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

June 12, 2013
Meeting Notes
Seattle Municipal Tower Room 2750
700 5th Avenue, Seattle
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attending

Commissioners
John Small (JS) – vice-chair
Gordon Bradley (GB)
Tom Early (TE)
Matt Mega (MM)
Jeff Reibman (JR)
Erik Rundell (ER)

Staff
Sandra Pinto de Bader (SPdB) - OSE

Public

Absent- Excused
John Floberg (JF) - chair
Leif Fixen (LF)
Peg Staeheli (PS)

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
In John Floberg's absence, John Small is chairing the meeting.

Chair report
JS – there is a list of questions that are being put together to engage the Portland UFC.

Matt –The chair is the head of Portland's Audubon. I'll be talking to her at a conference.

JS- any project on the Willamette has a very strict re-vegetation component. They interact with the UFC so they may be more ingrained in the regulatory process than we are.

JR – is that process driven by shoreline regulations or more for UF-related issues.

JS – I think it's a Portland specific shoreline regulation. May be different from Seattle's approach but need consistency for Federal compliance.

JS – revisit the idea of field trips. As we move into some of the work plan issues this could be pertinent. A lot of our plan was to work with the ordinance issues. Maybe look at sites under developments.

MM – I like that, especially if the DPD inspector comes along so we can ask questions.

JS – another trip was industrial areas, SODO or Ballard and understanding opportunities and constraints for additional canopy there. I don't think we need to do a field trip for mitigation and tracking. Participation on Arbor Day or other events might be something to consider as a group.

MM – we talked about Green Factor too.

JS – residential development might be more pertinent. Maybe Jeff could give us a tour on a successful Green Factor project.

TE – I think there's more value in Single Family.

JS – maybe DPD can provide an area with high density of developments. I see some benefit in going out and interface with inspectors on the field.

JR – I might be able to use a listserv I belong to and find a good project to visit. WE could see where they land according to the point system being considered. What kind of potential the point system has. To see on the ground what planting "x" number of trees looks like.

JS – Might be interesting to see if those areas where the development projects are happening are located in areas with low canopy. How much canopy are we losing in the long-term. It would be interesting to see how our suspicions bear out.

MM – Maybe we can do Georgetown that has diverse issues.

JR – Industrial areas around the Duwamish.

MM – a lot of activity going on right now.

JS – opportunities for real change would probably be along the Duwamish corridor. In terms of street trees is a different issue than habitat restoration issues. I have contacts for Port of Seattle, which could be another alternative.

Letter of support for City Fruit - continues

JR – first paragraph can be edited a bit. The message is that they don't donate food to the restaurants, they donate it to food banks and sell to restaurants in order to fund their efforts.

ER – we should highlight the community stewardship piece.

TE- also they are looking for a self sustaining. I'm worry about food donation and food sales. Looking for help from the City

JR – my take is that they are looking for the City to provide a sustainable City source to suppo "Seeking to expand stewardship activities and create a mode of sustainable funding including expanding sales to restaurants and providing paid support to City programs, to maintain the balance of revenue sources"

MM – what was their budget last year.

GB – are there any precedents from the City funding these types of efforts?

SPdB – yes GSP

JR – we can express general support. The letter needs another round of edits.

MM - add a paragraph our recommendations to City Fruit. Put together a business plan, and other infrastructure to become sustainable.

JS – some of the information is not clear. Second paragraph needs more explanation on what the sustainable model is. What the specific ask is, is it an ask from the General Fund? Last paragraph, tie that to their targets even though they don't have a biz plan, what are they trying to achieve with that level of funding.

Recommendation on Departmental budgets – continues – possible vote
ER – I'm still following up with each of the departments to get numbers for the last five years and broken down by the topics we discussed. I'm not sure if this is going to be easy to do but we could have a 5-year trend and then make a recommendation based on that. I'll continue working with the people that briefed us so this can be moved to July.

Recommendation on small lot development in SF zones:
JR – policy recommendations for DPD staff and Conlin for a formal update on what they are doing. After our discussions I thought it through a bit and came to the conclusion that what we really wanted to comment on was that the tree point system was adapted moving forward. Jeff covered the content of the draft letter. Recommend a change to the tree point system so that all lots contribute to canopy cover. After doing test layouts we found that even the smallest 2000 sqft lot has enough planting space to fulfill 2 points. No one property should be off the hook on this.

MM – are street trees in addition.

JR – Street trees do not count toward the tree point system.

GB – tree points would translate to…

JR – small species – 1 point. Small.med 2 – points. They can also contribute to a fund.

JS – we are not dealing with the ordinance, but ensuring those trees survive development is going to be key.

MM – I wonder if they can transfer excess tree points to the home owner somehow. Too complicated.

JS – this was a good way to not change the deducted area (the 2000 number) but instead put in the minimum ensuring that trees are part of any site re-development in SF zones, without really changing things. Part of the rationale is that the tree credit system was modeled after trying to achieve the 33% canopy coverage for SF zones.

GB – are paragraphs 1 and 2 talking about two different policies?

JR – yes, they are related because we are linking both pieces.

JS – we considered commenting on the small lot development but really our comment is related to the tree ordinance and making sure small lots didn't fall under the threshold.

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

JS – Jeff will send Sandra the new iteration of the letter.

Urban Forest Stewardship plan update and timeline
JS – do we want to revisit the idea of meeting in July 17?

Public Comment
None

Next month's agenda items. Good of the order.
MM - Seattle Audubon went public with Canopy Connections on the tree canopy cover work. Tree census. People go out and walk their block and count their trees. My goal is to include private trees as well as street trees. SDOT has provided info on the street trees.
62 people go through trainings we have gotten back 36 maps now. We are transition to a full online process.

A lot of SDOT data is changing. 48 trees were gone but we added 67 trees that were not included in the DB. We added other 40-50 trees on private property. It's pretty exciting.

Adjourn

Community input
From: mailto:i8smoochy@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 06, 2013 1:56 PM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Subject: University Substation tree removal
Sandra-
Thank you for being so understanding of my position. You were very reassuring. URD and Network, two Orgs at City Light are planning capacity improvements to the University Substation. This involves the placement of underground vaults with large switches above. Five bulky switches with the necessary tunneling for conduit will require the removal of a number of trees. Mature flowering cherries, A large Parrotia persica, a grove of very large specimen Photinia, a large Magnolia, a mature Acer palmatum the potential for root damage from trenching is significant to many other trees.
I thought it was necessary for the commission to be aware as this seems to be on a fast track.
The work is being scheduled and no plan was presented for tree replacement.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.
A concerned citizen