



SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Joshua Morris (Position 7 – NGO), Co-Chair

Alicia Kellogg (Position 2 – Urban Ecologist) • **Becca Neumann** (Position 4 – Hydrologist)
David Baker (Position 8 – Development) • **Nathan Collins** (Position 9 – Financial Analyst)
Logan Woodyard (Position 10 – Get Engaged) • **Jessica Jones** (Position 12 – Public Health)
Lia Hall (Position 13 – Community/Neighborhood)

The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle

Draft meeting notes

August 14, 2024, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Via Webex call and in-person at the
Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 1872 (18th floor)
700 5th Avenue, Seattle

(206) 207-1700

Meeting number: 2483 667 9913

Meeting password: 1234

Attending

Commissioners

Josh Morris – Co-Chair
Alicia Kellogg
Becca Neumann
Nathan Collins
Logan Woodyard
Lia Hall

Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE

Guests

Absent- Excused

David Baker
Jessica Jones

Public

Steve Zemke

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at:
<https://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocuments>

Call to order: Josh called the meeting to order, offered a land acknowledgement and reviewed the agenda.

Public comment:

Steve Zemke noted that when the tree ordinance was passed last year, it was noted that updates/amendments would be made. The most important update needed is related to the tree protection area. What is included in the ordinance is not consistent with International Society for Arboriculture standards; it lets developers and not SDCI decide on the size of the tree protection area. SDCI's Tip 242A notes that the basic tree protection area is It is noted that the Basic Tree Protection Area is larger than needed to protect most trees, and the tree protection area for construction is always smaller. He suggested that the UFC urge the City Council to remove the stipulation that the basic tree protection area cannot be modified during development.

Chair, Committees, and Coordinator report:

Patti noted that the recruitment process has started, to fill the six vacant UFC positions. The application period started last Thursday and will continue through September 12. Information on the process and link to the application is on the UFC's Membership page.

She noted that this meeting is Logan's last meeting as the Get Engaged member. The Y has been running a process to appoint the new cohort of Get Engaged members for the 2024-2025 term and they are scheduled to be ready to start in September.

Patti also shared the information that she will be leaving her position with the City, as of the end of August. OSE is working on a transition plan to ensure continued support for the UFC in the short-term while a permanent replacement is found for this position. The priority will be on making sure the recruitment process continues smoothly along the planned timeline, with recommended appointees identified by the end of October, and then continuing planning for the UFC retreat. The annual UFC-IDT joint meeting will likely be postponed until later in the winter/spring, when the new Commission members can participate.

Josh seconded the request for Commissioners to share the information on recruitment for the vacant positions with any people or networks who might be interested. He also put out a call for anyone interested in and able to serve as a Co-Chair to consider doing so, to help spread the responsibilities.

Lia shared that she created an easy bitly link to the application page that folks can share for easy access to the application when folks are sharing about the recruitment.

Bike Rack items – discussion and possible action**- June – Clarifications from SDCI updates – Christy Carr, SDCI**

Christy explained the two definitions of tree protection area. She explained how they are determined and when they are used.

Questions/comments from Commissioners on this topic included:

- Is it possible to rename the basic tree protection area since it's basically a misnomer? It's not delineating protection for a tree. It's related to a basis for tree removal.
- Could changes to the definition be accomplished in an Omnibus bill?
- The physical tree protections on construction sites sometimes looks inadequate; how can complaints be made on the quality of installed tree protection?
- Could feedback on the Omnibus bill be a way for the UFC to recommend potential changes around the tree protection area definitions and uses? Yes; the TPO subgroup will work on developing draft recommendations for the UFC to consider.
- Is there a monetary valuation made of those trees that don't have adequate tree protection in place (those that are approved for removal)?

Christy again noted where the tree-related information resources are and how to find them through the SDCI website.

Christy explained and walked through use of the tree tracking and tree notice tool. She noted that she did talk with staff after the June UFC meeting and the recommendation the UFC made about amending the tool to split out trees that were not at risk from the trees that are noted as “protected” on the map.

Questions/comments from Commissioners on this topic included:

- Will it be possible for users to download an export of the data? Currently, reports can only be provided by staff; Christy will ask if in the future reports can be downloaded.
- Does the data include just private land trees or does it include street trees and parks trees?

- **July – Follow up items for SPU and WSDOT briefings**

Patti shared slides outlining the Commissioner questions and comments for these briefings and the potential next steps for the UFC on these topics. Nathan volunteered to write an email to the Trees for Seattle team to thank them for the presentation, share the Commissioners’ questions and invite them back later in the year to update on the work. Josh volunteered to email the WSDOT team to thank them for the presentation, share the Commissioners’ comments, and let them the UFC would like to invite them back after they have finalized their tree replacement plan.

Duwamish Valley Industrial Greening project – Patti Bakker, OSE

Patti provided some background information on this project, including its context in the City’s broader Duwamish Valley Program and what the goals for and components of the project are. She described the current status of the project now in its third year, describing some of the challenges and solutions/accomplishments, and provided updates on projects completed so far and those remaining to be installed this year. She shared some current metrics for the project – number of trees and other plants, number of property owners reached, etc. – and noted that it will take some time to finalize all of the details, and to confirm the long-term canopy provided by the project.

Questions/comments from Commissioners included:

- Given familiarity with some of the areas shown, it’s great to see the before and after photos to see how the projects are transforming them.
- Given the challenges faced with the project in installing trees in industrial areas, how should we be feeling about the goal to reach 10% canopy cover in industrial areas?

Subgroup reports

- Tree Protection Ordinance – this group will work on the tree protection area draft recommendations. They also want to start considering what other parts of City code aside from SMC 25.11 would be useful to review and consider recommendations around in terms of trees and canopy.
- Budget – this group has not met recently, but will restart meeting as the next steps in the City budget process approach.
- DEI – this group had some thoughts and ideas around recruitment, so are happy to see that process moving forward.
- Climate – nothing to report.

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Public comment:

Steve Zemke noted that there are positive things in the Omnibus bill, including clarifying that the exemption for critical areas from the tree ordinance is removed. There was also clarification that the ordinance had said that 35% of the tree protection area could be removed, but the truth is that up to 35% of the outer tree protection zone could be removed. Regarding the conflicts around the tree protection area, the main problem is with the basic tree protection area not being able to be modified. That’s what prevents many tier 2 trees from being saved, and there is no precedent for that within ISA or other industry standards.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Meeting chat:

Lia Hall #13 8/14/2024 3:12 PM • Thank you for your service, Logan!

New messages

Logan 8/14/2024 3:13 PM • Thank you for your work Patti and congrats on your new position!

steve zemke 8/14/2024 3:16 PM • Thanks to Logan and Patti for your work and involvement!

Lia Hall #13 8/14/2024 3:17 PM • I created this easy link for applicants! <http://bit.ly/m/SeattleUFC>

Tina Cohen 8/14/2024 3:33 PM • What a gift to developers!

stevde zemke 8/14/2024 3:35 PM • .They are not required to not modify the tree protection area basic. See Tip 242A. It leaves it up tp developers to decide whether to use the basic tree protection area or allow it to be reduced. It allows developers to remove trees that could be saved by a reduction up to 35% of the outer root zone.

Tina Cohen 8/14/2024 3:39 PM • What about tier 1 trees? TIP 242 A says they must be saved but SMC offers ways of getting around it

See:

25.11.115 - Modification of tree removal, replacement, and voluntary in-lieu payment requirements

steve zemke 8/14/2024 3:40 PM • The ordinance defines tree protection area, basic, as being able to be modified by the Director!

steve zemke 8/14/2024 3:41 PM • Can just reome tree protection area basic and let it follow SMC 25.11.060 using the "tree protection area" as defined by ISA

Public input (additional comments received):