

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) • Bonnie Lei (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

December 5, 2018

Meeting Notes

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

Attending

Commissioners

Joanna Nelson de Flores – vice-chair
Whit Bouton
Craig Johnson
Jessica Jones
Stuart Niven
Sarah Rehder
Shari Selch
Michael Walton
Sandra Whiting
Andrew Zellers
Steve Zemke

Absent- Excused

Weston Brinkley – chair
Bonnie Lei

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE
Mike Wynne - SPU
Paula Hoff - SPR
David Graves - SPR
Jon Jainga - SPR

Guests

Elijah Selch

Public

Susan Zeman
Joel de Jong
Claire Hoffman
Cameron Justem
Mira Latoszek
Joyce Motty
Joshua Morris

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, acting as chair, called the meeting to order.

Public comment

Susan Zeman – volunteer at Cheasty Greenspace Mountainview. Continues to hear from community members wanting to know when are the trails coming? Excited about the project.

Joel de Jong- This project integrates nature with community building. Planting hundreds of trees every year. Excited with the project. Likes the idea to expand trail network.

Cameron Justam – She is a member of Friends of Cheasty. They have filed second appeal to defeat this project. Appealed two-and-a-half years ago and Parks’ Determination of Non-significance (DNS) was reversed. They believe the mountain bike plan will cause damage and impact the natural environment. They don’t see mitigation for noise, parking or impacts to wildlife included in the project.

Mira Latoszek: She is part of the group Friends of Cheasty. Parks has done a Geotech study of the area but she feels it doesn’t provide adequate analysis. Non-exceptional trees add to the quality of the greenspace and have their own benefits. A lot of the trails are zigzagging and would require a lot of tree removal. An appeal will likely happen again.

Joshua Morris – works as Seattle Audubon and wanted to share that many members oppose the project. Would like to see wildlife and habitat monitoring.

Adoption of November 7 and 14 meeting notes

ACTION: A motion to approve the November 7 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

ACTION: A motion to approve the November 14 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.

Cheasty Mountain Bike/Pedestrian Trail Pilot Project update – Paula Hoff, David Graves, and Jon Jainga (SPR)

Paula Hoff shared general information on the Project. Including the [link](#) of the project website.

David Graves – shared a map with the new project design which shows trails staying away from wetlands. Parks did a lot of Geotech, wetland, and habitat analysis. Moved trails outside of wetlands and steep slope to minimize impact to habitat. Parks also did a tree survey.

Jon Jainga mentioned the project will use “soft trails” so as to not affect trees.

UFC question: will construction work take place within the drip line of exceptional trees? What is the expected mortality rate?

Response: they are planning on using materials as to not impact roots of the trees. They are expecting no mortality.

UFC question: how are the trails built?

Response: there are two types of trails, some will be done by removing duff and digging 6” down by hand. The standard trail will be 4 ft gravel.

This is a 16-month pilot. If the mountain bike pilot is not successful, then they’ll decommission the trails. They will figure out the timeline to monitor. Probably quarterly. They took a lot of time to evaluate conditions including a very wet winter. This information helped re-vamp the plan.

UFC question: Is rockery used to stabilize switchbacks?

Answer: yes. There are no big structures. There will be no mountain bike features. The project will include mostly beginner trails.

Public question: What baseline data are they planning to use?

Answer: They have quite a bit of data.

UFC question: what kind of criteria will be used to determine whether the pilot is a success.

Answer: They are looking at making adjustments as they monitor the project. Maintenance and upkeep will be part of their evaluation. Some of the topics to evaluate are parking, erosion, people staying on the trails, disruption of the forest, etc.

The UFC might issue a recommendation around doing more frequent monitoring. Instead of quarterly, perhaps it could be done monthly, especially in the wet months. The UFC also recommended adding signage with SPR contact information for people to give feedback. Bike advocates will help with maintenance.

UFC question: how is the site used now?

Answer: there is some illegal dumping, GSP forest restoration, etc. Community likes the opportunity to “bring eyes” to the space.

Public question: their experience of the greenspace has been observing birds. But there are also people doing illicit things. There are areas of high-ecological value that SPR has identified but are not currently publicly available.

Timeframe: Hearing with the Public Examiner will take place 4/29 – 5/1 in 2019.

For more details on the discussion, including Q&A, please listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

SPU’s Ship Canal Water Quality Project (SCWQP) design follow up – Mike Wynne (SPU)

Mike Wynne, deputy project manager, gave an update on the project. The Ship Canal Water Quality project aims to keep sewage from combined sewer systems out of water bodies. The project is designed to prevent overflows by intercepting overflows that would go to water bodies during high rain events. This is a combined King county and SPU project that includes a 2.7mile tunnel following 45th St all the way to Wallingford.

They will be doing tree mitigation, to comply with the City’s two-for-one tree replacement policy as a complete program. UFC recommended tree planting in the fall. They are currently starting to do boring work to remove soil (clean) that will be transported to a quarry.

Tree Inventory and Assessment:

- 78 trees required removal
 - o 28 classified as exceptional
 - 13,183 sqft canopy cover in Ballard and Fremont
 - o 6 dead or dying trees removed after assessment was made
- Reasons for removal
 - o Excavation for site remediation
 - o Mechanical and odor control vault installation
 - o Drop shaft construction
 - o Diversion structure construction
 - o Above ground structures

Neighborhood impacts:

- Ballard
 - o Site remediation requires excavation of property’s north end
 - o 23 trees need removal (14 are exceptional)
 - o 46 replacement trees needed
- Tunnel Effluent Pump Station (TEPS)
 - o TEPS contract may plant trees on site and along 24th Ave. NW right-of-way

- East Ballard
 - o Large underground mechanical and odor control vaults
 - o 4 trees need removal. 8 replacement trees required
 - o 20 trees will be planted on-site (1 parcel tree, 19 street trees)
- Fremont
 - o Underground shaft and diversion structure
 - o 16 trees need removal (2 exceptional)
 - o 32 replacement trees needed
 - o 21 trees will be planted on-site (12 parcel trees and 9 street trees)
- North Queen Anne
 - o Drop shaft and structures
 - o 26 trees need removal (no exceptional, 4 dead trees removed already)
 - o 52 replacement trees
 - o 14 trees will be planted on-site (14 parcel and no street trees)
- Wallingford
 - o Storage tunnel and East shaft
 - o Soil remediation
 - o 3 trees need removal (none are exceptional)
 - o 6 replacement trees required
 - o 29 trees will be planted on-site (16 parcel and 13 street trees)

Exceptional tree canopy mitigation:

- Exceptional tree canopy area estimated at 13,183 sqft
- Assume conservative 25ft dripline per average deciduous street tree, results in the need for only 27 trees.
- 8 or more continuous trees (grove potential at maturity) can be achieved at Wallingford and north Queen Anne sites
- Design meets exceptional tree mitigation intent.

Updates since last briefing:

- Trees have been removed from Ballard site
- 21 fewer trees need to be removed overall, due to site design refinement
- In response to the UFC recommendation to increase tree diversity, street trees changed from maples to hornbeams, Littleleaf lindens, and Elms
- South Operations Center no longer an option for mitigation
- TEPS design has begun, part of SCWQP tree mitigation plan
- Tree planting continues until TEPS construction ends 2024
- Present to UFC again after additional updates.

UFC recommends leaving nurse logs where possible to allow for wildlife habitat.

For more details on the discussion, including Q&A, please listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Draft letter of recommendation RE: Green Factor Director's rule update

The UFC discussed the draft letter and will continue discussion and possibly adopt next week.

Public comment - none

New Business - none

Adjourn