

## SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Leif Fixen, Chair • Tom Early, Vice-Chair

Gordon Bradley • Donna Kostka • Richard Martin • 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*

**July 1, 2015**

### Meeting Notes

Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 2750 (27<sup>th</sup> floor)

700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Seattle

#### Attending

##### Commissioners

Leif Fixen - chair  
Tom Early – vice chair  
Gordon Bradley  
Donna Kostka  
Steve Zemke

##### Staff

Jon Jainga - Parks  
Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE

##### Guests:

Gene Brandzel  
Bob Edmiston  
Juliet Vong – HBB Consulting

#### Absent- Excused

Joanna Nelson de Flores  
Richard Martin  
Jeff Reibman  
Erik Rundell

##### Public

Linda Murtfeldt

**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

Tom kicked off the meeting by reading the Commission's mission and agenda.

#### Public comment

Linda Murtfeldt – Chair of conservation committee for Seattle Audubon. Their members discussed Parks supplemental use guidelines. They are supportive of the letter of recommendation that is going to be discussed. Also agree on the final recommendation on the Arboretum.

UFC question: Is there a particular aspect of the Guidelines they have an issue with?

Answer: They are in favor of keeping natural areas as a native setting without having more active uses.

#### Adoption of June 3 and June 10 meeting notes

**ACTION: A motion to approve the June 3 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the June 10 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

### **Green Seattle Partnership Strategic Plan update – HBB Landscape Architecture**

Jon Jainga from Parks and Juliet Vong from HBB Consulting updated the UFC on the Green Seattle Partnership (GSP) Plan update process. Earlier this year presented the outline of the GSP Plan Update timeline and now Juliet from HBB will present the update process.

GSP was created with three main goals in mind:

- Field: to restore 2,500 forested parkland acres by 2025
- Community: to encourage resident involvement
- Resource: To ensure sustainability

Two components to the update:

- Getting to 2025 and
- What happens after 2025

Where we are today:

- 1,040 acres in restoration
- 700,000 volunteer hours
- 80 parks

The program has been recognized in the past:

- Top 10 urban forests -2013
- 5-Star community rating – 2014
- Community catalyst – 2010
- Game Changer award from Forterra – 2015

The goal is for the update to be transparent, inclusive and tangible. The engagement process will include sharing information and getting input from the GSP Team, general public, partner organizations, Metropolitan District Oversight committee, GSP Management Team and Executive Council, as well as advisory groups such as the Parks Board, the Urban Forestry Commission, Planning Commission and others.

Key considerations for the update:

- Strengthen partnerships
- Engage youth and diverse communities
- Communicate relevancy
- Ensure continued resources and support
- Expand educational opportunities
- Connect GSP sites to the community
- Cultivate new leaders in the community
- Build on GSP success to other public/private lands

Next UFC interaction points:

September 9 – for Commission to provide input to the draft  
October 7 – final plan

UFC question: what percent of forested parklands not covered in the original plan goal of 2,500? There is specific designation for natural areas. What amount of the 2,500 acres are classified as natural areas?  
Answer: The majority of the Parks lands to be restored are the 2,500. Beyond 2025 work would be to work with other City departments such as SDOT. We would have to bring the map and analyze it to answer your question about the classification. The GSP strategic plan update will not be dealing with uses issues. That will be addressed in a separate process within Parks.

UFC comment: Steve would like the plan update to include the issue of uses for those restored areas. He doesn't see trails as a separate issue. Cheasty Greenplace shows how this issue could become problematic.

UFC comment: gets confused when he hears about Forest Stewards and Forterra and the Green Cities program, Parks and Friends of... groups. If I'm a resident that is interested in making a difference, what are the connections and how can I get involved.

UFC comment: it will be important to communicate that 2025 is not the end but that this is an ongoing process. Once areas are restored, what does management mean?

UFC comment: Kiwanis Ravine – did a walking survey and noticed that 99% of private property adjacent had invasive plants ready to get into parklands. There needs to be a buffer. Engage adjacent property owners to remove invasives. Show homeowners what their yard could look like with native plants.

UFC question: Are you going to be engaging Seattle Public Schools? The update process could open some doors for interaction with the schools.

Answer: Will do that through the Urban Forestry U project. Are looking at starting to engage young people.

### **Madison Park to Montlake connection - Bob Edmiston and Gene Brandzel**

Bob Edmiston – organizer of Madison Park Greenways. He is also in the Parks Board. Gene Brandzel, a resident of the Madison Park area. The community has been exploring the possibility of a trail that would join Madison Park with Montlake. There was a trail design, it was funded, but due to political issues at the time, the project died.

They believe that there is enough public interest to try and resuscitate the project. They have learned a lot from past experience.

Bob provided background history. There are trails (Burke Gillman, Interurban, Elliott Bay – are all completed) the piece that is missing is the Madison Park piece.

Broadmoor is a gated community that blocks access from Madison Park to the arboretum. If a connection were made (with high level of environmental sensitivity) the Madison Park community would be able to have access.

This piece would complete Seattle's trail system.

Why now?

- It completes a 100 year old vision of a citywide Seattle trail system.
- It's part of the adopted 2015 Bicycle Master Plan

- SR520 is being building through the area now
- Link light rail is opening in 2016. Madison Park access.
- Healthy business tax revenue stream from busier neighborhood business districts.
- Provides important connections to Seattle Parks and Natural Areas.

This is a unique opportunity at this point in time.

UFC question: have you talked to the Broadmoor golf club?

Answer: preliminary but would like to come to them with a more specific proposal. It will be a tough sell. There will be a pull between protecting the natural environment of the area and protecting the privacy of the property owners.

UFC comment: they are also hitting golf balls and that is a natural conflict with a trail.

UFC question: How would this fit with the Arboretum Master Plan?

Answer: Have not taken a look at that.

UFC question: Who are you representing?

Answer: We are representing Madison Park Greenways (neighborhood organization advocating for neighborhood greenways). As a volunteer we work with neighborhood groups to create GIS mapping in support of the Bike master plan.

The City has a formula to determine what priorities they'll spend public dollars on implementation of Pedestrian Master Plan and they don't share them with the community. This idea is not currently on the list of priorities. This is a very preliminary stage of this idea.

UFC question: How can the Commission help?

Answer: We welcome ideas on how to advance this to the next level. He is mostly requesting input and feedback.

UFC comment: The UFC would provide stronger support if the 'greenways' actually included trees and other green elements.

UFC comment: this idea has a lot of merit. On a broader scale it can be a connection to Burke Gilman Trail to the south part of Lake Washington Blvd that is closed for people to ride. This would be more family-friendly. There is not much the Commission can do at this time, but would like to be engaged as the project moves forward. It might be a good idea to talk to the State and see if there are any SR 520 mitigation funds available for this project.

#### **Bylaws update and protocols review – discussion and possible vote**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the updated UFC Bylaws as written was made, seconded, and approved.**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the UFC Protocols as written was made, seconded, and approved.**

## **Parks' Draft Natural Area and Greenbelt Supplemental Use Guidelines - continues**

Steve shared the comments he made to Parks' Natural Area and Greenbelt Supplemental Use Guidelines as representative of Friends of Seattle's Urban Forests.

The Commission discussed this issue.

Parks says they are not changing the 1993 policy. But the guidelines go in direct opposition to the 1993 policy passed by City Council.

The checklist doesn't identify any criteria. You fill out the checklist but they don't say that if the majority of the items are 'yes' or 'no' what happens. The utility of the checklist (adding the yeses and the nos) it's not clear.

The Commission is in agreement. The UFC is writing a letter.

- The guidelines run totally contrary to the policy. If they want to change the policy, change the policy.
- The letter should point this out. Guidelines are undermining existing policy (1993).
- The arguments made for the guidelines are arguments for changing the policy. Those arguments are fine for the guidelines but they need to change the policy.

## **UFC comments to ECA and LID updates – initial discussion**

There are not draft documents ready to be shared with the Commission at this time.

## **New business and announcements**

None.

## **Adjourn**

## **Public Input**

**From:** Robert Kettle [mailto:kettlere@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2015 4:21 PM

**To:** Rips, Bruce

**Cc:** Sugimura, Diane; Pinto De Bader, Sandra; Bagshaw, Sally; Burgess, Tim

**Subject:** Project #3015522/ #3020595 (Toll Bros. Development of the Seattle Children's Home site)

Bruce,

The switch from Full Design Review to Streamline Review for Project #3015522/ #3020595 is very concerning to me. First, I was told directly, as were others in our Queen Anne community, that Toll Bros. would go through the full design review process for the Seattle Children's Home site. Simply put this raises a serious integrity issue with me especially since Toll Bros. did not reach out to the community in a transparent way to explain their switch. I learned of the change by seeing someone had added a "streamline" in black magic marker on the public announcement board on 10th Ave. W. This is no way to conduct business given the history of the development planning for this site. A DPD response of well they can do it is also unsatisfactory. The rules need to be amended especially for a site of this size (over 2 acres) to ensure transparency across the board to ensure the city's equities are protected.

Toll Bros.' involvement in the community to date has actually brought numerous positive changes to the plan. DPD should ensure those positive changes such as Queen Anne stairs, the pocket park, a reduced Eastern Bloc apartments look or the Berlin Wall effect, are locked in place. Very important as well is to ensure the trees on the site and the right-of-way (a false distinction in this case since the trees long pre-date today's unsatisfactory code rules on trees for DPD/SDOT). In fact, trees always lose out in today's Seattle development environment. They lost out in the Aegis project on 3rd Ave. W. in Queen Anne near Rogers' Park, on numerous small development sites around the Seattle Children's Home at 10th Ave. W. and W. McGraw St. and may do so again with the Seattle Children's Home site itself. I request the city's Urban Forestry Commission is brought in before any decision by DPD and SDOT is made on trees for the site to include those along the right-a-way.

I am definitely for development in Queen Anne and across the city. I am not against development of this site. We must be for smart growth however that incorporates the various aspects of the community (public safety for the streets/intersections, the environment with the trees and water run-off given Queen Anne steep slopes, the limited public transport in the area, etc.). The best way to do this for a property over two acres such as the 2.5 acre Seattle Children's Home site is to have the transparency of a full design review. I understand the full design review is now not possible despite Toll Bros.' previous promises to do so but still DPD can ensure the community is given full transparency on decisions made for the site and use this development to improve the city's development codes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please include me on any future notices about Project #3015522/ # 3020595.

Best regards, Bob

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

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**From:** Future Queen Anne [mailto:futurequeenanne@outlook.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 17, 2015 11:22 AM  
**To:** Rips, Bruce; Ames, Bill; Amrhein, Seth  
**Cc:** Sugimura, Diane; Pinto De Bader, Sandra; PRC  
**Subject:** Trees -- Project #3015522, #3020595

Dear Bruce, Seth & Bill,

As you know over the past months I have contacted DPD in hopes of getting access to Toll Brothers' new arborist's tree report for the former Seattle Children's Home property. I was informed that the report would be posted on the DPD website once it was received. I check back daily but have not successfully found the report. However, the new application (#3020595) site plan on the DPD website refers to the new tree report

I did find a Tree Legend as part of Toll's new site plan. This list is quite different from Toll's past arborist report. In fact, more than one tree has now been moved from the Exceptional List to non-exceptional due to measurement changes. An example -- a healthy Pacific Madrone Tree previously documented as 14" is now listed as 13.7" (less than 1/3 of an inch below the size threshold for Exceptional). It is now slated to be eliminated.

Given the new application and switch to Streamlined Review, a new tree report with significant changes from the past reports, we have four requests:

1) Please extend the SEPA comment period. Given that we have not had access to the report during the comment period, there has not been an opportunity for us or our arborist to assess it and give meaningful input.

2) If you have the new tree report, please post it. If Toll has not filed the report with your office, how can you review the plans without this?

3) Ensure Toll is maintaining the row of Elm Trees in the ROW on 9th Avenue West. These Exceptional trees are very important to the neighborhood, and the City. Our arborist recommended the Elms be inoculated against Dutch Elm Disease in the Spring when the trees leaf out. Toll's arborist agreed and included this preservation step in their application/plans. It is now June. Has this protection measure occurred?

4) Please ask Toll to maintain the ROW parking strip around their property. The site has been neglected. The property looks abandoned and unkept and is now attracting criminal behavior. We have asked Toll directly to secure the site and care for the ROW and have been told it will be taken care of, but no action has yet been taken.

We look forward to hearing from you and gaining access to the new arborist report.

Sincerely,

Terri Johnston  
on behalf of Future Queen Anne

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**From:** Mark Holland [mailto:solarhound@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 18, 2015 5:50 PM

**To:** Williams, Christopher

**Cc:** Sugimura, Diane; Hoffman, Ray; Acosta, Rachel; Pinto De Bader, Sandra; LEG\_CouncilMembers; Murray, Edward; Nyland, Kathy; Shiosaki, Michael; Sheffer, Andy; friends@seattleolmsted.org; Critchfield, Doug; Johnson, Dan; Jainga, Jon; Hoff, Paula; Johnson, Sharon

**Subject:** Mountain Biking on Jefferson Park Reservoir Berms

Seattle Parks Department Deputy Superintendent Christopher Williams,

**MOUNTAIN BIKEERS "SHREDDING" THE RESERVOIR BERMS AT JEFFERSON PARK**

Please examine the attached photos from Jefferson Park, taken last Saturday.

I saw a mountain biker ride down and up this eroded cross trail on the West reservoir berm just before I took these photos. It looks like Mountain Bikers are shredding the Jefferson Park reservoir berms.

Mr. Williams, mountain bikers are already riding all over the Cheasty Boulevard pedestrian trail, Cheasty Green Space, and now the reservoir berms at Jefferson Park. In fact, one of your hand picked PAT team members, David Couture, was photographed riding a mountain bike along the pedestrian path on Cheasty boulevard - while the PAT was still meeting!

You really know how to pick'em CW!

The mountain bikers like to jump back and forth up and down the berms from the trail to the boulevard and back.

People are beginning to see packs of 20 or more mountain bikers traveling up and down the trail and boulevard. This did not happen before your bike park plan. Mountain bikers have already decided Cheasty Boulevard and Green Space, and now even Jefferson Park, is the place to "shred", thanks to you, CW.

Since you made the foolish decision to combine the boulevard trail with the bike park, this activity is likely to get worse, not better if the bike park goes through.

#### CHEASTY GREEN SPACE MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK: SOCIAL JUSTICE OR ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM?

CW, if you cannot stop mountain bikers from "shredding" the reservoir berms at Jefferson Park, how will you control them on Cheasty Boulevard or in the Forest for that matter?

Wiser people before you created the bicycle use policy because mountain bikers prove themselves time and again to be brazenly defiant of the rules, disrespectful of, and destructive to nature, and if you have ever seen their videos, pretty much devoid of common sense.

Now you want to reduce the coverage of the bicycle use policy to protect only the most precious (wealthy, white etc..) parks in Seattle while leaving public parks in working class and minority communities open to the ravages of mountain biking?

Then you have the gall to call it social justice? That is twisted as your mind, CW.

What you are doing with natural spaces policy, bicycle use policy, and Cheasty Greenspace is ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM of the lowest order.

Mr. Willams, as a citizen of Seattle, I order you to stop this environmental racism of the Cheasty Bike Park proposal right now and treat all Seattle neighborhoods equally.

WHAT YOU WILL AND WILL NOT DO.

You will NOT change the bicycle use policy.

You will NOT institute "supplemental use guidelines" for Natural Spaces policy.

You will NOT build a mountain bike park in the Cheasty Green Space, or in any other forest in Seattle.

You WILL use the natural spaces and bicycle use policy in their present form to continue to protect ALL Seattle parks and forests equally.

You WILL work to strengthen and enhance, not diminish and erode, the environmental protections from mountain bikers in the bicycle use and natural spaces policies.

#### CONTAIN MOUNTAIN BIKERS

I want to know what you are going to do to contain mountain bikers once you open the floodgates with your "Natural Spaces Supplemental Use Guidelines" (what the heck is a "ropes course" anyway?). and gutting of the bicycle use policy. What is your plan? Do even you have a plan?

CW, you are the number one cheerleader for the bike park and your aggressive promotion created a reckless sense of invincibility in Seattle mountain bikers. The rules do not apply to mountain bikers, only to Kurt Zwar? Is that it, CW?

Shred the reservoir berms. No Problem! Shred the pedestrian path on the Olmsted landmark Cheasty Boulevard (by your own hand picked PAT member no less) No Problem!

Shred Cheasty Boulevard and Green Space? No problem at all. Those folks cannot fight back like they do in West Seattle, right CW? Is that why you are in SE with your bike park and not West Seattle?

#### CONFERENCE TIME IS NOW - WAKE UP DEPARTMENT HEADS!

I would suggest the other concerned parties (Diane Sugimori, Ray Hoffman, Michael Shiosaki, in the cc of this email sit down with that ol' SKUNK ON THE TABLE, CW (Christopher Williams, that is) and ask him exactly how he plans to stop these mountain bikers from damaging not only the

forests in Seattle, but every other piece of adjacent public property, like the reservoir berm at Jefferson Park.

Oh yeah. I forgot. That OI' SKUNK ON THE TABLE, CW, is just a deputy now. Maybe you think Cheasty is not your problem anymore? Let others deal with the consequences of your poor decisions? Is that the attitude that got you demoted to deputy, CW?

I never really thought of you as superintendent material anyway. I think it is better this way.

BTW. The eroded trail is directly adjacent to the new staircase going in on the west berm of the reservoir. So do not suggest formalizing a social trail with the staircase will solve the problem. It is the speed of downhill cross trails mountain bikers crave. That will not change.

These photos show the result.

Mountain Bikes are eroding the Jefferson Park reservoir berm as fast as your career, CW.

Good work!

Now what are you going to do to fix it?

The berm, I mean. I fear it may be too late for the other thing.

Sincerely,

Mark Holland

**From:** Cass Turnbull [mailto:cassturnbull@comcast.net]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 25, 2015 7:44 AM

**To:** Cass Turnbull

**Cc:** Mary Fleck; Pinto de Bader, Sandra; Rasmussen, Tom; Kim, Hyeok

**Subject:** Trees make money for the City

At the recent Urban Forestry Symposium one of the researchers explained that City trees generate more tax revenue than they require to plant and maintain.

The home that has a street tree, as well as the homes adjacent it, appraise for more than similar homes with out tree cover. That is about \$7,000 more for each home. That translates into property taxes that we get from the state.

Other research shows that shopping areas with good tree cover are visited by more people, for longer periods of time than those without. That translates into sales tax revenue for the City.

And trees lower the temperatures throughout the City and especially for individual homes, that reduces air-conditioning use which keeps SCL from having to build more generating facilities or buy energy from outside the area.

The net economy of trees dictates that we have more of them, and more places for them to grow. I hope you will agree.

Cass Turnbull  
206-783-9093