

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Tom Early, Chair • Steve Zemke, Vice-Chair
Weston Brinkley • Leif Fixen • Reid Haefer • Craig Johnson
Joanna Nelson de Flores • Sarah Rehder • 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

July 12, 2017

Meeting Notes

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

Attending

Commissioners

Tom Early – chair
Steve Zemke – vice-chair
Weston Brinkley
Craig Johnson
Joanna Nelson de Flores
Sarah Rehder

Staff

Jana Dilley – Trees for Seattle
Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE

Guests

Jessica Farmer – UW Botanic Gardens

Public

None

Absent- Excused

Leif Fixen
Reid Haefer
Andrew Zellers

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 and read the agenda.

Public comment

None

Urban Forestry Symposium

Jessica Farmer from the UW Botanic Gardens briefed the Commission on the Urban Forestry Symposium.

The Symposium has been in place since 2009 and is co-hosted by PlantAmnesty and UW Botanic Gardens. The late Cass Turnbull was the founder of this event which is held annually in May at the Center for Urban Horticulture. Each year there is a different topic that brings together a wide variety of participants: volunteers, advocates, municipal staff, arborists, tree service providers, etc. It's an opportunity for urban forestry professionals to learn new skills, bring creative ideas to the table, and network. The planning committee is formed from folks from the different sectors.

Benefits to participants include:

- Networking opportunities
- Professional development

- Cross-sector collaboration
- Education for volunteers and advocates

The event provides opportunities for organizations to host table displays. Organizations that have participated in the past include:

- PlantAmnesty
- TreePAC
- Seattle Audubon
- City Fruit
- Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition
- Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment
- DIRTCorps
- Seattle Green Spaces Coalition
- Flora & Fauna Books

In the first couple of years the symposium was sponsored by the WA State of Natural Resources, Pacific NW charter of the International Society of Arboriculture, and the Northwest Horticultural Society. They provided support on the early years.

More recent sponsors include Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment, West Seattle Garden Tour, Seattle Parks, and Arborist support (Bartlett tree experts, Seattle Tree Preservation, Davey, Arborwell, Thundering Oak, Renaissance Tree Care, and Gilles Tree Consulting).

Past years topics:

1. Managing urban forests in the heart of the City
2. Saving trees
3. Trees and urban infrastructure
4. Trees and volunteers
5. Trees and viewers
6. Climate change and the urban forest
7. For what it's worth: valuing the urban forest
8. Sustaining the urban forest during densification
9. Equity and the urban forest

The event is making sure to incorporate more diverse participants both to the event and the planning committee.

UFC question/comment: do you have an idea on the topic next year?

Answer: things are pretty preliminary at the moment but looking at potentially looking at partnerships between government and non-profits.

UFC question/comment: it could also include resident involvement in UF efforts.

UFC question/comment: do you keep track of where the attendees come from? Are they non-profit, government, etc.?

Answer: We don't have consistent data. It would be good to get a better sense of the audience.

UFC question/comment: another idea would be trees and risk could be a very relevant topic. Municipalities are working with their attorneys' office to look at risk.

Answer: We do partner with the Pacific NW chapter of ISA to get professional certifications. A broader conversation about that would be helpful.

UFC question/comment: how are you planning to expand your reach to more diverse participants?

Answer: a lot of the advertising for the event is word of mouth so, having a more diverse planning committee helped. We asked our speakers to share with their networks and we also got access to a listserv for people of color in the environmental field.

2017 Arbor Day Celebration

Jana Dille, Trees for Seattle program manager, updated the UFC on this year's Arbor Day celebration planning.

The event is scheduled for October 14 at Sam Smith Park in the Mount Baker neighborhood. Right next to the Jimmy Hendrix Park and the African American Museum.

MLK Way and 28th Ave S just north of Massachusetts. They have lost several trees in the past years (especially last summer due to lack of irrigation). They are planning on planting conifers including some of the redwood clones. 20 trees total. Working with Plant for the Planet to help plant the trees. Some of Philip Stielstra clones will also be planted in SPU's watershed and elsewhere on SPU property in the city.

Jana shared pictures of the area where the event will take place. They are looking at street trees as well.

Some of the partners that are confirmed to date include:

Mount Baker HUB (business association)

Plant for the planet

Seattle Audubon

Forterra

King County Million Trees campaign

There will be a guided tree walk.

Park(ING) day will be September 16 and are working on holding it near the park this year. It presents a good opportunity for outreach and Arbor Day celebration promotion.

Jana invited the UFC to getting involved and attend the event.

UFC question/comment: are there other Arbor Day celebrations throughout the city?

Answer: that model is more for Green Seattle Day where they have a hub location and work parties in other parks throughout the city. An Arbor Day celebration is a requirement for the City's TreeCity USA denomination.

UFC question/comment: what efforts have been made to get schools involved.?

Answer: maybe a way to get them to come would be to have a memorial tree planted in the school's name.

UFC question/comment: how many people are you expecting to get? How much capacity do you have?

Answer: there is enough space to accommodate a couple hundred people and there is enough volunteer work.

UFC question/comment: do you get sponsors? Maybe a way to support tree planting by giving people the ability to put up a plaque?

Answer: the event is a pretty low cost. Mostly staff time. Parks has pretty strict restrictions around plaques.

UFC question/comment: food sponsors would be a good way to guarantee attendance.

Answer: We are also inviting City Fruit

MHA EIS recommendation

The Commission reviewed and discussed a couple of items related to the MHA EIS recommendation. Commissioners agreed that mentioning the 2035 Comp Plan would make sense as well as including specific questions for SDCI to respond to.

Questions could include:

- What is the projected tree loss on the no-action alternative?
- What methodology is used to estimate tree loss in alternatives 1, 2 and 3
- How do you enforce a policy that it's not actionable?
- How is a mitigation effort tied to an incomplete future work effort such as the UFSP update?
- How are you planning on having developers mitigate for tree loss?
- What are you comparing tree loss to?
- How is the UFSP update policy will be actionable and enforceable?

Tom will send a revised version to Sandra to circulate for adoption at the beginning of the August 2 meeting.

Work Plan items discussion

- **Policy principles of a tree code update**
- **2016 canopy cover assessment review. How should our current data inform future urban forest policy decision?**

Move to next meeting

Public comment

None

New Business

Next week there will be a tour of Yesler Terrace.

Adjourn

Public input:

From: Mike.Barrett Susan.Ward [mailto:barrettmw@msn.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 11, 2017 6:23 PM

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

Subject: Re: New documents posted on the Urban Forestry Commission website

Dear UFC and Ms Pinto de Bader,

Whether the response to the DEIS is this or an even stronger one, I do urge the commission to hold the DEIS accountable for more realistically reporting the probable effect on tree canopy, and to offer recommendations for mitigation. The draft EIS gives little weight to environmental and aesthetic impacts, particularly to the loss of trees which would be inevitable under each alternative- even 1- if greater protections are not mandated.

Thank you,
Susan Ward