

## SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

John Floberg, Chair • John Small, Vice-Chair  
Gordon Bradley • Tom Early • Leif Fixen • Matt Mega • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Peg Staeheli

*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*

**May 22, 2013**

### Meeting Notes

Seattle Municipal Tower Room 2750  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Seattle  
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

#### Attending

##### Commissioners

John Floberg (JF) - chair  
John Small (JS) – vice-chair  
Gordon Bradley (GB)  
Tom Early (TE)  
Leif Fixen (LF)  
Matt Mega (MM)  
Jeff Reibman (JR)  
Erik Rundell (ER)  
Peg Staeheli (PS)

##### Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader (SPdB) - OSE

##### Guest:

Gail Savina (GS) – City Fruit

##### Public

Steve Zemke

#### Absent- Excused

**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

JF – we have quorum so let's get started

#### Chair report

JF – Portland's Audubon director is chair of their Urban Forestry Commission. She'd be up for maybe having a phone call. WE need to put together a set of questions. Would another Commissioner like to join me to put together questions for the call and maybe include it in the June 12 meeting?

Matt will work with John.

Now that we are dealing with different issues, is this a good time to start planning a field trip, maybe to the industrial area or maybe take a look at one of the small lot developments. Any comments or ideas?

ER – who would coordinate the trip?

SPdB – I could help organize

Pruning for views issues could also be something. Maybe have Mark Mead to go out with us.

MM – maybe go look at some Green Factor developments

LF – in industrial areas the issue is trucks hitting trees?

JF – plantable space is an issue too.

JS – would be good to see the difference of impacts to trees based on traffic patterns, in industrial areas 18 wheelers are going 40 mph, very different to residential streets.

Maybe August meeting – do a visit to a small development with Janet Oslund.

GB – look at the work plan and see what issues are interesting: pruning, green factor, institutions, look at all the things that would be informed by a trip.

PUT TOGETHER LIST OF DIFFERENT ISSUES

JF – how does everyone feel about cancelling the July 3 meeting?

It was agreed that we would cancel the July 3 meeting.

### **City Fruit briefing**

Gail Sabina – art project in Madison Mark putting foot socks on fruit trees to protect apples – blushing orchards

Founded 5 years ago. Small non-profit organization. Organized around the idea of urban fruit trees.

Mission: City Fruit promotes the cultivation of urban fruit in order to nourish people, build community and protect the climate.

Are currently partnering with different departments in the City. Parks, DON, OSE, Housing. Fruit trees play a special role (they are part of the UF and we recognize that their benefits are fewer than larger trees) they become an entry point for people to interact with trees. Orchards in Seattle are a remnant of the past and connects people to Seattle's past.

Seattle made it in the NY Times – Beacon food forest and urban orchard stewards were featured in the New York Times. People feel strongly about fruit trees and are highly motivated to plant them and take care of them. If the fruit is allowed to fall on the ground it becomes a nuisance. Last year we harvested over 30,000 lbs of fruit that was donated to food centers.

Working on fruit trees on public property. Working with Parks department restoring old orchards that have been neglected. Received grant from State Department to train urban orchard stewards. Similar to

GSP. Have 10 parks with stewards. Have 65 stewards. Jose Rizal used to be all Blackberry. Now there are 26 trees producing fruit. They help build community. Now have SDOT property, WSDOT property along I-90, Seattle Housing Authority put in another orchard. Most fruit trees are on people's yards. Do trainings and classes. Also working with the P-Patch with a pilot program. The public education piece is huge. This is just a taste of what we are doing.

We are also promoting planting appropriate size and type of fruit trees. Last year did 100 fruit trees in the Rainier Valley. Working to get them planted properly.

Fourth area is food harvesting (there is another group, solid ground, doing this too). Average tree gives 100 lbs. This is the tip of the iceberg. Hire harvesters because they are cheaper than volunteers and are providing jobs. Older, non-English speakers are assistant harvesters.

Fifth area is mapping and inventorying of fruit trees. Have an on-line map. Had grant to do GIS system to continue developing the map. Exploring the idea of putting plaques on trees that are notable. Do also a scanable to get info via a mobile app.

Don't have the money to do more work than last year. There is a great demand. At least 10 more parks that have orchards that need stewards. There are more p-patches with fruit trees. Would like to grow the harvest program by one neighborhood a year. Would like to do more education.

This year the operating budget is \$60K. have some grant money to do add-ons (signage in parks) to do the basic is \$60K. We are a non-profit, for the first two-years nobody got paid. Now have two part time people that get small salaries. This is not a sustainable situation. Raising the money takes time.

Next year we'll need \$146K. We can raise \$44K through fund-raising at grassroots level. But we need help with the \$100K. That's our predicament.

We've been working in partnership with the City of Seattle. Parks – train stewards and restore orchards, DON – training p-patch, Food banks – Human Service Departments provides money for them to buy food (we are donating the fruit). Liaison between SDOT and fruit trees in their property. The City likes this programs, City Fruit has generated all the funds but it's no longer a sustainable situation. We want these partnerships to continue. Would like to ask the UFC to use its influence, to create a formal relationship with the City and figure out how to get more sustainable funding for the programs not to go away.

TE – Have you had conversations with Seattle Public Schools.

Gail – tried to work with the administration

JR – go with separate principals.

TE – by selling the local fruit to the schools could get revenue.

Gail – fruit is harvested when school is out.

Peg- Parks' programs during the summer. Selling the fruit to day cares.

Gail – I'm working with them right now.

Erik – where are the grants coming from?

Gail – Puget Sound Energy, DON, Dept of Natural Resources, a variety of organizations interested in the environmental and food aspect. Are exploring selling in different locations and a viable business model. Maybe someone that wants to make jam.

Peg – what's the dollar number you are looking for?

Gail – Need \$100K. Would give two ¾ staff and a part time to coordinate stewards and part time to do harvesting.

JF – how about going to Parks and asking them to pay for the services. There are different ways of supporting departments. Like the idea of having a distributor and an initiative associated with a grant. Grants want to seed something. You need to achieve sustainability.

JR – Forterra and the GSP has this model. Forterra got things going and are moving to a sustainable place.

JF – approach Forterra to see if they are interested in supporting.

JR – working with different departments helps you lobby with the support of champions in different departments.

Peg – need to look into the mission of the organization you are attached to.

JF – what's the vision. Why grow to \$140K and not \$300K.

Peg – a different angle could be to partner with the hospitals, maybe UW Public Health.

LF – is this a program to support trees or support food.

PS – money comes from different sources.

JS – it's all about yield.

GB – how many private trees do you harvest

Gail – around 300. We don't charge but would like to charge.

Peg – work on the value of the trees and go after that source of money (environmental value); community value (DON, Parks). It's a pie, and go after several funding sources. Maybe six pieces of funding. Then figure out what City departments and what non-City funding sources might be. Invasives removal, health impacts of preventing vermin. Think big.

SM – Jana's program has limit in being scaled up. Maybe partner up with them.

GB – Do you have a business plan? There are organizations that

It would be most efficient to partner up with nurseries. Now working with two nurseries.

## **Recommendation on Small Lot Development in SF zones - continues**

Tree points:

JR – This is compatible and it makes sense if this development pattern moves forward then the point system would work. 2000 sqft would be the smallest lot allowed. Tree point system kicks in at 2,000 sqft.

Required to provide one credit (1 small tree), 2 credits (small/med), 3 credits (med/large) and 4 (large trees). 2 credit for every 200 sqft of lot area after 2,000. Would still get a street tree requirement. The developer would pay for that.

Peg – by the time you have a driveway and setbacks you might not be able to fit a street tree.

JR – a couple of factors that could make it possible.

Peg – if they have an alley they would get a tree. If they have a garage with driveway. There should be a fee in lieu. We need to track this. The point system doesn't apply to street trees.

JF – make recommendation that street trees be required and fee in lieu applied if can't fit a street tree. As soon as the lot gets to a certain size it would be required to have one small tree.

Peg – why do we give a parcel an out. Why aren't all parcels required to plant a tree. I would not give any parcel an out in residential areas.

JR – recommendation on the point system.

JS – it's an inconsistency between the two systems.

JR – easier to adjust the tree point proposal. Move everything down 200 sqft. 2,000 sqft tree needs one tree (one point). There has to be setbacks and they should have room to plant a tree.

LF – could we have just a standard rule for all lots all development?

JR – when you subdivide, all lots would have tree requirements.

JR – it doesn't make sense. Single Family development is different because it has setbacks. When you get into multi-family you shift the balance of benefit towards density. It's more flexible. They already have a system for large projects (Green Factor). As an architect I think it's working pretty well.

LF – the issue I'm trying to avoid is having different values for trees in different areas of the city.

PG – Observe development patterns over a few years to see if it's working.

JR – the Green Factor is designed to be more flexible than what I think we need to be in SF.

PS- would rather leave the SF pretty simple. Green Factor needs professional help.

JR – Change to the tree point system. I'll write the draft recommendation.

JS – use 1,000 sqft as the number to deduct from rather than 2,000. If we go to zero then trees might not survive.

### **Position paper on pruning for private views – initial conversation**

Tom and Leif presented the first draft.

LF – the City is only paying to maintain view corridors.

JF – should this be a letter? Saying that the precedent that the City has guaranteed views.

TE – presented the position paper. Mark spends a lot of time dealing with maintaining trees for private views. This is trying to balance the existing policy that allows for certain view pruning approaches. Trying to put a policy on paper for the City. We are not talking about new views.

TE – a lot of pruning for views will continue and then decrease. WE have shown this draft to Mark. The nice thing is that it allows for a policy to change overtime.

JF – Could you guys bring another draft?

### **Analysis of Departmental budgets – initial conversation**

Erik presented the spreadsheet showing departmental budgets for urban forestry.

JF – would be a good idea to ask departments what their ideal budget would be to do the work. What is the impact of not achieving the 7-8 year cycle of pruning? Not asking them to do a huge analysis, but if we get the information we can help them help themselves.

JS- if the tree is being pruned for another purpose than promoting its health. SDOT is an example, are they pruning the tree so the bus doesn't hit it or are they pruning the tree because due to buses the tree doesn't grow as well. Pruning for line clearance is a more black and white thing.

JF – Any other thoughts?

ER – we'll see how easy it is for the departments to do a breakout of the information.

### **Public Comment**

SZ – a couple of you were at the Urban Forestry Symposium. I was surprised at what Mark Mead had to say about tree topping for views. There are view corridors that they maintain. He basically said that Parks policy is to do tree toping for views.

SPdB – Mark did not say topping, he said copassing and crown reduction.

PS – I wasn't there but someone from my office was there. This seems tied to the SCL pruning. When trees have been topped, they should come out and a feasible tree be planted. I understand that trees that have been topped seem to be guaranteed a view.

### **Next month's agenda items**

#### **Adjourn**

#### **Community input**