

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Weston Brinkley (Position #3 – University), Chair • Joanna Nelson de Flores (Position #7 – NGO), Vice-Chair
Steve Zemke (Position #1 – Wildlife Biologist) • Sandra Whiting (Position #2 – Urban Ecologist)
Sarah Rehder (Position #4 – Hydrologist) • Stuart Niven (Position #5 – Arborist – ISA)
Michael Walton (Position #6 – Landscape Architect – ISA) • Andrew Zellers (Position #8 – Development)
Craig Johnson (Position #9 – Economist) • Megan Herzog (Position #10 – Get Engaged)
Megan Herzog (Position #10 – Get Engaged) • Whit Bouton (Position #11 – Environmental Justice)
Jessica Jones (Position #12 – Public Health) • Shari Selch (Position #13 – Community/Neighborhood)

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 11, 2018

Meeting Notes

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

Attending

Commissioners

Weston Brinkley – chair
Whit Bouton
Megan Herzog
Craig Johnson
Stuart Niven
Shari Selch
Sarah Rehder
Michael Walton
Sandra Whiting
Andrew Zellers
Steve Zemke

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE
Patti Bakker - SPR
Eric McConaghy – Council Central Staff
Maggie Glowacki - SDCI
Chanda Emery - SDCI

Guests

Amanda Bidwell

Public

Michael Oxman

Absent- Excused

Joanna Nelson de Flores – vice-chair
Jessica Jones

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

Weston called the meeting to order.

Whit Bouton and Stuart Niven joined the UFC for the first time as Environmental Justice and Arborist representatives respectively. They introduced themselves to the UFC.

Public comment

Michael Oxman – He thanked the new UFC members for joining the commission. A [complaint](#) was lodged against the owner of a new home for parking their car in the front yard which is supposed to be planted. Landscape requirements were allowed to die to accommodate an unpermitted rental unit. We have problems in SDCI. Keep these factors into account as they put together recommendations.

Adoption of June 6 and June 13 meeting notes

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

ACTION: A motion to approve the June 13 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

Tree regulations timeline

Eric McConaghy from Council Central Staff walked the UFC through the tree regulations update. The calendar has been up on CM Johnson's website as part of the [Trees for All](#) proposal. He is currently working with SDCI on a draft bill that once finished will allow for publication of a SEPA notice around the end of July. By that point, the bill would be public.

Once the SEPA notice is issued there will be a comment and appeal period on the SEPA threshold determination for the bill around the end of July/beginning of August. There will be a possible briefing and discussion at Council's Planning, Land Use & Zoning Committee (PLUZ) on Wednesday, August 1.

The August 15 PLUZ Committee meeting has been cancelled, so a public hearing will likely take place on September 5. Discussion and possible vote at the PLUZ committee is likely to take place September 19.

There were several questions from the UFC. For the details, please listen to the digital recording of the meeting: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Moss and Air Quality

Patti Bakker (SPR) and Amanda Bidwell (UW graduate and researcher) presented the findings of her moss study. Amanda did her masters' research on heavy metals pollution in transportation corridors. Many of Seattle Parks and Recreation's natural areas and parks are close to transportation corridors.

Amanda presented her research (see the [report](#)). Moss has been used extensively as an indicator for air quality in Europe. She used pristine sites in the Olympic peninsula, 10 sites in Seattle and 5 along I-90. As Seattle continues to grow so will traffic conditions which impact urban pollution.

Sources of urban pollution

- Exhaust emissions
- Brake and tire attrition
- Lubricant degradation

Moss is like a sponge and absorbs everything around it. The reasons Amanda used moss on her research are:

- It's non-vascular
- Lack protective epidermis
- Absorb organic compounds and inorganic ions deposited on their surface
- It undergoes significant drying and re-wetting cycles
- It provides a snapshot of wet and dry deposition
- There is a history of use a bioindicators in Europe and the Pacific Northwest
- Inexpensive analysis costs

Why use soil?

- Metals, in their various forms, can exist in pore-water as soluble species or precipitate out of solution.
- Metals can stunt plant growth and reduce native survivorship in urban forests
- WA State Department of Ecology measured "naturally-occurring" background levels = concentration of hazardous substance not influenced by anthropogenic activities

- Strategies can be implemented to ‘tie-up’ metals reducing potential for plant uptake if staff has an understanding of current soil conditions.

Amanda created hot-spot analysis using different Green Seattle Partnership sites throughout Seattle. She found that the sites with the highest levels of pollution are:

1. Kingfisher natural area – 9th St slope
 - o Recommendations: establish ground cover to help tie-up metal deposition influences; install lysimeters to measure seasonal/annual wet metal deposition rates as moss had higher concentrations of pollutants.
2. East Duwamish Greenbelt 1
 - o Recommendations: establish ground cover and native plantings should help mitigate metal concentrations.
3. Westcrest
4. East Duwamish Greenbelt 2
5. Mt. Baker
6. St. Marks Greenbelt
 - o Recommendation’s for 3 to 6: continue mulching and adding Cedar Grove compost amendments.
7. Magnolia
 - o Recommendation: consider adding the Green Seattle Partnership to begin restoration.

Soil recommendations:

- Soil at these locations also above naturally occurring background values for suite of metals, continue mulching and composting at these sites to tie-up metals and reduce ability for plant uptake.
- Tillage and soil mixing 8=12” in depth during phase 1-2 of restoration activities
- Continue to incorporate mycorrhizal inoculates (both endomycorrhizae and ectomycorrhizae species) into bareroot and potted soil mixtures to increase likelihood of native plant survivorship.

Additional recommendations:

- Regular soil testing for suite of metals
- Soil analysis for pH, organic matter content, and cation exchange capacity
- Installation of resin lysimeters to measure seasonal and annual wet-deposition rates across priority GSP restoration sites.

MHA Ordinance letter of recommendation

Will be discussed at the next meeting.

Tree regulations enforcement letter of recommendation

Commissioners discussed the draft letter.

ACTION: A motion to approve the amended Tree regulations enforcement letter of recommendation was made, seconded, and approved.

Public comment

None

New Business

None

Adjourn

Public input

None