

Urban Forestry Commission
November 16, 2017
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Nora Palmatier, Chair
Kit Norland
Caroline Haynes
Brian Keene
Sherry Frear
Evelio Rubiella
Paul Campanella
Phil Klingelhofer
David Howell – PRC rep

State and County Staff

Brian Keightley, DPR Liaison
Vincent Verweij, DPR

Guests

Emily Graffum
Jean Mitchell
Mary Glass
Margie Bell

Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in

Public Comment

Mary Glass presented information on tree impact from development. She handed out information on the tree inventories of Donaldson Run, and requested i-Tree analyses be performed on all future public projects, to assess the full impact of tree loss.

Additionally, she provided information on Washington, DC's planting program, and an update on 2513 N Vernon St's by-right project.

Survey Results from the Tree Canopy Fund's Planting Grants

ACE compiled information on the Tree Canopy Fund's planting grants. TreeStewards, Master Naturalists and several UFC members helped with the survey to identify the presence or absence of trees planted and an analysis of the health of the trees found. There may be minor errors, but the report shows at least 81.3% of trees found in the field. Trees that were not found may be in back yards or inaccessible areas, so the actual number may be higher.

Discussions focused on how to improve the social connection to people who planted trees, and how to gather more data and on their motivation for planting trees. Also, an application fee was discussed, but no decision was made.

Action items: Nora Palmatier to draft letter to the Board that explains the survey results and will request to be on the agenda for County Board carryover meeting on December 19th.

Discussion on Arlington's Trees and Urban Forest

Jay Fiset joined the commission for about 20 minutes and spoke about:

- UFC's role in monitoring and accountability for the County's tree programs
- Praise for integration of tree advocacy in all projects
- Volunteer project for tree health monitoring

- Where changes can be made at the state level:
 - More possibilities with election results in House of Delegates
 - Possible changes/tweaks to legislation
- Success of the tree grate removal project
- Specific concern about trees and sidewalk conflicts at California Tortilla in Courthouse
- John Carey and Vicki Arroyo's legislative recommendations,
- Suggested UFC and advocates try more outreach to developers
- Gaining efficiencies using our existing resources
- Urban Forest Master Plan
 - Importance in updating in the future
 - How the UFMP integrates with other planning documents
 - The importance of long-range planning and implementation
 - Policy implementation and refining policies
 - Builds community awareness and buy-in
 - Integrating with other planning documents a challenge

Commissioners mentioned:

- The need for more maintenance funding
- A public inventory of trees
- Integration of the UFMP in other plans, such as transportation and health plans

Approval of October Minutes

Approval of minutes tabled to November.

Staff reports

Vincent Verweij

Planning:

1. The Administrative regulation finished legal review, and has been sent up to the county manager for a signature. This regulation will set soil volume targets, thanks to public input to the planning commission.

Volunteers:

1. We had a fantastic planting of 140 native trees, at Bluemont park, along Four Mile Run. 5 Gartner volunteers, and I believe 7 Tree Stewards helped to get all these trees planted. It was gorgeous weather, and the trees got watered by rain for the next few days.

Staff:

1. Our division has a new acting safety specialist, Patrick Todd. We are meeting with him regularly to understand how he can help make our tree maintenance work safer, and provide relevant training.

Site plans:

1. 4210 Washington Blvd finished. This was a duplex site plan. Not much exciting, but they had some minor changes in species planted.
2. Ballston Quarter is finalizing their streetscape design. It should be an interesting design to watch, with bioretention tree pits, structural cells, and other innovative design
3. Central Place has finalized their tree planting

Parks:

1. Nelly Custis park: Working with staff to preserve a large elm at this park, along the street.

2. Henry Clay Park: This park is being scoped for a playground renovation. The trees around the perimeter are high value, and we will work to avoid damaging them.
3. Gunston: One large willow oak will not likely survive this project, but all the other oaks along the street will remain, with replacements for the first one planted in the park.
4. The Reeves farmhouse is finalizing design to improve access, and to shore up the house. Some small trees will be removed, and replaced with white oaks. The specimen tree on the lot will be untouched.

DES:

1. The Carlin Springs bridge will be repaired. Some trees were already removed, but we're keeping some nice pin oaks, and will be replanting.
2. Windy Run Stream restoration: We are making some field changes, as some trees were not properly surveyed, and may pose a risk to the construction crew. None are particularly large, and will be replaced.
3. The Washington Blvd Bike trail (remember that one?) is starting soon. I have met with staff and the construction company, to set expectations for the process, and to prepare them for the watchful eyes of Arlington.

Conferences:

1. Treematter symposium: Several Tree Stewards also attended this. I plan to follow up on new information on i-Tree wildlife, as a new component of i-Tree Eco, to see what our trees provide for bird wildlife.
2. Trees for Health conference: Nora will likely speak about this, but I plan to help push the idea of trees as critical health infrastructure more, internally.

Outreach:

1. We had another champion tree bike ride, the southern one, again. There was some confusion about the location, but we still had good attendance, and it was a great day. I will resume this next year, with another round of Northern trees, and Southern trees, if I can find the time. I was also thinking of an "Extreme tree bike ride", riding up and down Military Rd and Williamsburg, for the real bike fanatics, who also want to see great trees.
2. I taught the ARMN class on forest ecology and dendrology. Great class, lots of technical questions.
3. I presented on Arlington County's streetscaping today, for Master Gardeners, Tree Stewards, and Master Naturalists. It was very well-attended (probably 60+ people). It was great to hear about Alexandria's program, before my presentation, presented by Stephanie Free.

Adam Lipera

Operations

- Continuing to review 311's, Web Submissions, and customer calls pertaining to County trees. We are receiving approximately 25 submissions per week, at this time.
- Still receiving a high amount of requests from the Villages, Wards, and Community Center in Fairlington for crown cleans (which County and contractor crews are working on now), as well as crown thinning (which have been deferred to late November-early December).

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. Replacement trees are being scheduled, where appropriate.
- Removing several dead oak street trees around CHP.
- Removing 9 dead sycamore street trees around the 600 block of Army Navy Drive during weeks of 11/20-12/1.

- Removed approximately 12 dead street trees in Rosslyn on 11/13-11/15.
- Removing 1 large dead tree in Lacey Woods by N George Mason Drive at the park entrance near the trail.
- Removed 6 dead median trees along various locations along N George Mason Drive on 11/13 and replanting those same locations during the Spring.

Site Plans and Permitting

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

Projects

- Attended TRAQ training 11/8-11/10.

Brian Keightley

- No report this month

Commission Member Reports (provided in advance by email unless otherwise noted)

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group – Caroline Haynes

NRJAG has not meet since the last UFC meeting.

Park and Recreation Commission – Caroline Haynes

PRC has not meet since the last UFC meeting.

Planning activities

Reed School

Brian Keane noted that there is less impact and away from Champions

Four Mile Run Valley Visioning – Nora Palmatier

No report this month

Red Cross Site (Evelio Rubiella/Nora Pamatier)

No report this month

Tree Canopy Fund – Nora Palmatier

No report beyond agenda discussion above.

Tree Stewards – Steve Campbell

The planting of 140 tree ‘whips’ at Bluemont Park, organized by Vincent, was successful. Volunteers completed the job in half the time allotted for the project.

EVENT: Arlington National Cemetery Tree Walk, Friday 11/17, 9-11:30AM. Register at Eventbrite

EVENT: Long Branch Nature Center Tree ID Hike, Sunday 11/19, 11:15AM-12:30PM. Learn to identify tree species.

Ongoing TS activities include:

- assisting citizens with their Tree Canopy Fund applications;
- assisting with Notable and Champion Tree nominations which are due 11/15/2017;
- TS are removing stakes, and pruning dead and damaged branches from 125 trees at Wakefield HS.

Northern Virginia Urban Forest Roundtable – Nora Palmatier

No report this month

Single Family Homes – Nora Palmatier

No report this month

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Commission – Phil Klingelhofer

No report this month

Public Spaces Master Plan – Caroline Haynes

Advisory Committee met on October 30 to review public feedback on the July draft update of the Public Spaces Master Plan. There were lots of positive comments, especially about level of service and working towards defining casual use space. The committee is focusing on key areas that need additional work: land acquisition; synthetic turf and lighting of fields: and trees, natural resources and casual use space.

The scheduled events include:

- Fri., Dec. 1, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. @ Courthouse Plaza - Chat about Land Acquisition
- Wed., Dec. 6, 6:30 – 9 p.m. @ Navy League Building - Expanding Field Capacity with Synthetic Turf & Lights
- Dec. 14, 6:30 – 9 p.m. @ Central Library- Stewarding Tree Canopy, Natural Resources & Casual Use Spaces

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission - Kimberly Fedinatz

No report this month

Virginia Department of Forestry – Jim McGlone

No report this month

Arlington Public Schools – Jim Meikle

No report this month

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Kirsten Buhls

No report this month

New Business

Update on 2513 N Vermont from staff

Request staff give quarterly or bi-annual reports on tree removals and plantings

Next Meeting

December 21, 2017 – 2100 Clarendon Blvd – Room 311