

**SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Tom Early, Chair • Steve Zemke, Vice-Chair  
Gordon Bradley • Leif Fixen • Mariska Kecskes • Donna Kostka • Richard Martin • Joanna Nelson de Flores  
Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell

*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*

**February 3, 2016**

**Meeting Notes**

Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 2750 (27<sup>th</sup> floor)  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Seattle

**Attending**

Commissioners

Steve Zemke – vice-chair  
Weston Brinkley (not voting)  
Mariska Kecskes  
Donna Kostka  
Jeff Reibman  
Erik Rundell

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE

Guests

Frana Milan – King County Parks

Public

Evan Shaw – Seattle Audubon

**Absent- Excused**

Gordon Bradley  
Tom Early – chair  
Leif Fixen  
Richard Martin  
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**

Steve Zemke chaired the meeting. Read the Commission’s mission and the agenda.

**Public comment**

None

**Approval of January 6 and January 13 meeting notes**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the January 6 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the January 13 meeting notes as written was made, seconded, and approved.**

**Chair report**

The hearing examiner agreed with the group challenged Parks' DNS.

### **King County Million Trees Campaign – Frana Milan (King County)**

Frana Milan - King County Parks. King County recently adopted the Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP). The plan focuses on reducing GHG emissions and to prepare for impacts. The overall goal of the SCAP is to achieve 80% reduction in GHGs by 2050. She has been talking to people looking for partners for their million trees campaign.

Key themes of the plan:

- Elevate partnerships
- Address multiple benefits of climate action
- Integrate equity and social justice

SCAP goal area 5

Forestry and Agriculture.

“Plant one million native trees between 2015 and 2020 and develop a sustainable 30-year plan to maintain and enhance tree cover countrywide that identifies specific approaches, including public and private partnerships, geographic focus areas, and number of trees.” Page 93

The one million number came from a marketing perspective and considering that KC already plants between 60,000 to 80,000 trees per year and they think that if they can stretch themselves to plant 100,000 they could comply with 50% of the goal. They don't know how many trees there currently are in the County. They also do not track survival rate of trees they plant.

Why one million trees?

- Carbon sequestration
- Resilient forests
- Clean air and water
- Public health
- Livable communities

One million trees campaign:

- collaborate with public, civic, and private partners
- Amplify existing efforts
- Leverage resources
- Raise awareness
- Develop tools for reporting, monitoring, ongoing stewardship

Why partner?

- Access to additional resources
- Develop efficiencies
- Engage new audiences
- Diminish barriers
- Increase impact

What does it mean to partner?

- Shape the regional alliance: criteria, branding, tools, promotional activities
- Contribute expertise to urban forestry in King County: carbon accounting, urban forest science, tree/forest stewardship
- Participate in your community: track planting, organize activities, engage residents, cultivate new partners.

One goal, many places

- Street trees
- Forest restoration
- Public parks and green spaces
- Green stormwater infrastructure
- New development
- Private forestland
- Backyards

One goal, many actions

- Volunteer service days
- Mini-grants to orgs
- Social media promotions
- Green Cities Partnership
- Landscape scale research
- Shared stewardship
- Group purchasing
- Carbon offsets

Next steps:

- Cultivate partners and secure commitments
- Facilitate partnership committee
- Develop brand, public materials, tracking mechanisms
- Plan big hullabaloo to launch campaign (April is Earth Month)
- Plant, plant, plant
- Rinse and repeat

Frana asked the UFC to support the effort.

UFC question/comment:

Seattle has a goal to get to 30% canopy cover from 24% by 2037. Recorded plantings are a few thousand a year but we don't know how many trees are lost every year. We have in the Comp Plan a no net loss of canopy statement. Steve's projections were that we were not going to reach our goal, based on his extrapolation on calculations made by Portland, OR.

One of the first things that need to be done is to get a canopy cover assessment for King County to figure out what a million trees would look like. It would be good to have a coordinated effort.

Answer: the assessment of tree canopy in King County is part of a larger vision of what is needed in King County. This campaign is just a beginning and they still need to figure out what the right number is. They want to bring partners around the table to create a strong collaborative.

UFC question/comment: It's not just the number of trees but the type of tree, the size of trees. The larger the tree the more benefits it provides. Canopy includes a three-dimensional component.

UFC question/comment: Do you have a breakdown of targets?

Answer: that will be figured out when the partners are around the table.

UFC question/comment: is the County dedicating money to this effort?

Answer: this goal encompasses a variety of groups. The County is currently going through their biennial budget cycle.

UFC question/comment: how many staff is KC willing to dedicate to this effort?

Answer: they have 25,000 acres of forested lands and it needs staff support.

UFC question/comment: what would be the source of the funds? A new Levy?

Answer: that is something to be figured out. The current King County Parks levy expires in 2019.

UFC question/comment: will the County develop more specific goals once some of these questions have been answered? The concern is to have a goal that is only about putting stems on the ground and not have further goals to make sure those trees survive and are maintained.

Answer: yes. That will be part of the long-term goal.

UFC question/comment: the timeline is already in a crunch. The goal encompasses 2015-2020 and we are already in 2016.

Answer: when we were planning the SCAP was to set bold goals.

UFC question/comment: how much of the GHG are attributed to trees? What's the goal for tree planting between 2020 and 2050?

UFC question/comment: KC will need to full support of the mayors and councils of all cities. Commissions like the UFC can only recommend. It's also important to set a goal that can be accomplished because if it's not accomplished it will discourage participants.

UFC question/comment: will there be an equity assessment? In paper it sounds great but there is the reality that unless there is a strategic effort, new resources and trees will likely end up in communities that have historically benefited.

Answer: there is a lot of opportunity to incorporate RSJI principles and planning into the project.

UFC question/comment: is this more like a platform to coordinate work that cities are already doing and report together?

Answer: yes

UFC question/comment: do you have a sense of what these tools might turn out to be? What do cities get out of it? Are there thoughts about what they might be?

Answer: knowledge management angle. They are thinking about streamlining technology to benefit other municipalities. It could be finding different ways to disseminate the information.

UFC question/comment: maybe develop a system for interim goals. So that it's not a stretch to the end. It would also be advisable to do a canopy cover assessment for the County. To figure out if the County is moving forward or backwards on this.

### **2016 Work Plan – continues and possible vote**

The Commission discussed the work plan.

**ACTION: A motion to approve the 2016 work plan as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

### **MIMP recommendation – discussion and possible vote**

The UFC discussed the 2-1-16 draft MIMP letter.

Move to next meeting.

### **Public comment**

None

### **New business and announcements**

Donna: there will be an invitation coming to the UFC from a group of 5 organizations applying for urban bird city status (Fish and wildlife service). On second year can apply for grant funding.

There is interest in looking at SPU major Green infrastructure projects (18 months rolling process) and see if the UFC can advocate for inclusion of conifers and other relevant species. Maybe start with Thornton Creek? Invite someone from Thornton Creek Alliance come to present as well.

Invite a speaker to continue the conversation on the carbon economy and urban forestry.

### **Adjourn**