

Urban Forestry Commission
March 23, 2017
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Nora Palmatier, Chair
Per Midboe
Ed Hilz
Elisha Sigmon Rubin
Scott Brinitzer
Paul Campanella
Kit Norland
Steve Campbell
David Howell, PRC

State and County Staff

Brian Keightley, DPR Liaison
Adam Lipera, DPR
Jim Meikle, APS
Steven Bernheisel, APS
Jim McGlone, VDOF
Steve Strickel, APS

Consultants

Pete Price, Waterstreet Studio

Guests

John Kerry
Evelio Rubiella
Brian Keane
Doug Kirshner
Amanda Stiles
Mary Glass

Public Comment

Mary Glass made comments regarding Donaldson Run Tributary B concerns about tree loss and expressed interest in participating in future briefings and discussions UFC may be involved with regarding Trib B. Ms. Glass left behind research articles entitled *Evaluating River Restoration*, *Bulldozing a creek in order to save it*, and *Tree loss of one block in Arlington*.

New Elementary School at the Jefferson Site

Steve Strickel of APS gave a brief overview of the project, while Pete Price with Waterstreet Studio gave a presentation on site constraints, site features, and proposed landscaping. 249 new trees, 59 more than required. APS requests a letter of support

The follow items where discussed:

- Concerns about trees and kids play area and other foot traffic
- Turning the current paved parking area at Old South Glebe and 2nd St. South into a green space with trees
- Coordination with homeowners along First Street impacted by tree loss as a result of bus loop.

Action Item: Nora Palmatier to draft a support letter that addresses concerns about tree watering, species selection, the parking lot conversion, and coordination with the homeowners along First Street.

Phased Landscape Recovery for Wakefield High School

Scott Brinitzer, as a consultant for APS, presented his phased recovery plan for the landscape at Wakefield High School. The plan was divided into three sectors in need of different levels of rehabilitation. The approach provides the most impact for the least cost, using existing plants as much as possible and natives where appropriate.

APS asks for general support through outreach to avoid questions related to community perception of why we are rehabilitating a very recent landscape installation.

No Action taken at this time.

FY2018 County Manager's Proposed Budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation

Brian Keightley gave DPR's standard budget proposal presentation, but geared towards landscape, forestry, and natural resources units of the Parks and Natural Resources division.

The only proposed budget reductions that could affect PNR are:

Mowing and Landscaping Contractual Costs (\$175,000)

Description of Current Service: The County currently mows each year from April 1 through November. The current landscaping contract services priority 3 and 4 level landscaping beds throughout the County (76,000 sf).

Impact of Reduction: By reducing the mowing contract by \$50,000, mowing would start two weeks later and end two weeks earlier in the mowing cycle each year. A reduction of \$125,000 on the landscaping contract would result in no monthly contractor visits for priority 3 and 4 level landscaping beds and would require DPR staff time.

Trail Snow Removal (\$50,700, 0.25 Temp FTE)

Description of Current Service: In FY 2015, DPR assumed responsibility for snow clearing on the County's major commuter trails. This extends to almost 10 miles of high-volume, multi-use trails, giving them the same snow removal priority and response time as primary arteries.

Impact of Reduction: By eliminating the trail snow clearing budget, the major multi-use commuter trails will not be cleared of snow during major snow events at the top priority level. Snow removal will only begin after parking lots and other DPR assigned street routes are cleared.

No action taken at this time.

Minutes

February minutes were approved unanimously.

Staff Reports

Brian Keightley:

- Tree crew is continuing to see an uptick in emergency pruning and removals due to recent high winds and snow event. Six park trees, four street trees have come down in the past month. Approximately 12 trees required emergency pruning as a result of recent conditions.
- Brian Keightley, PSA managers and staff met with Tree Stewards to relaunch volunteer efforts. PNR staff will now hold quarterly meetings to plan out how to best use Tree Stewards resources and receive feedback from the organization. First meeting went well.
- A contract has been signed for treating 24 trees for emerald ash borer and 1 tree for Dutch elm disease on park properties. Staff will be coordinating efforts for treatments with contractor in the coming months.
- Native plant propagation efforts are going to be started with ARMN and Tree Steward volunteers at the greenhouse; this was delayed due to snow and started on 3/23/17.
- In regards to Fort Barnard tree clearing – DPR is referring all questions back to Kevin Connolly at DES. My understanding is that DES is presenting a draft landscape plan to Douglas Park Civic Association at a public meeting on 3/16. I have not heard any feedback.
- While looking into tree planting locations in Lacey Woods Park, Natural Resources staff found a series of elaborate mountain bike ramps and shelters built, along with an abundance of mountain bike and social trails. A large concentration of red-backed salamanders are located in the park and use the dead wood as habitat. Natural Resources staff would like to close sections of trail off, replant understory species, and launch an education campaign to the public.
- PNR's tree planting specialist Lois Barb presented on forest health to the Organization of Women Voters.
- Patrick Wegeng was acknowledged at the April 21st recessed board meeting for his recent efforts to plant a commemorative tree for a terminally ill resident.
- Arbor Day Ceremony - 10 AM on April 27th at Nottingham ES.

Park Projects

Park Project responsibilities have been shifted back to Vincent Verweij

Large or Significant Tree Removals

Reports on or large or significant trees has been reassigned to Adam Lipera

Adam Lipera:

Operations

- Continuing to review 311's, Web Submissions, and customer calls pertaining to County trees. Seeing a steady amount of submissions from the public.
- Received assistance from Dominion Virginia Power on several trees in conflict with utilities and continuing to maintain a good working relationship with Dominion's Alexandria/Arlington District Forester.

Site Plans and Permitting

- Taking over preconstruction meetings and certificate of occupancy final inspections for single family home projects – inspected approximately 10 this week.
- Starting to see an increase in amount scheduled.

Tree Removals

- APS removed several dead and dying trees at Glebe ES per my recommendation. Met with several concerned homeowners prior to the removals to explain why the removals were necessary.
- Urban Forestry removed several dead and hazardous trees from Parkhurst Park at the request of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Seeing a decent number of homeowner submissions and consequently removals of street trees due to sidewalk/apron damage.

Projects

- Coordinating and scouting projects for the Tree Stewards.
- Finalizing Notable Trees before the recessed board meeting in April – mailed all letters, printed all certificates, and ordering plaques.
- Will start Cambistat treatments to damaged or potentially impacted trees at several parks currently under construction or pending construction within the next month.
- Chesapeake Bay Data Study – compare and contrast Arlington standards to Fairfax standards.
- Digitizing Bluemont Disc Golf Course on Arlington GIS database.

Commission Member Reports

Chair Report – Nora Palmatier

1. Fort Barnard public comment follow up: The Douglas Park Civic Assoc President said they are reviewing a plan from the county and if they need any assistance will come to future meetings and make a public comment.
2. As UFC Chair, I meet with County Board on budget issues at 3pm March 28. There is a public hearing that evening on budget issues and on March 30 the Tax Rate hearing. Signups are at <https://countyboard.arlingtonva.us/meetings/budget-tax-rate-procedures/advanced-speaker-signup/> From experience, the tax rate hearing is less crowded and the Board loves to hear from positive speakers who want additional services (like canopy map) and don't begrudge taxes.

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group – Caroline Haynes

NRJAG did not meet in March

Park and Recreation Commission – Caroline Haynes

PRC does not meet until Monday 3/27.

I spoke at the County Board meeting on the Stratford School use permit, focusing comments on acknowledging the loss of parkland (the county deeded over parkland to APS to build the addition) and urging the county and APS to move forward on land transfers on APS property that can be better managed by DPR (Taylor and Claremont Schools, in particular). This has been in the works for some time, but APS leadership has been reluctant to tie the issues together. PRC and the Sports Commission also made some progress on temporarily reducing the amount of parking to extend the rectangular field to permit more flexible use, including ultimate frisbee which is what it is used for now. APS is supposed to come back after 9 months of school operation to determine if the additional parking is needed. Steve represented the UFC well, focusing on the maintenance of the new tree plantings, especially on the steep hill side. Assurances were made by APS that maintenance would extend past the two-year maintenance agreement. At some point, we may want to focus attention again on additional resources for APS to ensure maintenance of these challenging planting situations. It was noted during the County Board meeting that Jim Meikle sits on the UFC.

Planning Activities – vacant

Vincent Verweij noted projects in Staff Report.

Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) – Ed Hilz

No report this month.

Rosslyn Highlands Park+ (WRAP) – Steve Campbell

No report this month.

Four Mile Run Valley Visioning – Nora Palmatier

Four Mile Run Visioning is getting contentious regarding dog park location and diamonds vs rectangle fields. Can someone attend the April 4 meeting (which will be entertaining) as I'll be speaking at a TreeStewards training?

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2) – vacant

No report.

Tree Canopy Fund – Nora Palmatier

No report

Tree Stewards: - Steve Campbell

Ongoing activities include the 2017 Tree Steward class, pruning trees for APS, and removing invasive plants. Nothing new to report.

Ordinance adjustments for Tree Preservation – Nora Palmatier

No report.

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) – Phil Klingerlhofer

No Report

Public Spaces Masterplan – Nora Palmatier

No report

Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable – Nora Palmatier

No currently scheduled Urban Forestry Roundtable.

Virginia Department of Forestry – Jim McGlone

State budget even-keel a few positions lost through attrition but no employees lost their jobs.

Arlington Public Schools (APS) – Steven Bernheisel

Arbor Day to be celebrated on April 27th, at Nottingham Elementary school.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) – Kirsten Conrad

No report.

New Business

Tributary B Stream Restoration is scheduled for the April meeting

Next Meeting: April 27, 2016 – Courthouse Plaza – Room 311