

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Tom Early, Chair • Steve Zemke, Vice-Chair
Weston Brinkley • Leif Fixen • Reid Haefer • Craig Johnson • Donna Kostka • Richard Martin
Joanna Nelson de Flores • Andrew Zellers

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

April 5, 2017

Meeting Notes

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

Attending

Commissioners

Tom Early – chair
Steve Zemke – vice-chair
Reid Haefer
Craig Johnson
Donna Kostka
Joanna Nelson de Flores
Sarah Rehder (non-voting)
Andrew Zellers

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE
Darren Morgan - SDOT
Nolan Rundquist - SDOT
Anne Pfeifer - SDOT

Public

Kiara Fitzpatrick

Absent- Excused

Weston Brinkley
Leif Fixen
Richard Martin

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

Public comment

None.

Adoption of March 1 and March 8 meeting notes

ACTION: A motion to approve the March 1 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

ACTION: A motion to approve the March 8 meeting notes as written was made, seconded, and approved.

Revised tree maintenance coordination and SCL pruning cycle letter – discussion

Andrew walked the Commission through his revision of the proposed letter.

ACTION: A motion to amend the letter as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

Tree Protection Ordinance – initial discussion

Steve shared information with the Commission.

- Council issued Resolution # 31138 instructing SDCI (then DPD) to work on updating the tree protection ordinance. It's been eight years and this work has yet to be accomplished.
- The group Friends of Seattle's Urban Forest is proposing different elements that an updated tree ordinance should include.
- Lake Forest Park moved away from tree diameter as a proxy for canopy. They now use actual tree canopy on their property.
- SMC 25.11 (Tree Protection) and SMC 23.44 (Tree planting requirements for development in Single-family zones) are both to be considered as well as policies such as the Two-for-one Tree Replacement Policy.

Tom would like to put out principles that the UFC would like to see as part of an updated tree code, which needs to be updated. The Commission discussed the issue. Tom said Lake Forest Parks has a great code but it's a very different city.

Arboretum follow up letter

Move to next week.

SDOT Street Tree Management Plan

SDOT is implementing a new management approach. They divided the city into 27 street tree management units and they will be inventorying three units per year.

Street Tree Planting in Seattle:

- Past planting and policy efforts around street trees have impacted where they grow throughout the city.
- There are an estimated 250,000 total street trees in the right-of-way. 40,000 of those are managed by SDOT.

One of the challenges is how to determine which three management units will be worked on in any one year. SDOT added a 3rd tree crew as part of the Move Seattle Levy. 2/3 of existing crews' time will be dedicated to programmatic maintenance. Over 44% of total resources dedicated to programmatic maintenance.

They are going to be hiring additional inventorying staff (4 interns and contractor support). The challenge with Tree Ambassador volunteers doing inventory work is that they need consistent workforce.

Activities:

- Inventory
 - o Use ArcGIS collector app to update street tree inventory with handheld devices
 - o Hire additional inventory support staff
 - o Inventory all street trees in Seattle

- Maintenance
 - o Schedule pruning and maintenance
 - o Emergency response
 - o Hazardous tree removal
 - o Establish recently planted trees
- Replacement
 - o Plant at least two trees for every one removed
 - o Leverage existing gaps within SDOT tree 'corridors'
 - o Use iTree analysis of inventory to make better decisions
- Engagement
 - o Conduct Racial Equity Toolkit analysis to optimize benefits and minimize harm
 - o Implement inclusive outreach strategies to engage communities
 - Survey
 - Fact sheets
 - Newsletter posts

Work done to date:

- 2016 completed units
 - o South Park/Highland Park (Unit 3)
 - o Rainier Beach (Unit 5)
 - o Lake City/Olympic Hills (Unit 18)
- 2017 in progress units
 - o First Hill/Central District (Unit 10)
 - o University District/Ravenna/Eastlake (Unit 14)
 - o Ballard/Fremont (Unit23)

2016 in review:

- Estimated annual benefits to-date: \$841,647
- 2016 total expenditures: \$990,828
 - o Inventorying: \$56,022
 - o Pruning \$477,442
 - o Removal \$32,070
 - o Planting \$297,997
 - o Watering \$127,297

Unit 3 – South Park/Highland Park

- Inventory is 100% complete
- Trees added to inventory: 3,685
- Total trees inventoried: 6,081
- 153% inventory increase
- Initial annual benefits of inventory: \$122,201
- Annual benefits of final inventory: \$375,364
 - o Energy, CO2, Air quality, storm water, aesthetic
- Initial top 5 Genera: Maple (25%), Cherry (15%), Ash (8%), Hawthorne (5%), Oher (37%)

- Final top 5 Genera: Maple (25%), Cherry (15%), Pear (7%), Crabapple (6%), Service berry (5%), other (42%)

UFC question/comment: Do you think about the benefits on a per/tree basis?

Answer: We are not doing that because the benefits of larger trees are greater.

UFC question/comment: What are you tracking?

Answer: Attributes tracked in the inventory include: species, diameter, basic condition, width of planting strip, whether there are overhead wires, etc. SDOT is excited to launch the story map so the information is available to the public.

UFC question/comment: Are fact sheets in multiple languages?

Answer: Not yet.

Have you run into issues with the nursery? Do you have contract growing?

Answer: this is an Operations and Maintenance program. The financial setup would need to be different in order to accommodate contract growing.

Ongoing issues are homeless encampments, wind storms, snow and ice, etc.

Public comment

None.

New Business

None.

Adjourn

Tom adjourned the meeting.

Public input:

From: Steve Zemke [mailto:stevezemke@msn.com]

Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2017 12:35 PM

To: Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@Seattle.gov>

Subject: Fw: Tree Planting on Campus

Hi Sandra,

Here is a copy of the letter from the meeting I attended at the UW regarding their Urban Forest Management Plan and Campus Master Plan. Could you please forward it to the other members of the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission. Thanks

Steve

From: Kristine A. Kenney <kkenney@uw.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 1:28 PM

To: Sara Shores

Cc: Tom Hinckley; arthurleej@earthlink.net; stevezemke@msn.com; RICHARD ELLISON; Iain M. Robertson; Kristine A. Kenney

Subject: Tree Planting on Campus

Hi Sara and all copied,

Two weeks ago I had the opportunity to talk about trees on campus on a few separate occasions with some very interested faculty, tree advocates/specialists, and members of the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission. During each of these conversations, in addition to the desire to have better tree preservation standards, there was a desire to increase the diversity of trees on campus for aesthetic, educational, and habitat considerations. A couple of great suggestions developed from the conversations and I wanted to follow up with you and others I think could help add insights into future endeavors.

Some thoughts to build on:

1. Increasing the diversity of trees on campus to support teaching and/or habitat value would be greatly enhanced if we were provided a list of desired trees from individuals copied on this email and from others that use the campus for teaching or research. If appropriate, having locations for where these trees should or could be planted based on their needs or opportunities to improve certain landscapes would be welcome.
2. In addition to having a list of desired tree species, it would be helpful to discuss sources for unique trees that aren't commonly grown in local nurseries and to discuss ways in which we can procure materials through the public bid process. Is there a role for Grounds possibly in this process?
3. Arthur Lee Jacobson has graciously offered to walk the campus to share his insights into what we are doing well regarding tree preservation and diversity, and areas for improvement. He also noted there are misidentified species in the tree database and it would be useful to have a more in depth conversation regarding these trees. Are there others in this email, or not on this email that should be included in that walk?
4. I mentioned to Iain Robertson that you arrange an annual Tree Campus USA tree planting event in which we solicit volunteers and suggested he might use this event as a class exercise to get students out in the field. It would be great to see if we can expand on using the campus and its landscape as a teaching opportunity for students, well beyond the CSF projects and one-off groups that help with maintenance of particular areas. The UW Farm has done an excellent job of offering opportunities for students to participate in urban gardening practices and I think some discussions regarding how we might get classes more involved could prove fruitful for many, whether it's monitoring raingarden functioning, updating the tree database, planting trees, removing invasive plants, creating or expanding on self-guided plant tours, etc.
5. Some of these individuals may be interested in joining the Tree Campus USA committee, which would help broaden our discussions and ensure we're in step with expectations of a larger constituency. Could you provide a summary of the program and the role of the committee to all included in this email to see if anyone is interested in joining?
6. There was mention of many books to reference, but also a desire to reach out to additional faculty, staff and outside experts for advice and suggestions. Suggestions for whom to reach out to are welcome from all included in this email.

7. There is a desire to incorporate more of the thinking above into the Campus Master Plan (CMP) and Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP). The CMP references the UFMP as our reference document that illustrates our management practices. In my opinion, this is a living document we can continually refine and update as we see the need and as we become more knowledgeable about best practices and what works or doesn't for UW. We heard some feed back on how we can already improve this document, but would appreciate any additional comments anyone has to offer.
https://cpd.uw.edu/sites/default/files/UW_UFMP_NOV18.pdf

My hope is this is just the first in a series of follow up emails that will expand upon previous conversations and great ideas. I've copied you all because of your past or present interest in our campus trees in hopes you'll engage in the conversation to help us become better stewards of this incredible legacy we all value. Your input is most greatly appreciated.

Best,
Kristine

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