



City of 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)
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Joshua Morris (Position #7 – NGO) • **David Moehring** (Position # 8 – Development)
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Jessica Hernandez (Position #11 – Environmental Justice) • **Jessica Jones** (Position # 12 – Public Health)
Shari Selch (Position # 13 – Community/Neighborhood)

July 15, 2021.

Terry Galiney
Rachelle Montesano
Seattle Housing Authority
190 Queen Anne Ave N
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Terry and Rachelle,

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) would like to extend its gratitude to the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) for its continued work to enhance tree protection at Yesler Terrace and the development of a payment-in-lieu program. The UFC appreciates the updates on the project that SHA has provided, and the opportunity to provide feedback on the work. The UFC is very interested in equitable tree canopy across the city. The area of Yesler Terrace has a limited canopy of only 10 to 20 percent according to the Seattle 2016 LiDAR Canopy Cover Assessment¹, which is far from the 2037 citywide goal of 30 percent.

While the presentation was very informative, the UFC would like to learn more. Specifically, we would like clarification on the following items:

- The Tier categories consider the location of the trees to right-of-way and property lines and not just the tree's health and condition. The UFC believes standard of replacement should not be tied to the feasibility of protection during development, but to the characteristics of the tree itself. Could SHA share the history and rationale behind developing this tiered system? The UFC believes it would be more effective and equitable to have one standard for tree categorization and replacement across all properties.
- SHA said the community was not engaged with the proposed legislative changes thus far. The UFC believes that survivability of trees requires community engagement and

¹ O'Neil-Dunne, Jarlath (2016). 2016 Seattle Tree Canopy Assessment.
<http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Trees/Mangement/Canopy/Seattle2016CCAFinalReportFINAL.pdf>

connection. We recommend there be a plan to work with residents and adjacent communities on all tree-related changes or impacts.

- The UFC is concerned that the platting process of Block 7 did not look at maximizing preservation of existing trees. Are there criteria used for this platting that can be shared, or are there other considerations and tradeoffs that can be described that would help the UFC understand why the approach was taken?
- Can you provide more information about how off-site tree replacement locations are identified and how tree information such as survivorship is tracked?

Again, the UFC thanks SHA for their continued engagement and progressive approach to urban forestry management.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Weston Brinkley'.

Weston Brinkley, Chair

cc: Mayor Jenny A. Durkan, Council President Lorena González, CM Lisa Herbold, CM Debora Juarez, CM Andrew Lewis, CM Tammy Morales, CM Teresa Mosqueda, CM Alex Pedersen, CM Kshama Sawant, CM Dan Strauss, Michelle Caulfield, Sharon Lerman, Urban Forestry Management Team, Urban Forestry Core Team, Terry Galiney, Rachelle Montesano, Chase Kitchen, Christina Ghan, Yolanda Ho

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