

Urban Forestry Commission
May 25, 2017
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Nora Palmatier, Chair
Brian Keane
John Carey
Per Midboe
Steve Campbell
Ed Hilz

Phil Klingelhofer (NC Rep)
Paul Campanella
Evelio Rubiella
Elizabeth Gearin (PC Liaison)
David Howell (PRC Liaison)
Kimberly Fedinatz (E2C2 Liaison)

State and County Staff

Brian Keightley, DPR Liaison
Adam Lipera, DPR

Guests

Ann Marie Thro

Public Comment Procedures Discussion

The Commission members discussed requirements and appropriate times for public comment and decided to follow similar time limits to that of the County Board:

- 3 minutes for individual resident comments.
- 20 minutes for commission requested presentations from County staff.

Action Taken: Commission unanimously approved time limits

Public Comment

No public comment

Tree management near utilities

Adam Lipera, DPR Urban Forester, gave a PowerPoint presentation on vegetation management along utility rights-of-way in Arlington County. A link to the presentation can be found [here](#).

Items discussed during and after the power point included

- ANSI standards for pruning in utility rights-of-way.
- Consistency in application of best practices.
- Limited County jurisdiction and coordination.
- Approximately 4-year pruning cycles for electrical distribution lines in the County.

No action taken

Tree Canopy Fund

Elenor Hodges, Executive Director of Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE) came to speak to the UFC about future plans for execution of the Tree Canopy Fund (TCF), which her non-profit administers on behalf of the County under a Memorandum of Understanding.

The following items were discussed:

- 1,300+ tree planted since inception, with 213 planted in Spring 2017.
- Historical issues with tree planting contractors.
 - Trees delivered significantly late or poor quality stock.
- Evaluate a new model/planting system
 - Options for the TCF to pre-purchase stock, possibly years in advance.
- Add education grants.
- Expand maintenance grants
 - Currently limited to Champion Trees listed as a specimen, heritage, or memorial tree.
 - Program for low or fixed income residents.
- ACE recommends not planting until Fall 2018
 - Concerns by UFC members of “missing” a cycle.
 - Possibly doing a small planting >100 in Spring 2018.

Action Taken: A committee of UFC commissions will work with ACE to explore revisions to Tree Canopy Fund.

- Nora Palmatier and Ed Hilz will work with Elenor

Approval of April Minutes

The April UFC minutes were approved unanimously

Staff reports

The following items were discussed more at the meeting:

1. Street Lighting Administrative Regulation and Management Plan.
 - Vincent Verweij and Brian Keightley are working with DES on a reasonable distance requirement between street trees and street lights.

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 to meet performance goals.
- In response to a County Board charge to “Clearly Communicate Arlington County’s Priorities,” CPHD Planning is compiling essential information from each of the County’s 11 Comprehensive Plan Elements. Working with Vincent and Alonso on a summary report on amendments to Arlington County’s Comprehensive Plan as it related to the Urban Forest Management Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan.
- County tree planting is underway with Davey. Landscape crew is working on optimizing water routes for the summer as mother nature has been helping us out in the month of May.
- Working on the updates to the RFP for the tree planting contract to improve planting and performance specifications. This has become a negotiation between the volume requirements of the street and park planting program versus the quality required by many of our landscape installations.
- There has been an early emergence of the Brood X Periodical Cicadas, with numerous inquiries and concerns coming in to both Forestry and Natural Resource units.

- PNR Staff is working with the test environment for the Cartograph Work Order System (WOS). Recently the effort is to capture work processes and setting up the system in as user-friendly manner as possible. Staff is working to pull together and reconcile information that crosses divisions within DPR.
- Working DES staff to plan for the negotiations to revise the MS4 permit conditions this fall, one of which is trees planted per year on public property.
- Beginning to close out budget for FY17 and plan for implementation of FY18 on July 1.

Other Notable Updates

- The tree crew assisted Dominion Power on S Four Mile Run Dr., to remove a large oak, which fell on power wires and the road, indirectly igniting part of the meadow. The tree has been removed, and nearby high risk trees have been assessed.
- Arlington Bioblitz on May 20th consisted of 19 teams, 92 volunteers making over 1,000 observations and so far identifying 451 different species. These numbers will change, as some experts had to take vouchers to identify the species correctly and will be sending to Alonso.

Vincent Verweij:

Highlights, followed by more regular items:

1. Wilson School demolition is close to receiving permits. The landscape plan is still under review
2. Lubber Run community center project is finishing up their designs. I attended a public meeting, which was well-attended by the public. I'm personally optimistic about the design from a tree perspective, but it does balance different needs, and tree replacement will be a component.
3. Several larger by-right site subdivisions, with major tree impact will be approved soon. This includes a large lot at 23rd St S and Glebe Rd, and a large lot at 4626 N Carlin Springs Rd. Not much we can do about these, but they will significantly impact the tree canopy of these neighborhoods.
4. 6711 Lee Hwy, a proposed site plan, is not showing any tree preservation on the plan. It adjoins a park, and park trees will be affected, to the extent they will not survive. I have provided comments to adjust the plan.

Site plans:

- The Berkeley: Close to final permit approval. Will start soon. Some tree impact, but replacement is significant.
- 750 N Glebe Rd: Finalized the landscape plan. Has significant street trees, and a heavily treed higher private plaza. Also a small corner landscaped area (not a park)

Schools:

- Thomas Jefferson: Reviewing landscape plans, and finalizing issues with the tree protection plan. No major issues, except some concerns about on-site soil volume
- Wilson: Landscape plan looks interesting, but also have concerns about access to soil volume for on-site trees.

Parks:

- Bluemont park baseball field is finishing up. Go check out the great vegetative strip stormwater BMP, to see a great example of how some projects might be able to meet stormwater requirements (particularly on larger projects)
- Four Mile Run Valley: I assisted in finding a solution to maximize dog park area, while meeting stormwater regulations. This will likely involve a large natural component.

- Chestnut Hills park: The entrance renovation project is underway. No big tree impact, and trees will be transplanted, where impacted.
- South Park: Attended a public meeting, to discuss options for this park, from more structured, to more ecologically-minded. All options include significant natural features, as it is in an RPA, but some hardscape will be part of the project.

DES:

- I met with DES staff, Washington gas, and VDOT staff, to discuss potential restoration of the site of excavation for the large Washington gas pipe, along Arlington Blvd. More to come.

Ash trees:

- Continue to see massive ash tree dieback. Very few public trees can be treated within our budget, and private trees often show signs when it is too late to properly treat. This will impact proposed park projects, particularly ones along streams, such as Benjamin Banneker Park.

Adam Lipera:

Operations

- Continuing to review 311's, Web Submissions, and customer calls pertaining to County trees. An increasing amount of submissions from the public are being submitted (approximately 20-25 per week).
- Received assistance from Dominion Virginia Power on several county trees in conflict with utilities.
- Performed several tree inspections in Historic Districts, per resident request. No tree removals were authorized at this time.
- Assisted Vincent on a tree inventory for a property applying for Historic Preservation.

Site Plans and Permitting

- Attending/inspecting/reviewing on average 15-20 preconstruction meetings, certificate of occupancy final inspections, and site plan reviews per week for single family home projects.

Tree Removals

- Seeing a large number of homeowner submissions and consequently removals of street trees due to sidewalk and driveway apron damage. In some cases both sidewalk and tree needed removal and replacement.
- Had to remove several newly planted dead street trees in the Ballston – Clarendon – Courthouse corridor. These trees are all under warranty and will be replaced.

Projects

- Cambistat treatments have been completed for damaged or potentially impacted trees at four parks currently under construction or pending construction. Scott Graham assisted me in applying the herbicide.
- EAB treatments have been completed by RTEC. DED treatment to occur in July by RTEC.
- Coordinating mulch spreading project at Chestnut Hills Park with the Tree Stewards.
- Attending ESF and EOC training.

Commission Member Reports

Park and Recreation Commission – Caroline Haynes

Lubber Run Community Center: Staff and consultants presented on the latest design resulting from the community and PFRC processes. Saving mature trees, maximizing open space and

gently integrating the community center into the park were the highest priorities. The commission was generally pleased and impressed with the design. More details: <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/types/parks/lubber-run-community-center-project/>

GW Baseball field club house: Representatives from George Washington University presented on the planned construction of a clubhouse at the GW field on Four Mile Run Drive.

Arlington County Tennis Association: Michael Grace relayed issues associated with deferred maintenance on the tennis courts in the county and efforts to push to have increased rehabilitation of tennis courts in future CIPs.

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group – Caroline Haynes

Kurt Moser with the Four Mile Run Conservancy Foundation presented on activities of the foundation in Alexandria and possible ways to increase partnerships in Arlington.

Planning activities (vacant)

Joint Facilities Advisory Commission (vacant)

No report

Public Facilities Review Committee – Ed Hilz

No report

Rosslyn Highlands Park – Steve Campbell

No report

Four Mile Run Valley Visioning – Nora Palmatier

There was a good presentation by Parks & DES on the issue of the dog park being inside the RPA boundary which presented the plan to decrease the footage by half to install a planting buffer. You can imagine the pushback from the organized dog park users. My assumption is UFC will want to weigh in on this to support DES options so please review the presentation before a discussion at 5/25 meeting.

<https://arlingtonva.s3.dualstack.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2017/05/4MRV-Slides-517-WG-Parks-Alternatives-Analysis.pdf>

Tree Stewards – Steve Campbell

A few experienced Tree Stewards have been asked to help with the inspections of the recently planted Tree Canopy Fund trees (some recipients have concerns about the tree(s) they received).

Tree Canopy Fund – Nora Palmatier

Kudos to Steve Campbell for looking into several homeowners' concerns. Planting should be completed by the meeting and we'll hear a report from ACE. The possibility of limiting fall TCF

funding to education projects and Champion tree maintenance while we research a better option for obtaining quality trees will be discussed. There have been problems before, and this year was no better even though contract was strengthened.

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 May 11, the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) held its monthly meeting, with three items on the agenda:

Discussion / Action Items

- Presentation by Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager
- Presentation of the Williamsburg NC Plan
- Neighborhood Complete Streets Program Update by Michelle Stafford, Complete Streets Coordinator, DES

I was unable to attend this meeting, but will provide the minutes in my next report. See the Active Projects Status Update May 2017 for the latest information on NCAC projects. I have also attached the minutes from the April NCAC meeting for your information.

Public Spaces Master Plan – Nora Palmatier

Dean Amel will be present to report. For the newer members, Dean is a former UFC Chair who cycled off in January and continues to represent UFC on this study. And Dean will be recognized by County Board on 5/23 for his 20 years of volunteer service on UFC, E2C2, and more!

Dean's verbal report:

- Additional briefing at June meeting after draft released (240 pages). Expected June 12.
- The advisory committee is figuring out priorities
 - Forestry needs to be a priority
 - Bias towards “active” spaces
- Public draft out by fall
- Plan to finish and finalize document by end of year

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (vacant)

No report

Virginia Department of Forestry – Jim McGlone

No report

Arlington Public Schools – Jim Meikle

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Kirsten Buhls

No report

New Business

June – Public Spaces, Street Lights, Bioretention/SWM