

Urban Forestry Commission
October 22, 2020
Microsoft Teams meeting

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Phil Klingelhofer, Chair
Nat Ames
David Howell
John Carey
Kate Donohue
Noreen Hannigan
Teresa Leonardo
Caroline Haynes
Steve Sockwell
Tanja Crk
Kit Norland
Josh Handler

County and State Staff

Vincent Verweij, DPR
Steven Bernheisel, APS
Jim McGlone, VDOF

Guests

Bernie Berne
Mary Glass
Anne Bodine
Jon Walsh

Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in

The meeting was held online, using Microsoft Teams.

Public Comment

Anne Bodine spoke about trees being impacted on N Edgewood St., along with impact to the feel of the neighborhood. She highlighted spot flooding and stormwater issues. Anne invited UFC to join them to look at it. Why isn't the county asking for design changes on these projects?

Mary Glass spoke about a collaborative of the environmental affairs committee of the Civic Federation (CivFed). Working on positive incentives. Concerns about FNRP assessment methods. Spoke about Contractor budget. Mary expressed concerns about comparison communities. Mary also asked to have an email shared with the whole commission.

Bernie Berne spoke about the Biophilic component of green building code. Bernie shared the language he would like to see through email. Bernie also spoke about 3901 Fairfax Dr, and its alternatives to plaza design.

UFC Charter Change – Phil Klingelhofer

The Chair discussed the language to alter the charter of the Commission to include Natural Resources.

A discussion followed on the needs of a workgroup to flesh out issues, the collaboration statement, and inclusion of climate change language.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howell to adopt the language, with changes to definitions, and the removal of the collaboration language. It was seconded by Commissioner Haynes.

Commissioners Leonardo and Norland abstained from the vote, expressing their interest to add more language on climate change, and the rest of the commission voted to adopt the change.

Tree Canopy Fund Changes – Kate Donohue

Commissioner Donohue presented the final draft language. A short discussion followed, clarifying choices. No major issues were brought up.

Commissioner Carey moved to adopt the language, seconded by Commissioner Hannigan.

The language was adopted unanimously.

Letters to the County Board on Deer Management, NOVA Parks, Biophilic Design

The letter on deer management was approved unanimously.

The letter on Biophilic design got one edit to improve Item B in the list, to “create or expand natural habitats”. It was approved unanimously, with this change.

The letter to NOVA parks on more funds for invasive removal in NOVA Parks parkland in Arlington needed more research, and information from NOVA Parks on their current practices, before being considered for approval. Commissioner Handler will work on this update.

Snag Creation Policy – Vincent Verweij

Vincent Verweij presented on the standard practice for snag creation on public property. Conversation followed on tagging trees, the history with the chair’s adjacent tree, tree risk assessment, and ANSI standards.

September Minutes and Commission Infrastructure (Work plan, Annual report, Memberships)

Commissioner Sockwell moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Carey. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Staff Reports

Vincent Verweij spoke about the new maintenance contract, new bucket trucks, Arlington Forest Park, 2001 S Clark St site plan project, school projects, and the Tree Giveaway.

Commissioner Haynes asked clarifying questions about the Arlington Forest project.

The following staff reports were shared:

Maintenance:

- Tree maintenance requests are reducing in volume, but staff and contractors are still catching up to summer requests. We are down below 250 requests, at the time of this report.
- Foresters have identified significant amounts of dead trees in Arlington Forest Park. This is a Natural Resource Conservation Area, and all precautions will be taken to reduce impact to the natural resources on site, to reduce the risk these trees may pose.
- Two new bucket trucks were received by the equipment division, to replace our existing bucket trucks. They should be entered into our fleet in the next few weeks.
- A new tree maintenance contract is out for bid, due November 4. We anticipate a new tree maintenance contract, combining tree removal and pruning in one contract, in November/December. This bid can be seen here: <https://vrapp.vendorregistry.com/Bids/View/Bid/1ad01f0e-1cea-48a0-82d7-f944975d9611>
- Historic preservation – Several tree maintenance applications reviewed. Maywood continues to show some signs of oak decline throughout the neighborhood.

Planning:

Site plans – New:

- 1420 S Rolfe St – Reviewing second submission plan. This plan has significant conservation as part of its proposal.
- 3901 Fairfax Dr – Working on addressing comments on plaza design.
- 2001 S Clark St – Reviewing new submission. This project is proposing to impact significant trees in Crystal City.
- 2121 Crystal Dr – Scaled back plan to restaurant only, reducing tree impact.
- 1901 N Moore St – New Rosslyn project. Showing significant roof trees/green roofs. Very little impact to existing trees.
- Crystal City Substation – Dominion Energy substation. Impacting large willow oaks on site, but exceeding replacement.
- International Place (1735 N Lynn St) – Building renovation and streetscape update – Under review

Site plans – Approved

- Axumite Village (1105 S Highland St) - Completing tree planting
- Central District Retail – Planting trees
- Harris Teeter (600 N Glebe Rd) – Preconstruction held to ensure conservation of large willow oaks on site.
- 4000 Fairfax Dr – Continuing conversations on replacement of streetscape incorrectly installed.

- The Trove (1201 S Ross St) – Finalizing tree planting
- Clarendon West – Installing streetscape
- Queen’s Court – Installing streetscape and trees
- Red Cross/Trenton Thomas townhomes – Installed street trees
- 6711 Lee Hwy – Trees being installed for first section of townhomes

DES

- W&OD Trail and Goodwill Parking lot modification – Under review
- Four Mile Run Dredging project – Flood reduction project in Troy Park – Under review
- Arlington Ridge Rd and S Lynn St – Under Review
- Donaldson Run Tributary B – Under review

Parks

- Benjamin Banneker Park – Finalizing planting and park construction
- Henry Clay Park – Construction ongoing
- Edison Park – Park almost completed
- Jennie Dean Park – Preconstruction held. Construction will commence in November
- Fort Scott Park restroom and Parking Lot Renovation – Under review. Some impact to trees.
- The Bluemont Junction Trail will be repaved, and staff is working to minimize tree impact

By-right projects

- The Children’s School at 4770 Lee Hwy – School creation, with moderate impact to existing trees, and opportunity for new trees.
- Staff continues to work on reviewing and inspecting by-right single-family homes. Construction is not showing significant signs of slowing down.
- A private stream restoration in Arlington Village is being reviewed for tree impact.

Schools

- Stratford School – Finalizing planting and invasive plant removal.
- Ashlawn School – replacing trees that died in the last 3 years.
- Abingdon School – Replaced 3 trees that died in last year
- Fleet Elementary – Installing ADA parking spots, removing some street trees, to be relocated elsewhere. A new ADA playground addition may impact additional trees, which will be moved.

Long Range Planning:

- Plan Lee Highway is working on its metrics and tree canopy targets.

Forestry and Natural Resources Plan

- Branding, engagement, and benchmarking are all underway.

Tree Planting:

- The fall planting list has gone out.
- The tree giveaway is happening this weekend, and next Tuesday. We are working with volunteers to help safely distribute hundreds of trees, and free redbuds gifted to EcoAction Arlington by Dominion Energy and Arbor Day.
- The tree planting coordinator is working with a company looking to donate trees for planting in Bon Air Park. We are working to remediate soil, and plant additional trees in the floodplain, with this donation.

Outreach:

- Staff presented a video on urban trees to a group of 55+ participants. It was well-received, and will be shared with the general public, after adding final branding.

Other

- Staff attended the MAC-ISA conference. They learned about trees and climate change, tree risk assessment, ecological restoration, new technologies in tree evaluation, and the future of arboriculture.

Commissioner reports

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

Vincent Verweij provided more details on the rationale behind the choice of the communities for benchmarking purposes as part of the update of the Forestry and Natural Resources Management Plan. Commissioners noted that benchmarking was a topic of considerable interest and debate during the update of the Public Spaces Master Plan. Staff also shared a matrix of issues to be included in the update. The commissioners noted that many of these issues have been highlighted over the past several years as part of the NRJAG deliberations.

Park and Recreation Commission (David Howell)

This month the 4th Tuesday falls after the 4th Thursday, so there is no October PRC report this week. At the September meeting, the Park and Recreation Commission agenda included three items also addressed by UFC in our last meeting: the Green Building Program overview and discussion; the ARMN Deer Management presentation; and, the proposal to formally expand the UFC charter to include natural resources. PRC also heard a second presentation—as the formal process requires—of a proposal to rename Nauck Town Square as John Robinson Jr. Town Square. PRC voted unanimously to recommend this change to the board.

Planning Activities Notification

No report

Lee Highway (Caroline Haynes)

The working group on renaming Lee Highway has been meeting virtually. The group has developed a long list of names and is going through the process of winnowing down suggested alternatives.

Tree Stewards (Kate Donohue)

- Tree Stewards have been pruning trees at Arlington Traditional School, Yorktown High School, and Washington and Liberty High School.
- Tree Steward volunteers will be working at the Arlington Tree Giveaway, answering questions and assisting in the dissemination of the trees.
- Tree Stewards are being organized to help with promoting the TCF, with Nora Palmatier and Noreen Hannigan out in front of this effort.

Arlington Tree Action Group (Kit Norland)

No report

Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable (Vacant)

No report

Tree Canopy Fund (Kate Donohue)

- Comments regarding the proposal for a pilot using some TCF funds for tree maintenance have been incorporated, and the proposal is ready for a vote by the UFC.
- The list of species to be offered for planting in Spring 2021 has been updated, and is attached to this email.
- The current plan is to announce the Spring 2021 application round on Thursday, October 29, 2020 with a deadline of Friday, January 8, 2021.

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (Phil Klingelhofer)

The Department of Environmental Services presented on stormwater management.

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (Teresa Leonardo)

No report

Virginia Department of Forestry (Jim McGlone)

No report

Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)

No report

New Business

- The Chair asked for a commissioner to meet Anne Bodine to see the impact of by-right development at N. Edgewood St. Commissioners Norland and Carey offered to coordinate with Anne Bodine and let the rest of commission know the results.
- Commissioner Howell asked about how large neighborhood changes impact missing middle and ADUs. Commissioner Hannigan asked whether this interfaces with LDA review. Vincent Verweij clarified what would qualify for a land disturbance permit requirement.
- Commissioner Haynes mentioned the NRJAG discussion on stormwater by DES.
- Commissioner Handler asked about a year-after ADU update. Staff will investigate what information exists, and can be shared.
- The Chair spoke about the invitation to CivFed.