public meeting, tree protection and signage including penalties should be set in place around all trees (if any) that are currently assumed to remain through demolition and forthcoming construction permits. An assessment of natural habitats has been offered in public comments. Wildlife habitats are at risk.



Lot Boundary Adjustment risks 49 trees 11350, 11344, 11342, and 11340 23rd Ave NE

6808941-DM	Demolish rear existing single family residence, subject to field inspection, STFI.,	Demolition	11/4/2020	\$0	SEATTLE
6777162-DM	Demolish existing structures, subject to field inspection (STFI).,	Demolition	11/2/2020	\$0	SEATTLE

David Moehring
 TreePAC Board Member
dmoehring@consultant.com
 312-965-0634

=====
 December 28, 2020

JULIE LEDOUX
 SEATTLE PERMITS & PLANNING LLC
 21004 44TH DR NE
 ARLINGTON, WA 98223

Re: SDCI #3036857-LU – 11350 23RD AVE NE

Dear JULIE LEDOUX,

Your Lot Boundary Adjustment (LBA) has been examined for consistency with all applicable criteria and is approved. This approval is a final land use decision under the Land Use Petition Act and expires 3 years from the date of this letter. Final LBA recording documents must reflect any issues the Department identified during its review of the application. After submitting the final recording documents to the Department for its review, you will be notified by a Routing Coordinator of any project fees that remain owing and must be paid before the LBA is recorded with King County Recorder.

Instructions are attached for preparing and submitting final recording documents, paying any outstanding project fees, recording the final documents, and securing

issuance of your LBA permit. The LBA permit will be issued after the final recording documents have been submitted for Department review, any outstanding project fees have been paid, and the final documents have been recorded.

Thank you,
 Jamie Carlson
 Email: Jamie.Carlson@seattle.gov
 Phone: 206-684-8850
 Land Use Planner

Document	Size	Date	Record #	Record Type
Plan Set - Land Use	956 KB	12/30/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
LBA Determination Letter	139 KB	12/28/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
Correction Response Cycle3	396 KB	12/21/20	3036857-LU-003	Upload Documents
Correction Response Cycle3	404 KB	12/21/20	3036857-LU-003	Upload Documents
Plan Set - Land Use Cycle3	1338 KB	12/21/20	3036857-LU-003	Upload Documents
Correction Letter-Land Use-Cycle2	360 KB	11/25/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
Correction Response Cycle2	367 KB	11/03/20	3036857-LU-002	Upload Documents
Correction Response Cycle2	176 KB	11/03/20	3036857-LU-002	Upload Documents
Correction Response Cycle2	196 KB	11/03/20	3036857-LU-002	Upload Documents
Plan Set - Land Use Cycle2	1338 KB	11/03/20	3036857-LU-002	Upload Documents
Correction Letter-Addressing-Cycle1	180 KB	09/30/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
Correction Letter-Land Use-Cycle1	360 KB	08/20/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
Correction Letter-Zoning-Cycle1	168 KB	08/20/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
Record Snapshot	213 KB	07/31/20	3036857-LU	Master Use Permit
Arborist Report	3 MB	07/29/20	3036857-LU-001	Application Intake

50+ Public meeting requests from 2017 and 2018:

Public Comment: Songer 09/06/2018	47 KB	09/07/18	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Preliminary Assessment Report	70 KB	04/28/18	3026308-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	53 KB	09/26/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	12 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	35 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	36 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	56 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	55 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	12 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	12 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	12 KB	09/20/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit

Public Comment	4 MB	09/14/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	117 KB	09/14/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	43 KB	09/14/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	159 KB	09/12/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	40 KB	09/11/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	38 KB	09/06/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	36 KB	09/05/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	33 KB	09/05/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	117 KB	09/05/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	2 MB	09/05/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	19 KB	09/05/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	333 KB	09/01/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	51 KB	09/01/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	51 KB	09/01/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	47 KB	08/30/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	28 KB	08/28/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit
Public Comment	45 KB	08/28/17	3028516-LU	Master Use Permit

From: Stuart Niven <panorarbor@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 10:02 AM

To: David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>

Cc: Carlson, Jamie <Jamie.Carlson@seattle.gov>; PRC <PRC@seattle.gov>; DOT_LA <DOT_LA@seattle.gov>; Huey, Betty <Betty.Huey@seattle.gov>; Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>; McGarry, Deborah <Deborah.McGarry@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; alex.petersen@seattle.gov; Zsofia Pasztor <zs.pasztor2011@gmail.com>; Juarez, Debora <Debora.Juarez@seattle.gov>; Humphries, Paul <Paul.Humphries@seattle.gov>; Torgelson, Nathan <Nathan.Torgelson@seattle.gov>; Emery, Chanda <Chanda.Emery@Seattle.gov>

Subject: Re: Public meeting needed for 49 trees 11350, 11344 and 11342 23rd Ave NE (3036857 et. Al)

CAUTION: External Email

Thank you David, I second your comments and request for a public meeting for this project.

The proposed destruction of up to 49 trees including many healthy, native conifers that are well above the 'exceptional' threshold is in direct conflict with the City of Seattle's own claim of wanting to increase the urban tree canopy to 30% and SDCI's own claim of "Helping people build a safe, **livable**, and inclusive Seattle."

Furthermore, this destruction of natural resources is in direct conflict with SMC 25.11 on many levels:

25.11.010 - Purpose and intent.

It is the purpose and intent of this chapter to:

A. Implement the goals and policies of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan especially those in the Environment Element dealing with protection of the urban forest;

B. To preserve and enhance the City's physical and aesthetic character by preventing untimely and indiscriminate removal or destruction of trees;

E. To especially protect exceptional trees that because of their unique historical, ecological, or aesthetic value constitute an important community resource; to require flexibility in design to protect exceptional trees;

F. To provide the option of modifying development standards to protect trees over two (2) feet in diameter in the same manner that modification of development standards is required for exceptional trees;

G. To encourage retention of trees over six (6) inches in diameter through the design review and other processes for larger projects, through education concerning the value of retaining trees, and by not permitting their removal on undeveloped land prior to development permit review.

25.11.040 - Restrictions on tree removal:

1. All trees 6 inches or greater in diameter, measured 4.5 feet above the ground, on undeveloped lots;

2. Exceptional trees on undeveloped lots;

25.11.050 - General Provisions for exceptional tree determination and tree protection area delineation in Single-family, Residential Small Lot, Lowrise, Midrise, and Commercial zones.

A. Exceptional trees and potential exceptional trees shall be identified on site plans and exceptional tree status **shall be determined by the Director** according to standards promulgated by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections.

B. Tree protection areas for exceptional trees shall be identified on sites plans. Applicants seeking development standard waivers to protect other trees greater than two (2) feet in diameter measured four and one-half (4.5) feet above the ground shall also indicate tree protection areas on site plans. The basic tree protection area shall be the area within the drip line of the tree. The tree protection area may be reduced if approved by the Director according to a plan prepared by a tree care professional. Such reduction shall be limited to one-third of the area within the outer half of the area within the drip line. In no case shall the reduction occur within the inner root zone. **In addition, the Director may establish conditions for protecting the tree during construction within the feeder root zone.**

E. **The Director may condition Master Use Permits or Building Permits to include measures to protect tree(s) during construction, including within the feeder root zone.**

25.11.090 - Tree replacement and site restoration.

A. Each exceptional tree and tree over two (2) feet in diameter that is removed in association with development in all zones shall be replaced by one or more new trees, the size and species of which shall be determined by the Director; the tree replacement required shall be designed to result, upon maturity, in a canopy cover that is at least equal to the canopy cover prior to tree removal. Preference shall be given to on-site replacement. When on-site replacement cannot be achieved, or is not appropriate as determined by the Director, preference for off-site replacement shall be on public property.

Given the clear wording of the City of Seattle's own codes as they relate to tree 'protection' where is the department's evidence of adhering to these claims of protecting trees over 6" and all exceptional trees? Where is the documentation to say that if the trees identified for removal are going to be replaced with sufficient trees of an appropriate species. (Not only are we losing healthy, native and exceptional trees, adequate replacement trees are not being installed.)

The above property is an ecological goldmine and its destruction for the sake of a handful of market rate houses will do nothing but line the pockets of one developer and some contractors, while impacting the future health and 'livability' of not just the residents of this neighbourhood, but the whole of Seattle as the removal of more healthy, large trees increases the 'heat island effect' and further adds strain on the already breaking environmental balance of the City.

Please adhere to the codes in place and prevent this unnecessary destruction. Development of the site can still happen but it should be better planned to retain all existing, healthy trees, especially native conifers.

Thank you and kind regards,

Stuart Niven, BA (Hons)

PanorArborist

www.panorarbor.com

[ISA Certified Arborist PN-7245A & Tree Risk Assessment Qualification \(TRAQ\)](#)

[Arborist on Seattle Audubon Society Conservation Committee](#)

[Arborist on Seattle's Urban Forestry Commission](#)

[Board Member of TreePAC](#)

[WA Lic# PANORL*852P1](#) (Click to link to WA L&I's Verify a Contractor Page)

From: Michael Oxman <michaeloxman@comcast.net>

Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2021 10:40 AM

To: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>

Subject: Emerald City Task Force Recommendations from 2007

CAUTION: External Email

Howdy,

Please accept my comments on the update of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP).

This update is mandated every 5 years by the Comp Plan. The last update was 7 years ago, so we are long overdue.

The Emerald City Task Force was a group of 10 stakeholders appointed by Mayor Greg Nickels, who met 5 times in 2007, after the release of the first Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP).

The ECTF goal was to achieve consensus on how to implement the UFMP, but there was lots of shouting going on. The Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) staff explained away how the meeting got out of hand by this paragraph, found on page 1 of the recommendation letter.

"Please keep in mind, these recommendations are not meant to imply consensus on the task force as to a specific direction or regulatory change. Instead this list represents ideas that that the task force believes have merit to be pursued, researched further, and considered as part of a comprehensive revision to the City's land use code as it addresses trees. "

The recommendation letter can be found on the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission website here: [Microsoft Word - 071217 Final ECTF Recs.doc \(seattle.gov\)](#)

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) website used to contain the summaries of each of the 5 ECTF meetings, but I can no longer find these documents.

Other relevant UFC meeting documents are available here: [Archived 2010 Meeting Documents | seattle.gov](#)

Arboreally yours,

Michael Oxman
ISA Certified Arborist #PN-0756A
www.treedr.com
(206) 949-8733

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMERALD CITY TASK FORCE

Page 1

LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT December 17, 2007
Diane Sugimura, Director Department of Planning and Development City of Seattle P.O. Box 34019 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 Seattle, Wa 98124

Dear Ms. Sugimura: The Emerald City Task Force respectfully submits the following recommendations for improving the City of Seattle's incentives and regulations for tree preservation and planting on private property. These recommendations represent the diversity of expertise and perspective of the ten members of the group.

The task force convened on July 19, 2007 for the first of five meetings to discuss the state of the City of Seattle's existing tree regulations and how the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) might respond to the challenge posed by Mayor Nickels' recently released Urban Forest Management Plan. If we are to increase the tree canopy coverage in Seattle from the current 18% to 30% over the next thirty years, as outlined in the plan, it will take a concerted effort by all City departments to re-evaluate their tree policies. For DPD that means a well-thought out effort to improve the existing tree preservation regulations on private property and to inspire more tree planting and care by everyone in Seattle. The task force discussed the City's current regulations, reviewed tree protection strategies and efforts used by other cities, and then put together the list of recommendations to DPD contained in this letter. Please keep in mind, these recommendations are not meant to imply consensus on the task force as to a specific direction or regulatory change. Instead this list represents ideas that the task force believes have merit to be pursued, researched further, and considered as part of a comprehensive revision to the City's land use code as it addresses trees. The recommendations are organized by topic area for easier reference. The groups are not meant to imply priority based on their order. In addition to these recommendations, we are forwarding discussion summaries for each of the five task force meetings so that you may get a better idea of the breadth of discussion at each meeting about each of these topics.

Over-Arching Goals

- There are environmental, economic and social benefits of urban trees; including storm water mitigation, climate protection, air quality improvement, reduced energy costs, carbon sequestration, improved aesthetics, better business environments, and increased land value. These benefits make a compelling case for the City to better understand its urban forest resource.
- Tree protection goals need to be considered in the context of other City goals such as density, transportation, housing affordability, and urban design among others.
- Emphasize flexibility and incentives so that developers and property owners fully embrace the goals of the Urban Forest Management Plan.
- Establish a reliable, on-going funding mechanism by which to implement and enforce any new regulations.

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- Consider short- and long-term costs and development restrictions of new tree protection regulations on developers and future property owners along with the overall health of the urban forest.
- Make trees an asset for homeowners and developers rather than a liability. Evaluate the City's regulations and utility operations to determine where incentives can make a compelling argument to retain existing trees.
- Utilize rights-of-way in residential, commercial, and industrial areas to increase tree plantings. The rights-of-way present a significant opportunity to increase the tree canopy cover without limiting development potential.
- Make clear, concise and effective regulations.

- Inter-departmental coordination is critical in order to achieve the City's urban forestry goals and to ensure consistency and eliminate conflicts between City departments. Incentives
- Establish incentives within the development process to protect existing trees, preserve open space for new tree planting, and adopt low-impact development techniques.
- Establish incentives outside of the development process for private property owners to maintain existing trees and plant new trees whenever possible.
- Recognize that increased density/height and reduced parking requirements are the most valuable incentives for developers.
- Evaluate infrastructure requirements that could be reduced based on tree canopy retained or green space protected (i.e., storm water vault sizing requirements). Regulations
- In order to curtail the loss of existing tree canopy, require tree removal permits both during development and for all property owners.
The permit process should have the following features:
 - Affordable or even free, particularly for the removal of damaged, diseased, dying, or dead trees.
 - Easily and quickly obtained on the internet, at Neighborhood Service Centers, or at DPD.
 - Clear criteria as to which trees can be removed, when they can be removed, and whether they need to be replaced.
 - Flexible - use menu of preservation/replacement options.
 - Impose penalties/fines for lack of permit or violating conditions – penalties should be significant enough in order to encourage compliance.
 - Educational – use permitting process to educate applicants on the value trees provide to their property and to the larger community.
 - Data gathering – use permit application to gather data on the City's tree infrastructure.
- Establish flexibility in the tree protection process to consider tree health, tree structure, life expectancy, and tree location. This flexibility might encourage preservation of multiple small trees rather than one large or mature tree in order to result in a net gain of environmental function. Preservation or improvement of environmental function in the short- and long-term should be the foundation for decision-making.
- Re-evaluate definitions of Heritage, Exceptional, mature, and special trees and consider groups of trees as well. Streamlining and simplifying the designations in the City land use code is desirable.

- Establish a tree fund that receives money from fines, fee-in-lieu payments, and other sources and in return plants and preserves trees in Seattle. This money should not be intermingled with the General Fund or used for the City's standing tree-care obligations.

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- Consider alternatives or limits to impervious surface areas in single-family residential zones in order to provide space for trees and improve drainage and the health of the soil which would, in turn, support the long term health of trees. Don't do this, however, in a way that would limit the overall development potential of the site.

- Update tree protection requirements during construction to current best management practices.

Enforcement

- Enforcement is an important part of tree protection; however creating clear, concise regulations up front will facilitate compliance and will reduce potential conflicts that would require enforcement. • Create an arborist position at DPD to manage the entire tree protection process including plan review, landscape requirements, permitting, and enforcement. • Set fines based on the value of the tree, or trees, in question.

- Re-evaluate the criteria for calculating tree value to include storm water protection, climate protection, carbon sequestration, economic/business value among others. Set fines based on new criteria.

Education/Outreach

- Communicate the environmental, social, and economic value of trees in the context of climate change and urban quality of life to residents, developers, and the construction industry.

- Increase awareness of existing and new tree protection requirements – from regulations on private property through development and construction requirements.

- Increase information and education about tree protection opportunities and regulations earlier in the development process. The goal should be to get tree protection designed into the project earlier during initial site planning rather than trying to incorporate it further down the road when changes to design would be costly or difficult.

- Increase awareness about tree care for all landowners.

- Urban forestry groups and volunteers are a significant resource. The City can leverage its scarce funds by acting as a facilitator connecting residents and developers to these resources. Land use regulations will play an important part in the City's efforts to achieve the Mayor's urban forest canopy coverage goal; however, they are only part of the effort. Full engagement by City departments - from their own tree care and maintenance practices to how they promote tree planting and care is vital. The City's efforts will not only go along way to directly improving the urban forest's health but it will lead the way by example and show that this effort is not expected from any one individual but as an effort by the community for the benefit of us all.

Recommendations for Other Departments

- Encourage Seattle Public Utilities to reduce drainage rates based on impervious surface and tree/canopy coverage on property – reflecting the role trees play in reducing costs associated with storm water.
- Acquire additional public parks, greenways, and other green space as part of the strategy for protecting and increasing canopy coverage.
- Maximize tree planting on public property including street right-of-way.
- Allow, encourage, or require trench sharing/stacking by City & private utilities.
- Promote underground utilities to reduce conflicts between trees and utility service.
- Create or support programs that reduce the cost of tree planting to homeowners.

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- Tighten tree protection requirements for private utility companies using overhead easements and right-of-way.
- Increase tree planting and maintenance on City property, such as parks, street rights-of-way, utility easements, steep slope areas and greenbelts. Encourage other public entities within Seattle to improve their tree planting and maintenance programs as well, such as the school district among others.
- Conduct a comprehensive inventory of trees in the City of Seattle to better understand the resource we have and better craft programs to support that resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our recommendations with you. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and your staff as you further develop updated tree regulations for the City of Seattle.

Sincerely, The Emerald City Task Force

Randy Bannecker, Seattle King County Association of Realtors

Dan Duffus, Soliel Development LLC

Deb Guenther, Mithun

Ann Hirschi, Consulting Arborist, Tree Solutions Inc.

Garrett Huffman, Master Builders Association

John Hushagen, Seattle Tree Preservation

Amalia Leighton, SvR and the Seattle Planning Commission

Martin Liebowitz, The Madrona Co.

Eric Pravitz, HomeSight

Paul Tomita, Weinstein A/U

CC: Mayor Greg Nickels City Council Members Steve Nicholas, Director, Department of Sustainability and Environment Grace Crunican, Director, Department of Transportation Chuck Clarke, Director, Seattle Public

From: Emily Van Bronkhorst <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 8:35 AM
To: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>
Subject: Please Update Seattle's Tree Ordinance

CAUTION: External Email

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

Seattle's rapid growth and an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed and not replaced. It is urgent to act now to stop this continued loss of trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.

Please update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance as recommended in the latest draft by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission.

Here are the key provisions that need to be in the updated tree ordinance:

1. Expand the existing Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program, including 2-week public notice and posting on-site, as used by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) – to cover all Significant Trees (6" and larger diameter at breast height (DBH)) on private property in all land use zones, both during development and outside development.
2. Require the replacement of all Significant Trees removed with trees that in 25 years will reach equivalent canopy volume – either on site or pay a replacement fee into a City Tree Replacement and Preservation Fund. Allow the Fund to also accept fines, donations, grants and set up easements.
3. Retain current protections for Exceptional Trees and reduce the upper threshold for Exceptional Trees to 24" DBH, protect tree groves and prohibit Significant Trees being removed on undeveloped lots.

4. Allow removal of no more than 2 Significant non-Exceptional Trees in 3 years per lot outside development
5. Establish one citywide database for applying for Tree Removal and Replacement Permits and to track changes in the tree canopy.
6. Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing.
7. Expand SDOT's existing tree service provider's registration and certification to register all Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.
8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Emily Van Bronkhorst

emilyveebee55@gmail.com

4107 Wallingford Ave North

Seattle, Washington 98103

From: Alan Muller <info@email.actionnetwork.org>

Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 11:10 AM

To: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>

Subject: PLEASE! Update Seattle's Tree Ordinance

CAUTION: External Email

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

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8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Alan Muller

venerablelekshay@gmail.com

609 Yesler Way, Apt 2-206

Seattle, Washington 98104-3722

From: Ericka Berg <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2021 2:50 PM
To: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>
Subject: Save Our Trees!

CAUTION: External Email

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

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8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Ericka Berg
ericka98115@gmail.com
14035 Burke Ave N
Seattle, Washington 98133

From: Ben Nechanicky <bendervish@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 12:31 PM
To: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>
Cc: McGarry, Deborah <Deborah.McGarry@seattle.gov>
Subject: Re: Exceptional Trees on 14th Ave 400 block.

CAUTION: External Email

Thank you so much Sandra I really appreciate the quick reply. I'm just checking all my bases here making sure I haven't left any stone unturned so to speak.

Deborah and SDCI have been great and super responsive and I feel very confident with their support. I happened to see the Urban Forestry Commission while researching additional resources and thought I would ask in case there are additional resources to understand.

Thank you for all the great work you do in our big green city, have a great rest of the week!

-ben

Sent from my Communicator

On Jan 28, 2021, at 12:10 PM, Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov> wrote:

Hi Ben,

Thank you for your email.

I'm including my colleague Deb McGarry in my response as she is already familiar with this issue (you mention that she has been in touch) and she has a better understanding of the regulations that apply to trees on private property.

Unfortunately, I'm not aware of any other resources besides sharing your concerns with SDCI.

Thank you,

<image001.png> **Sandra Pinto Urrutia**
She/her/hers
Urban Forestry Policy Advisor
City of Seattle, [Office of Sustainability & Environment](#)
206.684.3194 | Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Blog](#)

From: Ben Nechanicky <bendervish@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Pinto Urrutia, Sandra <Sandra.PintoUrrutia@seattle.gov>
Subject: Exceptional Trees on 14th Ave 400 block.

CAUTION: External Email

Hello Sandra,

I am reaching out to see if you can help provide any additional resources to help us protect some large and exceptional trees in our property at 448 14th Avenue.

The developer who purchased the adjacent property at 418 14th Avenue which hosts some structure of the trees has been less than ideal in their property plans and execution by their contractors has been troubling. We are concerned about long term health of the trees in light of a current situation. The developer has been issued a stop-work-order by the SDCI for failure to comply with adequate tree protections (Record Number:000625-21CP). They've been evaluated by the City, and Deborah McGarry the Reviewing Arborist for SDCI has been in contact. We are concerned that with an established pattern of disregard on the part of the general contractors on-site that we might encounter additional pressures on the trees. We'd like to help them understand their value.

We are learning as we go as stewards. We have maintained them often and have them assessed regularly by arborists. They are quite massive and unique to the First Hill and Cherry Hill environment, and valuable to protect especially in light of the rapid development underway here.

Are there any other routes or resources we can explore beyond the SDCI complaint process to protect these large specimens? We are aware that it only takes a couple hours to undo a century of natural processes. We are hoping for the best outcome for all parties.

Thanks in advance for any guidance you can provide.

Ben Nechanicky

