

**SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Weston Brinkley, Chair • Joanna Nelson de Flores, Vice-Chair  
Tom Early • Megan Herzog • Craig Johnson  
Sarah Rehder • Sandra Whiting • Andrew Zellers • Steve Zemke

*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 2, 2018**

**Meeting Notes**

Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 2750 (27<sup>th</sup> floor)  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Seattle

**Attending**

Commissioners

Weston Brinkley – chair  
Megan Herzog  
Craig Johnson  
Sarah Rehder  
Sandra Whiting  
Steve Zemke

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE

Guests

CM Sally Bagshaw  
Daniel Strauss (CM Bagshaw’s office)  
John Evans & Fred Wilhelm – Sound Transit  
(accompanied by the ST team working on the Lynwood portion of Light Rail)

**Absent- Excused**

Tom Early  
Joanna Nelson de Flores – vice-chair  
Andrew Zellers

Public

Carolyn Rodenberg  
Lynn Fitz-Hugh

**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.

**Public comment**

Carolyn Rodenberg – She is interested in protecting trees which provide us with clean air (specially conifers). A lot of the trees you see from this room’s window are deciduous. We need to protect trees and plant more to provide us with clean air. Even 6” diameter trees are beneficial. We need to protect as many trees as possible.

**Adoption of April 4 and April 11 meeting notes**

The Commission reviewed the April meeting notes.

**ACTION: A motion to approve the April 4 meeting notes as written was made, seconded, and approved.**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the April 11 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

**Sound Transit presentation - John Evans and Fred Wilhelm**

Fred gave an overview of Sound Transit's (ST) Lynwood Link Extension. The project is 8.5 miles in length (around half elevated and half at grade). Project ridership is expected to be 74,000 riders each weekday in 2035. Service is expected to start in 2024. Fred showed a map with the full Sound Transit system.

John Evans continued the presentation. ST is an environmentally-focused organization with a net reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by more than 793,000 metric tons annually. They are taking down trees, but they are also contributing to the environment by helping reduce the region's transportation footprint.

They have to clear areas where they are building light rail, but they also do restoration as part of their environmental mitigation commitment. ST works closely with stakeholders throughout the region such as the cities of Seattle, Shoreline, Montlake Terrace, Lynwood, and WSDOT.

They did a tree inventory and assessment. Approximately 8,000 trees over 4" in diameter were surveyed. The information collected included: location, height, spread, root zone, diameter, species, health. The project is still in design process, so they don't know yet the actual number of trees to be impacted. They will be planting at least two trees for each tree removed. They are looking at trees outside the guideway area because they are going to monitor them to manage hazardous trees and assess risk of service disruption. As part of hazard assessment, they will identify potential hazard trees, do a risk assessment in terms of targets, likelihood and severity, and develop potential mitigation strategies.

As part of the project, trees are removed in areas where track, guideway, or other transit infrastructure will be located. Trees are also removed for safety to reduce potentially hazardous trees from falling on the tracks. Trees will be continually assessed and monitored for risk to operations.

Tree replacement plan:

ST has a tree replacement plan that includes planting trees within the corridor at areas outside the immediate construction area. Local agencies worked closely with ST to identify short-statured tree species that could be planted under elevated guideways, where feasible, for safety and long-term maintenance. Using the tree replacement plan, trees are removed and replaced as work areas are cleared for construction. The ratio of replaced to removed trees depends on several factors: Number and species of trees removed; Maturity; Federal environmental regulations; and State/local requirements.

Additional mitigation that ST is currently negotiating with WSDOT:

- Extend the standard 3-year plant establishment period to add 10 years (ST will pay the State to maintain plantings for 12 years)
- Larger, 2.5-gallon plantings.

This approach will ensure the replacement plantings are successful over the long-term.

The highest point of the guideway will be upwards of 70 ft. which would accommodate larger trees to be planted in that area.

Invasive species (e.g. blackberry and ivy) will be removed and replaced with trees to improve corridor habitat. Native, adaptive plant and tree species are among those considered for replacement trees.

Repurposed trees:

- In compliance with project contractual restrictions, merchantable timber rules, regulations, and other concerns, removed trees are generally repurposed by the contractor.
- On the Lynwood Link project, trees will be sold for timber and mulch and not end up in landfills.

NOTE: The UFC asked questions throughout the presentation. To hear the details of the conversation please go to the digital recording at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

**Detailed Tree Regulations letters, response to CM Johnson’s framework – initial conversation**

The Commission began discussing CM Johnson’s proposal. Some of the issues discussed included: having a data-source (which a tree-removal permit system would provide) would be very helpful. In terms of replacement, the UFC would propose a method without providing specific numbers. On the fee-in-lieu it’s important to include the actual cost of replacing those trees and maintaining new trees. The equity component to make sure all neighborhoods are able to keep trees.

Steve and Weston will work on a draft letter to discuss next week.

**CM Sally Bagshaw visit**

Daniel Strauss joined CM Sally Bagshaw on her visit with the UFC. CM Bagshaw thanked the UFC for the work they are doing. She is aware that the UFC is working on tree protection regulations. She would like to know how she can help.

Weston asked CM Bagshaw how the UFC can support Council on creating tree protection legislation that would help the City’s goals and actually have a chance at passing.

NOTE: The conversation with CM Bagshaw was very rich. To hear the details of the conversation please go to the digital recording at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

**Public comment**

Lynn Fitz-Hugh: She is One Sustainable Climate’s director. Her organization is part of a coalition to try to get a stronger tree ordinance. She is thrilled with CM Johnson’s proposal of no net-loss but their focus is climate change and they want to focus on trees’ role as carbon sinks. They would like to see trees 6” or larger protected (vs. 12” currently proposed).

18% of trees are 12”

45% of trees are 6”

They support a certification program for tree service providers.

**New Business**

None

**Adjourn**

**Public input**

None