

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

August 12, 2015

Meeting Notes

Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 2750 (27th floor)
700 5th Avenue, Seattle

Attending

Commissioners

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

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE

Public

Linda Murtfeldt (Seattle Audubon)

Absent- Excused

Joanna Nelson de Flores
Erik Rundell
Jeff Reibman

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 called the meeting to order, read the Commission's mission, and read the agenda.

Chair report

Leif and Tom met with the Arboretum Botanic Garden Committee (ABGC) this morning and did a tour of the Arboretum loop trail. The meeting was the beginning of what promises to be a fruitful relationship. ABGC made the point that this is a collection and put together for research. Tom and Leif successfully communicated the UFC's concern about the number of large conifers being removed to accommodate the mixed-use trail. That the UFC is not concerned about residents that are aware of the Arboretum's goals but is concerned those residents that are not so aware but see that a large number of trees (very large, mature, native trees) is being removed by the City.

The University of Washington owns the collection, not the land. A proposal was being considered years ago about fencing the arboretum and charging fees but it didn't move forward because of people's reaction.

One of the things ABGC mentioned was an effort before or as they are cutting the trees that describes how they are going to make reparations. They are going to be planting six trees for each tree they are removing. The arboretum experience will be markedly improved by this project.

We need to be cautious with the planting of new trees because if they don't get watered they'll die. Tom said that the Department of Ecology will have a ten-year monitoring effort of restoration activities because as part of this project they will be restoring one creek, removing culverts and altering some wetlands.

UFC should brainstorm ways to influence the Arboretum to join the effort to protect trees in Seattle. They are talking about a way-finding plan that could include signs that describe the details of the trees. There can be opportunities for the public to gain information and understanding about urban trees. A second way to participate would be to make assessments about survivability of trees during construction.

The Arboretum's plan is reviewed annually, but it sounds like they usually keep those changes to a minimum. The UFC might be able to influence the process in such a way that it becomes a higher priority.

Sandra will set up a working joint meeting with ABGC to talk about the wayfinding plan and the Master Plan update. This could be an opportunity for the UFC to become better known.

Parks' Supplemental Use Guidelines for Natural Areas/Greenbelts follow up recommendation – discussion and possible vote

Donna walked the group through the draft letter she prepared. The Commission discussed the letter and agreed that the revised draft guidelines continue to be in contradiction of the 1993 policy.

Council should determine whether the supplemental use guidelines comply with the 1993 policy or not. There was agreement that the UFC should encourage City Council to get involved, so a new letter was drafted encouraging City Council to get involved in this process.

ACTION: A motion to approve the new letter was made, seconded, and approved.

City Fruit letter of support – first draft, discussion, and possible vote

The Commission reviewed the draft letter produced by Erik and Sandra and decided to adopt it as written.

ACTION: A motion to approve the draft letter as written was made, seconded, and approved.

Cheasty Greenspace determination of no significance – discussion

The Commission discussed both the DNS and the SEPA Checklist.

There was discussion about issuing a letter stating that the check list doesn't address the UFC's hydrology issues.

Tom recommended the group to provide advice at a higher level instead of providing input on a project by project basis.

The Commission discussed whether or not to re-send the hydrology concern letter to remind Parks of this issue.

Richard recommended waiting to address hydrology issues when they are at 90% design.

The Commission agreed to send a welcoming letter to Jesús Aguirre. Sandra will put together a draft for review.

Comp Plan update - discussion

This item will be moved to the next meeting. Sandra will re-send link to draft comp plan and deadline for comments.

Public comment

None

New business and announcements

None

Adjourn