



City of Seattle

Urban Forestry Commission

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Becca Neumann (Position 4 – Hydrologist), Co-chair

Joshua Morris (Position 7 – NGO), Co-Chair

Hao Liang (Position 6 – Landscape Architect – ISA), Co-Chair

Alicia Kellogg (Position 2 – Urban Ecologist) • **David Baker** (Position 8 – Development)

Nathan Collins (Position 9 – Financial Analyst) • **Logan Woodyard** (Position 10 – Get Engaged)

Jessica Jones (Position 12 – Public Health) • **Lia Hall** (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

Draft meeting notes

July 10, 2024, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Via Webex call and in-person at the
Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 1872 (18th floor)
700 5th Avenue, Seattle

(206) 207-1700

Meeting number: 2495 000 2825

Meeting password: 1234

Attending

Commissioners

Becca Neumann – Co-Chair

Hao Liang, Co-Chair

Alicia Kellogg

Nathan Collins

Logan Woodyard

Lia Hall

Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE

Guests

Absent- Excused

Josh Morris – Co-Chair

David Baker

Jessica Jones

Public

Steve Zemke

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at:
<https://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocuments>

Call to order: Hao called the meeting to order, offered a land acknowledgement and reviewed the agenda.

Public comment:

Steve Zemke urged the UFC to review SDCI's Omnibus legislation, particularly in relation to the tree protection area definitions. There is a conflict in the ordinance between Chapter 25.11.060 and 25.11.070, on whether or not the tree protection area can be modified in order to protect trees.

Chair, Committees, and Coordinator report:

Patti discussed the bike rack process initiated at the last UFC meeting. In that meeting, two bike rack items were noted, related to the SDCI updates briefing: revisiting the tree protection area definitions and uses in order to better understand how they work and how they play into tree protection or tree removals, and following up on the suggestions Commissioners have for the tree tracking map that SDCI has developed, and more fully understanding how the map works. OSE staff will follow up with SDCI to bring information on these topics back to the UFC, hopefully at the August meeting.

Regarding recruitment, Patti noted there has been a Mayor's Office staff person assigned as the new point of contact for Boards and Commissions, and OSE is now taking steps to convene the recruitment team to get the process going.

Adoption of June 12 meeting notes

Action: a motion to adopt the June 12 meeting notes as written was made, seconded and approved.

Trees for Seattle tree nursery research and planning – Jessica Farmer, SPU

Patti introduced this topic, noting that there is funding allocated in this year's city budget to start developing plans and looking into what it will take to start a nursery that can supply trees for the Trees for Neighborhoods program. This program has been looked to in the past to potentially increase the number of trees that the team works with residents to get planted, as a way of increasing tree canopy in the city. The number that's currently planted through that program is 1,000 trees annually. One of the challenges in expanding beyond that has been the difficulty of sourcing that many trees. This funding is being used by the Trees for Neighborhoods program to explore what will take to develop a nursery to provide trees for the program.

Jessica provided background on the Trees for Neighborhoods (T4N) program. The program has helped to plant 14,400 trees since it began. There is an equity focus in the program; they prioritize high heat and low canopy areas of the city. Along with the trees, recipients receive mulch, water bags, and education/training.

Jessica described what a tree holding nursery is and the benefits of them. She described the challenges that the T4N program faces in sourcing trees each year. The work the program is currently doing is a feasibility study and includes: assessing tree supply needs, conducting research on case studies, determining site criteria, identifying career pathways, outlining operational policies, and identifying potential funding to develop a nursery. Opportunities provided by a holding nursery include stabilizing tree supply, diversifying tree species, supporting green jobs programs, and increasing the program's equity focus.

Jessica described the status of the work, noting that they understand the tree supply needs, have conducted site visits/info gathering, and identified site criteria, and are continuing to work on exploring potential locations, identifying job training partnerships and operational policies, and gathering community feedback.

Questions and comments from Commissioners included:

- What are the funding plans for a nursery in the future?
- Regarding location, is there a plan to acquire the land? Is there expected to be one location, or multiple?
- Do factors of equity play into the sourcing of trees from other nurseries?
- Where is the team getting info on how trees will perform under future climate conditions, and how will that play into deciding what species to focus on?

- How does the program incorporate extra maintenance considerations as high heat neighborhoods are prioritized, since those trees are going into a harsher environment?
- Is the team considering future scalability, given staffing and capacity challenges nurseries are facing?
- How is survivability tracked? Is there a map publicly available to see where trees have been planted?
- Does the team have plans to partner with any community groups?
- Is there a similar program for commercial property owners?

Presentation debrief and chat comments/public comment

Commissioner comments included:

- The UFC should invite the team back later in the year to update on this work.
- The UFC is interested in how data is collected and used and whether the trees planted are mapped. Is data collected on where applications are coming from – where people are and what tree species they are requesting?

Chat comments:

- How does this relate to Parks and SDOT tree planting programs and nursery efforts?
- What about under the transmission lines on the Chief Seattle Trail, between Columbia Dr S and Beacon Ave S. SCL property?
- Are Trees for Seattle street tree plantings separate or counted in SDOT tree planting numbers?

Public comments:

Michael Oxman noted that he received an email from Councilmember Rivera that stated "the city has a goal of planting 1300 trees across Seattle in 2024, and you can help." He stated that the city needs 80,000 trees and he worries that Councilmembers may not act if they don't understand the canopy needs and goals. He encouraged the UFC to advise Councilmembers about the consequences of not allowing space for enough trees to be planted.

Steve Zemke noted there are many city departments that have arborists and tree planting efforts, and the City shouldn't consider setting up separate nurseries for them.

Washington Department of Transportation bark beetle pine infestation – Joe Sutton-Holcomb, WSDOT

Joe noted his role within WSDOT, introduced his team, and provided an overview of the project. There has been a lot of pine mortality along the I-5 corridor. Since the infestation was noted, there have been project phases and levels of assessment conducted. They assessed the corridor for infestations, then assessed the infestations that were identified – determined species they're dealing with, determined what treatment approach should be. Their response is aimed at containing the infestation as best as they can by removing infested trees. They presented their findings to other WSDOT teams and leadership, and developed a contract for removal that is being executed this spring and summer. The first phase is almost done; there will be additional removals in the fall after bird/nesting window closes. This is not a great time for removal due to the risk to healthy trees, but they need to balance the various needs.

They did additional field work last month, and seven more infested trees were detected and added to the list. They anticipate additional removals will be needed. Beetles don't pay attention to property lines; there are trees on private property, and they are working with SDOT on trees in their ROW. Over 130 trees have been lost so far; many between 6 and 15" and some in the 20-25" range, so this is not an insignificant loss of canopy. They are working on finalizing their replacement plan. There is a suite of native species and introduced species that do well and provide good services that they will select from. The plan will include a variety of species and genera, since they are planning for future pests, climate issues and conditions. It is important to establish lines of communication between agencies and groups and coordinate an informed response, since this area will be dealing with this problem for a while.

Joe described the removal protocol. DNR experts are involved in identification and development of the response plan. Trees are prioritized for removal based on characteristics: green (infested but still alive) and

red (recently dead) trees are prioritized. Gray trees (dead for 1-2 years) are priority 2. Bark beetles don't cause a lot of decay; don't structurally damage the tree. Joe described the challenges of the project, as well as the project successes and opportunities.

Questions and comments from Commissioners included:

- Can you elaborate on what types of species are selected for restoration and how they are expected to be more resilient and diverse in adapting to new climate conditions?
- What is the timeline for finalizing the replacement tree list and for conducting the planting? Late this year, early next year for planting for first phase; then additional planting in future planting seasons.
- Will it be a 1:1 replacement? Prioritizing these areas to avoid weeds filling in. Replacement requirements differ based on type of project (hazards, project removals). Focusing on replacing the canopy.
- Is there a plan for adding understory? Looking at doing pollinator seed mixes, but safety is a concern, need to allow for visibility between vegetation.
- How does the project deal with cuttings; can snags be left? Run everything through a chipper or take somewhere to make sure there's no survival of the beetles. There are other options for treating the wood that are available; choose the most feasible best practice.

Presentation debrief and chat comments/public comment

Commissioner comments:

- The different policies of different landowners across right of way area have an impact on canopy.
- The UFC is interested in learning more about the tree replacement plan when that is finalized.

Potential next steps

- Schedule another session later in the year on this topic:
 - o Invite WSDOT team when they have confirmed replanting plan
 - o City UF staff/SCIP briefing on City work

Chat comments:

- Does WASHDOT need permits for removing trees?
- It's my understanding that ips can survive in removed trees and even if the tree is put through a chipper. What is your protocol for the removal of the infested wood/wood chips? In an ideal world and a realistic world, how should we handle the removal of the invested wood?
- What about the role of foliar fungus in pines such as Dothistroma needle blight? It's been diagnosed in homeowner mature pines

Public comments:

Michael Oxman noted interest in the relationship between WSDOT and the City, in permits and also in capital projects.

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>

Public comment:

Steve Zemke thanked Hao for his service on the UFC, noting that he has been very helpful and informative. He noted the whole Commission deserves appreciation for all of the work they do; it is appreciated in the city.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 PM.

Meeting chat:

from Nathan Collins to everyone: 3:00 PM
Sorry I am having some audio problems

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:32 PM

How does this relate to Parks and SDOT tree planting programs and nursery efforts?

from Lia Hall to everyone: 3:43 PM

Is survivability tracked? Or is there a publicly available map available where trees have been distributed?

from Mark Malone to everyone: 3:43 PM

What about under the transmission lines on the Cheif Seattle Trail, between Columbia Dr S and Beacon Ave S. SCL property?

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:50 PM

Are Trees for Seattle street tree planting separtate or counted in SDOT tree planting numbers?

from Michael Oxman to everyone: 3:54 PM

Maritza Rivera sent this out in her city council email:

"The city has a goal of planting 1300 trees across Seattle in 2024, and you can help."

She was discussing the SPU Trees For Neighborhoods giveaway. She must not realize there are other departments involved in planting trees.

She needs a briefing.

from Hao Liang to everyone: 4:02 PM

The second half of the meeting will start at 4:06 pm

from Hao Liang to everyone: 4:02 PM

Thank you again Jessica and Jana for the great work!

from Hailey Mak Mackay to everyone: 4:17 PM

I can add info on the replacement strategy during QA if folks want to know more.

from Hao Liang to everyone: 4:18 PM

Thank you Hailey.

from Michael Oxman to everyone: 4:28 PM

Does WASHDOT need permits for removing trees?

from Hailey Mak Mackay to everyone: 4:31 PM

It depends on the situation.

from Logan Woodyard to everyone: 4:32 PM

From Logan- Thanks Joseph! Can you elaborate on what types of species are selected for restoration and how they are expected to be more resilient and diverse in adapting to new climate conditions?

from Perdue, Joe to everyone: 4:36 PM

It's my understanding that ips can survive in removed trees and even if the tree is put through a chipper.

What is your protocol for the removal of the infested wood/wood chips? In an ideal world and a realistic world, how should we handle the removal of the invested wood?

from Hailey Mak Mackay to everyone: 4:46 PM

I have to sign off, thanks for the great discussion everyone.

from Hao Liang to everyone: 4:46 PM

Thank you!

from Joseph Sutton-Holcomb to everyone: 4:51 PM

<https://wsdotblog.blogspot.com/2024/05/maintenance-arborists-tackle-bark-beetle.html>

from Tina Cohen to everyone: 4:52 PM

What about the role of foliar fungus in pines such as Dothistroma needle blight? It's been diagnosed in homeowner mature pines

from Lia Hall UFC13 to everyone: 4:55 PM

Thank you for this presentation!

rom Tina Cohen to everyone: 4:52 PM

What about the role of foliar fungus in pines such as Dothistroma needle blight? It's been diagnosed in homeowner mature pines

from Lia Hall UFC13 to everyone: 4:55 PM

Thank you for this presentation!

from Kathy to everyone: 5:00 PM

Thank you!

Public input (additional comments received):