

## SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Leif Fixen, Chair • Tom Early, Vice-Chair

Gordon Bradley • Donna Kostka • Joanna Nelson de Flores • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Peg Staeheli • 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*

**January 14, 2015**

### **Meeting Notes**

City Hall, Boards and Commissions, Room #L280 (basement level)  
600 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Seattle

#### **Attending**

##### Commissioners

Leif Fixen - chair  
Tom Early – vice chair  
Gordon Bradley  
Donna Kostka  
Joanna Nelson de Flores  
Erik Rundell  
Peg Staeheli  
Steve Zemke

##### Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE  
Garret Farrell – Parks  
Deborah Brown - Parks  
Brennon Staley - DPD

##### Guests:

Councilmember Sally Bagshaw

#### **Absent- Excused**

Jeff Reibman

##### Public

Sarah Welch

**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**

Leif Fixen called the meeting to order and read the Commission's mission.

#### **Chair report**

Big thanks to Peg for her service as chair last year.

Leif will be missing around six meetings due to a training program but is coordinating with Tom.

#### **Councilmember Sally Bagshaw and UFC 2015 Work Plan**

CM Bagshaw's Committee (Seattle Public Utilities and Neighborhoods) oversees the work of the Commission.

Leif mentioned some of the Commission's accomplishments in 2014:

2014 was a very productive year for the Commission with over 15 advisory letters issued on topics in support of Seattle's urban forestry goals. Topics discussed and acted on included: Executive Order 03-05 – Tree replacement; Revised Use Policy for Seattle's Natural Areas and Greenbelts; Cheasty Mountain Bike Pilot Project; Seattle city Light Disposition of Surplus Stations; DPD Tree Ordinance for private property;

Seattle Times Park; Queen Anne Children's Home property; Street Tree Manual; Avenue of Street Trees; Tree Grates on Downtown Street Trees; Seattle Metropolitan Parks District; and Carbon Market and Urban Forestry.

CM Bagshaw: tree preservation on private property. That effort might be slow going this year. The Commission should bring DPD and OSE into the conversation. She would like to speak more in detail about a couple of things she read in the Commission's Annual Report:

- Cheasty Mountain Bike pilot: she has been in communication with the groups working on getting the area cleaned up. She supports the pilot program. She believes it's a good idea from the neighborhood safety and the new use of our parks point of view. This project has been controversial, but it is her understanding that we are following BMPs.
- Surplus property stations: if the City figures out a way to keep them, she would love to do that, but there are some complexities. Looking at ways of how that can be done.
- Seattle Times Park: the Commission made Mirabella residents very happy. The community members that live there are delighted that the developer has made a commitment to have the trees remain. Thank you to the UFC for their input.
- Children's Home Property: the issue of tree protection here hasn't been resolved. Residents are concerned about it.
- ROW tree preservation: SDOT has been doing great work planting the right tree in the right place. She is very interested in having SPU and SDOT work on green streets. She supports Seattle Greenways.
- Carbon Market: she would love to know if there is anything else the City can do to support the Governor.

UFC question: What are your views on Cheasty pilot and the Natural Areas use policy?

CM Bagshaw: Parks is working on this and we'll see how the pilot goes.

UFC question: The proposed perimeter trail is not liked by proponents. People say that the pilot is moving ahead with this proposal. There seems to be not alternatives proposed to address some of the issues such as environmental impacts, costs, safety, etc. Not clear how the advisory team's input was properly considered.

CM Bagshaw: The group applied for and received a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant. The group will do design work and take it to Parks.

UFC Comments:

- Concerned about baseline study to be able to understand the impacts of this project.
- It's important to consider the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan's goals. A goal is to continue working with the Urban Forest IDT. Has a great retreat this fall. The intention has been to build relationship with the IDT members and that they see us as advisory. We see them coming to the Commission vs. the Commission requesting briefings. This year the Commission will work on scheduling meetings with Council and the Mayor.
- It's very important to perform another canopy cover assessment. It affects a lot of different City efforts. Whatever the technology used, it needs to be consistent to get a trend.

- Sandra will talk to the IDT about potentially having departments chip in for a satellite canopy cover assessment.
- It would be important to include urban forestry in the Governor's cap and trade proposal. This could be something that is dealt with as part of the legislative agenda.

CM Bagshaw: if we are going to talk to the legislature, we'll need the details so she can talk to them. Mark McPherson would be the person to reach out to. SANDRA TO MAKE THE INTRODUCTION.

UFC comment: The Commission will be advocating for ongoing funding for tree maintenance in GSP and the Metropolitan Parks District. The next effort is to make sure that funding allocations remain as originally stated. Things were worded broadly enough that the work plan for GSP might increase and start serving items that are not within the action items that will help accomplish the 2025 goals.

CM Bagshaw: no monies have been collected yet. Funding will begin to flow in 2016. The City has lent the MPD \$10M to fund some items this year.

UFC question: would like to have a discussion regarding the DPD tree ordinance.

CM Bagshaw: had conversation with Peg and her understanding was that the UFC wanted to move forward with the DPD tree ordinance for private property. She heard that DPD will not be ready to produce legislation in 2015.

Brennon Staley (DPD): there is currently no staff time assigned to the ordinance. DPD is still looking at the work plans for 2015 and 2016 to determine timeline.

UFC comment: At least they could consider fixing the Director's Rule (DR) to make sure that enforcement is consistent, as well as consistent interpretation. Right now we have an ordinance that is not enforceable.

Brennon: Issues are not related to the DR but actual complexities on enforcement – tree removals being done during weekends and DPD inspectors not being allowed on private property.

UFC comment: Better guidance on plan review would be very helpful. A community member brought a couple of projects that exemplify the problems. Procedures of inspectors didn't identify trees that were supposed to be preserved and were being removed.

Brennon: it would be helpful to receive specific examples. To see if these are training issues or DR issues.

CM Bagshaw: likes the idea of opening up the process for public input. To the extent that the process could move out of DPD and have focused discussions with the community on what we want to accomplish. What we can learn from other cities, etc.

UFC comment: what if UFC held a couple of community meetings to start getting input from the different stakeholders. Start that conversation without an ordinance. Reach out to people and see what it is that they want.

CM Bagshaw: what would be helpful to come out of those meetings so that it's useful for DPD? Are we looking for payment into a fund? Find out what's the first reaction of the city around this issue. An earlier

step to hear from people could be a survey. (Tom – in order to give people info so they can answer the survey is to have info on where we are now in terms of canopy cover.).

UFC comment: Portland had stakeholders meetings for a year when they were working on their ordinance..

CM B – what can we get from Google Earth? Ask the public very specific questions.

### **Arboretum Loop Trail Project – Garret Farrell (Parks)**

Garrett Farrell introduced the Washington Park Arboretum Multi-use trail. This is one component of the 2001 master plan for the Washington Park Arboretum. The UW, City of Seattle, and Arboretum Foundation are partners that operate the Arboretum, a living collection of trees and plants. UW manages and curates the collection. Parks maintains some areas of the site.

A lot of public input has gone into the development of this project. The trail will parallel the WA Lake Blvd and provide access to parts of the collection that were only reachable by fully-abled people. This will open up the collection.

#### Arboretum Master Plan Goals:

- Increase awareness and visitors
- Enhance natural environment
- Arboretum drive – safe for all users
- Improve surfacing
- Improve connections east and west of Lake WA Blvd.
- Increase habitat diversity – restore the natural function of Arboretum Creek
- Promote and increase in un-structure recreation building of education, display and conservation
- Reduce crime and the magnitude of potentially unsafe location.

Tree removal, tree movement, and tree propagation will be needed to deliver this trail project. Parks has been working closely with Arboretum partners. The trail's alignment was adjusted to avoid many major trees. 127 trees will be removed (and will be recycled on-site). 254 replacement trees to be planted in the Arboretum. Additional tree planting/restoration will take place in the southwest greenbelt. The project will start construction within three months. Work will last 24 months. The UW owns and is responsible for the collection. City of Seattle owns the native matrix, which is valued differently within the collection. They follow the 2 for 1 tree replacement policy.

UFC question: what's the scale of the project? If the multi-use trail is 14 feet wide, how much space is left for trees?

Answer: this was physically laid out at the beginning, using ASHTO guidelines along the way. The trail will vary in some locations. There are half-a-dozen locations where they deviated in order to protect some trees. The QA/QC will be an iterative process because the work will be done inside the living collection.

UFC Q/Comment: Tom is a fan of the project because it will bring exposure of the arboretum and its collection to more people. Is there a planned process to provide information to the public?

Answer: there will be wayfinding signage. Expected completion date for the bid is Spring 2015 and then two years of work. The project budget is \$4.5M. This doesn't include propagation and tree movement efforts.

The UFC might want to look at the Arboretum Master Plan and provide input and say whether it might be worthwhile exploring preservation of some of those larger native trees.

Sandra will ask Garret for the tree list for the project.

#### **Public comment**

None

#### **New business and announcements**

None

#### **Adjourn**

#### **Public input**

**From:** Lorelei Amato [mailto:whosthere@LORELEIAMATO.COM]

**Sent:** Monday, January 12, 2015 2:52 PM

**To:** Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra

**Subject:** In support of Cheasty Mt. View project

Ms. Pinto de Bader,

I would like to voice my support for the Cheasty Greenspace forest reclamation. Though I am not a member of the organizations supporting or opposing, I have attended PAT meetings and have thus far heard no evidence that clearly supports blocking Friends of Cheasty Greenspace at Mountainview's efforts. Below are three points as detailed by Friends of Cheasty at etc... that I feel represent my view clearly. I encourage you to support this reasonable, sustainable, community supported effort rather than cower to the "squeaky wheel".

Friends of Cheasty Greenspace at Mountainview is an organization focused on environmental stewardship and engagement, with a history of work in support of urban forestry, as evidenced by our 8 year successful reforestation in Mountainview and the more than 5,000 hours of volunteer labor we've already facilitated in Main in only the first 9 months of our work there. **We're planting the urban forest of the future.** Studies comparing mountain biking and hiking show comparable ecological effects with some indications of disturbance being greater for biking and others being greater for hiking. The point- **there is no objective explanation for commissioners to treat the two activities differently.** There seems to be some kind of moral debate at work here irrelevant to the facts.

A commitment to urban forestry means we need to develop strategies to better **engage the local population in environmental stewardship**. The Cheasty Greenspace Trails and Bike Park project is ONE such avenue to facilitate deeper community engagement. We do not argue that is the only way, but it is one way that has garnered unprecedented public support at this time and place. We have an incredible opportunity before us to restore the health of this forest right now. Let's work together to take advantage of it.

Thank you for your time,  
Lorelei Amato, Beacon Hill resident  
**From:** tonja hall [mailto:t.hall43@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 14, 2015 10:46 AM  
**To:** Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra  
**Subject:** Friends of Cheasty

Dear Sandra,

Thank you for working so hard on the Urban Forestry projects, and the time you sacrifice, so that Seattle stays green, our parks plentiful and safe, and working so hard on passing projects like Cheasty multi use trails.

**Friends of Cheasty Greenspace at Mountainview is an organization focused on environmental stewardship and engagement**, with a history of work in support of urban forestry, as evidenced by our 8 year successful reforestation in Mountainview and the more than 5,000 hours of volunteer labor we've already facilitated in Main in only the first 9 months of our work there.

**Studies comparing mountain biking and hiking show comparable ecological effects-** there is no objective explanation for the commission to treat the two activities differently.

A commitment to urban forestry means we need to develop **strategies to better engage the local population in environmental stewardship**. The Cheasty Greenspace Trails and Bike Park project is ONE such avenue to facilitate deeper community engagement. We do not argue that is the only way, but it is one way that has garnered unprecedented public support at this time and place. We have an incredible opportunity before us to restore the health of this forest right now. Let's work together to take advantage of it.

Sandra, I personally invite you to ride with us, on opening day of this wonderful collaborative project.

Won't that be a blast!

TONJA RENEE HALL  
Yoga coach/Assisted Athletic stretching  
Lionheart Yoga Training FB  
Floral Designer  
Vocalist for Trio Bissou

**From:** J.A.H. [deergrazingbymoonlite@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 12, 2015 11:26 PM  
**To:** Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra  
**Subject:** all our beautiful trees...

Hi Sandra,

I wanted to ask you if you can discuss the cutting of the 10 plus trees in west seattle on fauntleroy with your board b/c i have been trying to get to one of your mtgs but find it difficult especially b/c of your location.

what do you think?

i see very old trees here on vashon in the center of our town, 2 just across form the library just recently , being suddenly cut down.

well, let me know.

thanks,

jo ann herbert

vashon

**From:** Robert Kettle [kettlere@aol.com]

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 14, 2015 3:58 PM

**To:** Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra

**Cc:** Future Queen Anne

**Subject:** The Future of Queen Anne Trees?

Sandra,

Please forward to the commission as a follow up to our initial Future Queen Anne correspondence on the former Seattle Children's Home site here on Queen Anne.

Urban Forestry Commission,

The attached photos are from the McGraw St. side of the former Seattle Children's Home campus on Queen Anne I spoke to you about on behalf of our group Future Queen Anne. In my remarks to the commission I started off by giving examples of how trees were dealt with on Queen Anne to give a sense on how trees are faring generally here in our neighborhood. These photos showing some recent work being done on McGraw St. give you a further glimpse of practices affecting trees.

Best regards, Bob

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Robert Kettle

[KettleRE@gmail.com](mailto:KettleRE@gmail.com)

**From:** Jonathan Rosenblum [mailto:jonathanr4212@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, January 15, 2015 9:53 PM

**To:** Acosta, Rachel; Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra

**Subject:** Support Cheasty trails and bike project

Dear Seattle Parks Board of Commissioners and Urban Forestry Commission:

I'm writing as a nearby resident in support of the Cheasty Greenspace Trails and Bike Park project.

This project represents a strong commitment to urban forestry, and is an excellent example of engaging the local community in environmental stewardship. If the trails are built, I'm sure my daughters and I will be regular users. Let's make this wonderful greenspace a safe and accessible treasure to our neighbors.

Jonathan Rosenblum  
Seattle, WA  
206-465-7078

**From:** oxman86@gmail.com [mailto:oxman86@gmail.com] **On Behalf Of** Michael Oxman  
**Sent:** Friday, January 16, 2015 8:41 AM  
**To:** Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra  
**Subject:** Re: New documents posted on Urban Forestry Commission website

A prerequisite to an ordinance is a tree inventory. Our canopy cover analysis is inadequate for decision making because it only tells where trees are located, not how much work they need anything r their life expectancy. Let's start collecting tree data each time staff works on a tree.

Arboreally yours,  
Michael Oxman

**From:** Mark Holland [mailto:solarhound@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 22, 2015 1:57 PM  
**To:** Williams, Christopher; mary@waymarkers.net  
**Cc:** Bagshaw, Sally; Harrell, Bruce; Clark, Sally; Burgess, Tim; Rasmussen, Tom; Licata, Nick; Godden, Jean; Sawant, Kshama; Matsuno, Bernie; Sugimura, Diane; Bush, James; Sarah Welch; Rosie Selle; Cameron Justam; Kathy Colombo; Nyland, Kathy; David and Connie Bown(; Pitre, Yun; Mead, Mark; Graves, David; Shiosaki, Michael; Nishi, Rick; Pence, Roger; George.Robertson@consultgra.com; Robert Hinrix; Merrell, Frederica M; PatMorton (; VanArcken, Julie; Thatcher Bailey; Ed Newbold; Lopez, Patricia; Mira Latoszek; Johnson, Dan; Critchfield, Doug; Acosta, Rachel; donnah@nymbledesign.com; Derryl Durden; friends@seattleolmsted.org; Pinto\_de\_Bader, Sandra; Miki Nishihata; Frankl, Jenny; jenstewfam@comcast.net; Andrea Mojzak; Marianna Wickman; Jim Anderson; John Barber; Darrell Howe; Juli Sipe; Ruth Williams; mail@drruhland.com; Wendi Dunlap; northbeaconhillcouncil@gmail.com  
**Subject:** FIGHTING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SE SEATTLE

Mr. Williams and Mrs. De Jong,

Please read the email thread between yourselves from March 27, 2014, two days after the first and only public meeting for the Cheasty bike park.

I would like to give both of you an opportunity to explain your statements in these emails.

Mr. Williams, you claim you do not like it when people fight each other, yet here you are goading Mrs. De Jong to rally her forces and attack bike park opponents despite the "volumes" of emails you say you (and elected officials) received in opposition to the Cheasty bike park.

Are you deliberately ignoring those volumes of email Mr. Williams? You must have received many more since March 25, 2014? Are you ignoring those voices too?



Can you please explain why you encourage the mountain bikers to fight environmentalists when you say you want "healing" in our community?

It seems you are the cause, rather than the cure for strife in our community.

Is this how you follow your mission statement to "build community" in Seattle? By goading different groups on to fight each other?

Are you still colluding with Mrs. De Jong to fight bike park opponents, like for the next meeting on the 29th for instance? Are you planning to swarm us with mountain bikers again like the last two times you held Cheasty meetings in Jefferson? We are getting pretty sick of this.

Mrs. De Jong, would you take a few moments to explain your theories of social justice in SE Seattle and how exactly the VMP is racially motivated to keep people from RV out of the Cheasty forest?

Please also explain how the Cheasty neighbors are responsible for the history of "racial and social" intolerance you speak of? I would really like to hear a detailed description of your theories. I think a lot of people would like to hear you.

And who exactly are the NIMBY's you speak of? Can you give us some names?

I look forward to your replies.

Thank you,

Mark Holland  
Beacon Hill

Here is the thread.

Mary DeJong  
[206.618.0105](tel:206.618.0105)  
[mary@waymarkers.net](mailto:mary@waymarkers.net)  
[www.waymarkers.net](http://www.waymarkers.net)

On Mar 27, 2014, at 2:03 AM, Williams, Christopher  
<[Christopher.Williams@seattle.gov](mailto:Christopher.Williams@seattle.gov)> wrote:

Mary,

I'm in Washington DC, but will be returning to Seattle today, I'd like to speak with you by phone say around Noon today.

I have received (and elected officials) volumes of email from non supporters of the mountain bike trail, likewise it would be more than helpful for the Council and the Mayor to hear from whomever the supporters are of this initiative. Otherwise, this

project risk the appearance of having very limited community support. I recognize this is not the case with the mountain bike trail proposal. However, I have seen many a "good ideas" die, simply because the supporters did not speak-up.  
CW

Sent with Good ([www.good.com](http://www.good.com))

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Mary DeJong [[mary@waymarkers.net](mailto:mary@waymarkers.net)]

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 26, 2014 01:13 PM Pacific Standard Time

**To:** Williams, Christopher

**Subject:** Beacon Beacon Bike Park at Cheasty Greenspace

Dear Christopher,

We continue to be grateful for your confidence in our vision for Cheasty Greenspace, and the support of Parks in this effort to reclaim, restore, and re-imagine this critical landscape through the Cheasty Greenspace Mountain Bike Pilot Project. However, I can't help but to fear the effectiveness of this opposition group, as they are contacting all of our supporters and demanding them to recant their stated support. Sadly, I just received a call from the President's Office at SPU (my alma mater) asking us to remove their logo from our support page on our website due to the pressure from these people.

Last night's meeting was very well attended (over 120 people!) and VERY energetic. While it was evident that this forum was indeed necessary to provide a context for the "opposition" to vent, the discomfort with their yelling, shouting, interrupting, and disrespectful mannerisms was viscerally felt. The demand for due process and the sentiment that they never knew about this pilot project were the main points of contention, despite the fact that there has been a public process surrounding the decisions that have gotten us to date AND that a year ago we sat down in one of the homes of a Cheasty Blvd. neighbor (with a host of other neighbors) and tried to bridge-build with this proposal with them. That they didn't know about this effort is simply untrue.

This project is so much more than simply the restoration value and the introduction of a new recreational option in the city. What I don't want to be lost is the guiding value of social justice around this pilot project. We want to remove barriers of privilege from both nature and a sport that together have the potential of informing the health and wellness of our community. As it stands, Cheasty is largely surrounded by a chainlink fence, and VMP policies of no trails were designed to keep people from Rainier Vista accessing Cheasty Blvd through the woods. The history of this social/racial intolerance is unacceptable. Cheasty holds an inherent antidote to the social violence and health statistics of the Rainier Valley. I have a strong sense that this forest, along with the amazing partners that we have gathered around this vision, will contribute to the psychological health and well being of our urban children and youth while providing them the exposure and experience to become the conservationists of the future. This land needs to contribute to the sustainability of our transit oriented community, that is growing in density and diversity. We will be healthy to the extent that we have daily and immediate access to nature (and fun, relevant ways to recreate therein). The new consciousness of the Place-Making Movement (see the work of Fred Kent) applies to this land.

I, along with the hundreds and hundreds of supporters for this project, would be deeply saddened if the NIMBY's overcame this effort to reclaim, restore, and re-imagine Cheasty Greenspace for the sake of the common good. The Boulevard residents are not the gatekeepers to this land, and they only represent a fraction of adjacent residencies, and an even smaller percentage of tax-payers who now want to see this land revitalized with a user-group who has committed to the build-out and maintenance of the park.

My even deeper fear is that through their emails and phonecalls, they will force Parks in a position to withdraw their unanimous vote to support this pilot project, and we will be forced to halt this effort in exchange for leaving Cheasty to its otherwise certain demise, and maintaining the status quo of our neighborhood children playing on concrete or sitting on couches with their computers.

Please stick with us on this one, Christopher. Being advocates of dynamic change on behalf of something greater than ourselves is never easy, and always requires risk and advocacy. If it feels helpful, Joel and I would love to take you on a site-visit to Cheasty/North and show you the evidence of the rapid and imminent decline of this forest, and discuss how the **multi-use trail system** will engage and empower the youth and children in our community.

Okay, lots there containing lots of emotion from last night.

Thank you for time, and willingness to engage this work from a social justice perspective.

In gratitude,

Mary