

Urban Forestry Commission
April 27, 2017
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Nora Palmatier, Chair
David Howell
John Carey
Caroline Haynes
Steve Campbell
Ed Hilz
Evelio Rubiella
Phil Klingelhofer
Kit Norland
Brian Keane

State and County Staff

Brian Keightley, DPR Liaison
Vincent Verweij, DPR
Douglas Stephens, DES
Christin Jolicoeur, DES
Diane Probus, DPR
Jeanette Ankoma-Sey, DPR
Jim McGlone, VDOF

Guests

Bill Browning
Mike Mesmer, E2C2

Public Comment

No public comment

Updates to the Resource Protection Maps

Christin Jolicoeur of DES gave a PowerPoint presentation on the updates to the Resource Protection map, which was last updated in 2003. New information will be used in both the Stormwater Master Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan.

Questions were asked about why the map was wrong in some places. The original data was based on older and sometimes incomplete data, and has been updated.

Action Item: Christin asked for a letter of support from the UFC.

Donaldson Run Tributary B Restoration

Douglas Stephens of DES presented on the stream restoration along tributary B of Donaldson Run.

Questions were raised about the following:

1. Funding – the project is funded by the Neighborhood Conservation program
2. Trees removed and replaced – 81 trees removed, a 193 replacement value, 285 proposed to be planted
3. Notification to private owners about invasive plants on their property – Discussion has been had with neighboring owners to reduce likelihood of invasive plants on private property from escaping into the park
4. Upland impervious areas, and their impact – Taken into account, but not addressed by this project.

No action taken, as the project was previously approved by the Board.

Benjamin Banneker Park Project – Diane Probus and Jeanette Ankoma-Sey, DPR

Diane and Jeanette presented on the masterplan project for Benjamin Banneker Park.

This project is still in master planning and a letter was not yet requested.

No action taken.

Approval of March Minutes

The March UFC minutes were approved unanimously

Staff reports

The following items were discussed more in the meeting:

1. Three Oaks Park – Two trees declining, will have to be removed and reduced.
2. New Elementary school at Thomas Jefferson
3. Wood debris distribution and removal at Lacey Woods Park and Bluemont Park
4. The proposed Red Cross site at Arlington Blvd and Thomas St
5. Updated PNR Organization chart
6. Bluemont Golf Course
7. Storm and large tree removal update
8. Budget update

The following were submitted by staff through email:

Brian Keightley:

Management and Operations:

- Working with the Environmental Planning and Operations side of the PNR Division to develop yearly plans for FY18 in order to meet performance goals.
- County tree planting is underway with Davey. Andrew Knapik, a long-time team leader for Kasey Spriggs and former landscape and tree crew member will be working with Lois Barb on a training assignment in anticipation her retirement in September 2017.
- Had a kick-off meeting with RTEC, the contractor who will be conducting our Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and Dutch Elm Disease (DED) treatments this year.
- Notable Trees presentation went off fairly well. John Wingard was not able to attend, so in his stead I gave the presentation on behalf of the UFC. Still having issues with getting the placard produced with new sign contractor. DPR staff will hand deliver to winners once they arrive.
- Arbor Day ceremonies at Nottingham Elementary went off without a hitch. Libby Garvey gave the proclamation on behalf of the board. Our very own Jim McGlone presented the Tree City USA Award on behalf of Virginia Department of Forestry. Kit Norland from UFC graciously accepted on behalf of the County. Music from Nottingham ES students was excellent.
- Brian Keightley, Urban Forestry, Natural Resources, park managers, and tree crew are trying to develop a best management practice for appropriate level of debris left in parks. Some parks have a large amount of debris accumulating and we are evaluating strategies to reduce, distribute, and remove if necessary.
- Brian Keightley is working with Urban Forestry and park manager Lyndell Core to develop a plan to realign some tees and baskets of the disc golf course out of the Resource Protection Area

(RPA). This is a long term vision, but we would like to incorporate with restoration plantings and build on the momentum of the invasive removal project in Bluemont Park.

- Working on the updates to the RFP for the tree planting contract to improve planting and performance specifications.

Budget

- DPR has an approved budget of \$42M which is a 4% increase from FY17
- The \$42M includes \$10 of revenue, which is a 5% increase from FY17
- DPR was funded to move forward with our new Work Order System
- The Board mandated that all MS4 permit requirements be paid for using the Stormwater Fund
- The Board committed to conduct the tree canopy study but asked County Manager to use existing funds. DPR management is working through the budget, but it looks doable.

Vincent Verweij:

- Three Oaks Park: Two of the oaks at this park are not doing well. One will have to be removed, due to heavy infestation of *Hypoxylon*, and the other will have to have one lead removed. We are working with the developer to figure out an appropriate replacement.
- Red Cross site: This new project has some proposed significant tree impact (140 tree replacements). Staff is suggesting limiting the disturbance, to explore preservation of on-site trees.

Parks:

- Benjamin Banneker Park: Working with staff on the masterplan. Some demolitions of the acquired houses will occur, and tree replacements for these will be part of the larger project.
- Four Mile Run Stream restoration and park: Trees have been planted for the first phase.
- Long Bridge Park: Provided input on the need for tree inventories, and replacement calculations, to be included early in the design-build process.
- Four Mile Run Valley Master Plan: Working with stormwater staff to find a good solution for all, to include natural elements in the park design, that would help alleviate stormwater issues, while also working with other community needs.

DES Projects:

- Old Dominion Drive is getting their trees planted, from Rock Spring Rd to the county line. This project will have the Soil profile rebuilding for the tree pits, with biosolids, as a test project.

Site plans:

1. Marymount University are finishing up their tree pits
2. 10th Street flats are finishing up their tree pits
3. Met Park 6 will be one of those rare tree canopy improvements, converting warehouses in Pentagon City, to a residential high-rise with a plaza, and significant tree planting
4. Crystal Houses III: The project has reduced some of the impact of on-site trees, after discussion, but will still have some significant removal. Currently exploring improving the proposed park, as much as possible, to end up with a positive tree canopy.

Schools:

- Stratford: First meeting regarding condition compliance happened today. Emphasis was given on private arborist oversight of protection, follow-up, and planting.
- Thomas Jefferson: The plan was approved, but issues remain about soil volume standards for some of the on-site plantings.
- McKinley: Tree planting is ongoing, and almost completed. The site looks great, so far.

General:

- Arbor day: This was held this morning. Great performances by the kids, and no hiccups. We planted two pin oaks, along the playground. Kit Norland, Libby Garvey, Dr. Murphy, and several staff were present.
- i-Tree: I presented to DES, and DPR extended leadership on the i-Tree report. I am starting to look at presenting the information to the general public more.
- Administrative Regulation 4.3: Sharpening some of the legal edges of the regulation. Hope to have this enacted before the end of the summer. CPHD is interested in getting this approved soon, as well as us.
- Tree stewards: Presented on tree canopy, our programs, and i-Tree to the tree stewards. It was well-received.
- Vincent Verweij will be presenting the i-Tree Eco information to E2C2 in May.

Adam Lipera:

Operations

- Continuing to review 311's, Web Submissions, and customer calls pertaining to County trees. Seeing an increasing amount of submissions from the public.
- Received assistance from Dominion Virginia Power on several county trees in conflict with utilities.

Site Plans and Permitting

- Attending/inspecting/reviewing on average 10-20 preconstruction meetings, certificate of occupancy final inspections, and site plan reviews per week for single family home projects.
- Starting to see an increase in amount scheduled.

Tree Removals

- Still seeing a decent number of homeowner submissions and consequently removals of street trees due to sidewalk and driveway apron damage.
- Took down three trees (two of which were double trunked) in Lacey Woods Park due to damage caused by the rain and wind storm in early April.

Projects

- Finalized Notable Trees before the recessed board meeting on April 25th – mailed all letters, printed all certificates, and still in the process ordering plaques.
- Reviewed two Specimen Tree applications.
- Starting Cambistat treatments in early May to damaged or potentially impacted trees at four parks currently under construction or pending construction.
- Overseeing the EAB treatments currently being applied by RTEC.
- Chesapeake Bay Data Study – compared and contrasted Arlington standards to Fairfax standards.
- Digitized Bluemont Disc Golf Course on Arlington GIS database.

Commission Member Reports

Park and Recreation Commission – Caroline Haynes

The Bill Thomas Award for Outstanding Park Volunteer(s) was given to Paul Holland and Yu-hsin Hsu at the recessed County Board meeting, followed by a reception.

Erik Beach provided an update on the Long Bridge Park Design-Build contracting process and timetable for the aquatic and fitness center. (County Board was also updated during the afternoon meeting.)

We also had a briefing on planning for Benjamin Banneker Park. Planning elements are complicated by the RPA and bike trails that run through the park. Newly acquired properties are being incorporated into the park design, which includes a renovation of the rectangular field, updates to the dog park, new playground and picnic area. The forested areas are to remain and included in the project is funding for invasive removal.

Bill Ross provided an update on deliberations with the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee. The PRC discussed ways to engage in the process and provide feedback, beyond attending meetings. A letter will be drafted laying out basic principles that we would like to be included in the process.

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group – Caroline Haynes

Stella Tarnay, co-founder of Biophilic DC spoke at the April Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group meeting. She provided background on DC's commitment to become a Biophilic City, and steps DC is taking to integrate biophilic concepts into planning efforts. She invited Arlington to participate in the City Nature Challenge for the DC Metro area, April 14-18. (DC came in 7th in the competition nation-wide, with Arlington contributing a respectable number of observations to iNaturalist.)

Planning activities (vacant)

Joint Facilities Advisory Commission (vacant)

Public Facilities Review Committee – Ed Hilz

No report

Rosslyn Highlands Park – Steve Campbell

No report

Four Mile Run Valley Visioning – Nora Palmatier

The topic of stream restoration and the Shirlington Dog Park will be a large topic of discussion in the next few weeks. A positive for UFC is that there will definitely be more trees planted as a natural area along stream under any of the 3 designs. It's becoming clear that everyone's desires for the park and area can't be met and there does seem to be growing frustration, especially with the unknowns regarding swapping land parcels possibilities. Public comments will again be held in a few months to review the designs so stay tuned.

Tree Canopy Fund – Nora Palmatier

Tree Canopy Fund -- Over half of the 212 trees have now been planted and remainder should be finished by end of April. In March, Steve Campbell, myself and 2 other TreeStewards visited the nursery to inspect the stock -- quite a few of the Nyssa sylvatica were rejected due to cut off branch tips. The South Riding Nursery substituted others, but it shows once again how the pre-nursery production doesn't always follow the best practices. At least it was made clear that specimens will be rejected. The County staff was notified so they could ensure these don't end up in their pool.

Northern Virginia Urban Forest Roundtable – Nora Palmatier

No report

Ordinance Adjustments for Tree Preservation – Nora Palmatier

No report

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Commission – Phil Klingelhofer

On April 13, the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) held its monthly meeting, with two items on the agenda:

NCAC project cost overruns - Tim McIntosh reported that four projects of the six that were recommended to the County Board for approval and funding at the December 2016 NCAC meeting are now projected to have significant cost overruns. The total cost for the six projects is now forecast to be \$5,467,853, which is \$1,114,036 (26%) over the original estimates. While each project is different, the main reasons for the higher costs include new regulatory requirements, higher contractor costs, and higher materials costs. The NCAC voted to recommend to the County Board that these overruns be approved. The additional funds required for these projects would come from the current NC bond funding cycle.

Spring 2017 Project Funding Round – In light of the cost overruns associated with four projects approved in December, 2016, and revised estimates for many projects approved in previous years that are awaiting final design and construction that could total between \$5 million and \$10 million over the original estimates (for the same reasons cited above), the NCAC voted to cancel the Spring 2017 project Funding Round. You can review an up-to-date status report of all approved NC projects: Active Projects Status Report Update March 2017.

Public Spaces Master Plan

No report

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (vacant)

Virginia Department of Forestry

Jim McGlone reported on an effort to explore urban wood utilization. This will be discussed more at the May 19 Urban forest roundtable

Arlington Public Schools – Jim Meikle

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Kirsten Buhls

No report

New Business

There is an open position on the NRJAG.