

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 8, 2015

Meeting Notes

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

Attending

Commissioners

Gordon Bradley

Donna Kostka

Richard Martin

Jeff Reibman – acting chair

Steve Zemke

Erik Rundell

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE

Guest:

Sarah Bergmann

Public

Linda Murtfeldt

Absent- Excused

Leif Fixen - chair

Tom Early – vice chair

Joanna Nelson de Flores

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

Jeff, acting as chair, called the meeting to order.

Chair report

Sandra reminded Commissioners of the invitation the Planning Commission is extending for participation in the September 16 roundtable to discuss the Comp Plan update. Jeff, Steve, and Richard will participate.

Pollinator Pathway – Sarah Bergmann

Sarah is coming from the field of design thinking, art, and ecology. She brings these different perspectives into the Pollinator Pathway project.

As we enter the Anthropocene – the age of human kind, we have touched every ecosystem on the planet. She has been thinking about ways to produce new systems. The idea is to connect landscapes based on the island biology concept from Harvard University.

The bigger the island the more biodiversity it contains. If you connect islands you can increase the bio-diversity.

She started with the Seattle University campus, which has been an example of good work on sustainable, healthy landscapes. She has been working for seven years to connect the Seattle U campus to Nora's Woods -- an undeveloped city park and native plant garden in the Madrona neighborhood which is comprised of 99.9% native plants. She has been talking to homeowners about transforming their yards into gardens that are more pollinator friendly.

She is working on a large format book (2 ft by 3 ft) similar to what Audubon did documenting all birds in north America. She saw an exhibit that showed that 40 of those birds would be extinct in 10 years. That moved her to start working on creating the pollinator pathway.

The broad picture of the project is that it is bigger than one landscape plan. The project has been well received. Honey bees are in decline and have been since 2006 but they are not the only pollinators. The reason why the honey bee has been suffering is because industrial agriculture has gotten bigger and bigger and it all blooms at once and the bees have too much food and then no food. People started getting really concerned about the honey bee but no attention was paid to other pollinators such as bats, birds, bees, beetles, ants, butterflies, etc. which don't produce honey or wax but provide a crucial service.

The project is trying to build a responsible partnership to begin connecting landscapes in service of what our wilderness needs. It's about planting plants to support native pollinators and not just planting nectar plants. The agriculture systems we are looking at is mostly dependent on the honey bee and that makes it vulnerable.

She would like to use unutilized space to connect landscapes. Has gotten a lot of interest in the project but couldn't accommodate it. She really needs institutions to back up the interest for a long term viability of the project.

She is currently working on building criteria and principles for a SCL project. They are beginning to restore transmission corridors and are evaluating their project based on criteria and principles to then designate it as a pollinator highway.

UFC question: have you talked to SPU and King County about their Green Stormwater Infrastructure?

Answer: She is focusing on individual project instead of adding pollinator friendly gardens everywhere. She has also talked to King County. The biggest thing that happens when she talks to agencies is that they like each other but don't know how to work together. Principles will be helpful. Pollinators prefer small spaces.

UFC question: have you looked at street trees? That would fit with the UFC interest.

Answer: Supporting native species is important. Grouping of trees are best. Plants are moving due to climate change. This also happens due to urban forest fragmentation.

UFC comment: SDOT and utilities have been working on green streets. That's an opportunity to inform them to get another dimension added. Also, the City's GreenFactor might be a good

opportunity to encourage certain kind of plantings. There is lots of Seattle connected through the Olmstead legacy and this would be another opportunity to include this program into those places. With the UFC time and time again we are working on enhancing the urban ecosystem including trees and landscapes.

She is interested in looking at Transfer of Development Rights. She has been looking at maybe looking at a way to use 1% for art for this.

UFC comment: it would be good to talk to Forterra about this.

Answer: she has been working with them.

UFC comment: UFC is working with DPD on the new tree ordinance for private property.

UFC comment: Possible partnership with FeetFirst.

Answer: she has been working with them.

She has been trying to get funding for a demonstration project and people don't want to fund her work. They want to build pollinator pathways elsewhere. She has received Neighborhood Matching Fund grants twice. The project is fully dependent on her and it will likely die. Which might be good as inspiration. She needs to be well funded to be able to keep on going but if she doesn't remain involved the landscapes might die. She wants institutional support. Some homeowners say they will take care of it and they don't.

UFC comment: maybe partner up with a non-profit that is well established such as Audubon. The waterfront re-development would be a great opportunity and would be a great show piece for the Pollinator Pathway. Maybe get a 'friends of the pollinator pathway' group to be a long-term conduit to advocate for the project. The Rainwise program in SPU could be a way to get funding.

Sarah's contact information is:

Sarah Bergmann

Director

The Pollinator Pathway

info@pollinatorpathway.org

www.pollinatorpathway.com

Parks Supplemental Use Guidelines for Natural Areas and Greenbelts – discussion continues and possible vote.

Sandra conveyed Susanne Rockwell's request to postpone discussion and issuance of a letter of recommendation until after Parks has incorporated public comment to their draft document.

The Commission discussed the request and decided to move forward

ACTION: A motion to move forward to discuss version 2 of the draft letter of recommendation currently being considered by the Commission was made, seconded, and approved. (5-1)

The Commission discussed the draft.

Jeff expressed concern about UFC direction to provide comment as part of the public. Also he believes that neglect poses a greater threat to our natural areas and particularly to trees and canopy coverage within them, than limited additional use ever could. The spread of invasives is the primary issue but encampment and other miss-use is also an issue. Allowing more uses, and thus more users into our natural areas will build a greater constituency for their protection restoration and preservation. He believes that is the Parks department's intent with this policy and trusts the Parks Department to manage the properties, and uses effectively so that the benefits outweigh any impacts.

Other Commissioners mentioned that the Parks Department has not been a good steward of the land. An example being Kiwanis Ravine which used to be completely neglected.

Sandra confirmed what the Park Board website says about timeline for comment.

and-recreation/about-us/board-of-park-commissioners

Meet the Board

Calendar

Meetings, Agendas & Minutes

Meeting Videos

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Park Commissioners meet monthly on the second and fourth Thursday of each month.

Upcoming Meeting Agenda Items

The next meeting will be **Thursday, July 23, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.** The Agenda Items are:

TBD

The meeting is held at 100 Dexter Avenue North, Ken Bounds Board Room, Seattle

Briefing Papers

Natural Areas & Greenbelts Supplemental Use Guidelines Briefing Paper 6-4-2015

Written testimony submittal deadline regarding the Natural Areas & Greenbelts Supplemental Use Guidelines is July 16, 2015.

[Synthetic Field Subsurface - Alternative to Crumb Rubber Briefing Paper](#)

ABOUT THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

The Seattle Board of Park Commissioners is a volunteer advisory board established by ordinance. The Board consults with and makes recommendations to City Council, the Mayor, and the Superintendent regarding

Contact

Board of Park Commissioners
100 Dexter Ave. N.
Seattle, Washington 98109

For Park Board Business, please contact Rachel Acosta:

Phone: 206-684-5066
Email: rachel.acosta@seattle.gov

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Upcoming Events

MEETING CANCELED Board of Park Commissioners
Thu, Jul 9, 2015, 6:30pm
100 Dexter Ave N

Board of Park Commissioners Meeting
Thu, Jul 23, 2015, 6:30pm

Commissioners said the Park Board has welcomed interaction with UFC. This is an opportunity to communicate with the Park Board.

ACTION: A motion to approve the letter as amended was made, seconded, and approved. (6-0)

Planning Commission Comp Plan Round Table event on 9/16

Richard, Steve and Jeff will attend.

Right-of-way Improvement Manual – UFC participation update - Jeff

There has been no movement on this front.

Initial draft of updated Comprehensive Plan

Sandra will send the link and will include time for discussion in the August 5 agenda.

UFC comments to ECA and LID updates – initial conversation

No draft documents are available at this time.

Arboretum Botanic Garden Commission letter of response RE: Arboretum Multi-use Trail

Move to next meeting.

Public comment

New business and announcements

Adjourn

Public input

From: Mark Ahlness [mailto:mahlness@comcast.net]

Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2015 9:39 PM

To: Pinto de Bader, Sandra

Subject: Feedback: Draft letter on Parks Draft Supplemental Use Guidelines for Natural Areas/Greenbelts v2

Dear Urban Forestry Commission,

The Seattle Nature Alliance is very pleased to see your [Version 2 of draft letter of recommendation RE: Parks Draft Supplemental Use Guidelines for Natural Areas/Greenbelts!](#)

We hope it moves forward to a vote on July 8, and we urge you adopt it and send it to the Parks Board.

We are also very concerned that "low-impact" uses NOT be the defining criteria alone. It really needs to be the **total quantity** of trails or quantity of different uses added into a single space, measured against the carrying capacity of the land, habitat and overall visitor experience. In other words, adding too many "layers" of low-impact uses can be worse than a single high impact use. Every new recreation use compounds the impact, and added together in our small, fragmented and stressed natural areas, they will negatively affect nature for wildlife and the nature-experience for people.

We look forward to seeing a letter from the UFC added to the growing list of organizations who have sent letters urging the Park Board to vote no on the proposed Supplemental Use Guidelines.

- [Thornton Creek Alliance](#)
- [North District Council](#)
- [Fautleroy Watershed Council](#)
- [Seattle Audubon Society Conservation Committee](#)
- [Seattle Nature Alliance](#)
- [Friends of Frink Park](#)
- [Friends of Madrona Woods](#)
- [Friends of Seattle's Urban Forest](#)

In addition, we are currently listing 16 organizations asking the Park Board to vote no, by supporting the petition: [Preserve Seattle Parks Natural Areas and Greenspaces](#):

- [Seattle Nature Alliance](#)
- [Friends of Frink Park](#)
- [Friends of Cheasty](#)
- [Fautleroy Watershed Council](#)
- [Seattle Audubon Society](#)
- [Leschi Parks and Greenspace Committee](#)
- [Friends of Urban Forests](#)
- [TreePAC](#)
- [Magnuson Environmental Stewardship Alliance](#)
- [Plant Amnesty](#)
- [Friends of Schmitz Preserve](#)
- [Friends of the Burke-Gilman Trail at Sand Point](#)
- [Friends of Madrona Woods](#)
- [Seattle Green Spaces Coalition](#)
- [Friends of Lincoln Park](#)
- [Pelly Place Association](#)

We strongly encourage you to adopt and send your letter to the Board of Parks Commissioners. We thank you for your hard work and advocacy for our urban forests and for helping to protect what's left of our Urban Wild.

Sincerely,

Mark Ahlness, Denise Dahn, and Rebecca Watson - Directors



Seattle Nature Alliance
www.SeattleNatureAlliance.org