

CITY OF CORVALLIS
MINUTES OF THE CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION AND URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
AUGUST 8, 2013

Attendance

Angelica Rehkugler, Chair
 Tim Brewer, Vice Chair
 Becki Goslow
 Larry Passmore
 Norm Brown, OSU Liaison
 Joel Hirsch, City Council Liaison

Absent/Excused

Ross Parkerson
 Ruby Moon

Staff

Becky Merja, Urban Forester
 Jude Geist, Parks Supervisor
 Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors

Brian Kreft
 Matt Sanchez
 Owen Dell

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

| Agenda Item | Information Only | Held for Further Review | Recommendations |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|---|
| II. Introductions | X | | |
| III. Vegetation Presentation | X | | |
| IV. Review of Minutes- July 11, 2013 | X | | |
| V. Visitor Propositions | X | | |
| VI. Right-of-Way Tree Programs | | | Motion passed to recommend that CBUF advise staff to present the two concepts to City Council for their approval. |
| VII. Staff Reports- if questions | | | Motion passed to recommend the City Council amend Municipal Code Chapter 1.16, Section 1.16.090, Residency: "The appointing authority may also appoint persons who reside, are employed or self employed full time in the Urban Growth Boundary". |
| VIII. City Council / OSU Liaison Reports | X | | |
| IX. Report on Subcommittees | X | | |
| X. Adjournment | X | | The next CBUF meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. September 12, 2013, at the Parks and Rec Conference Room. |

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Angelica Rehkugler called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
- II. **INTRODUCTIONS.** Rehkugler introduced Brian Kreft and Matt Sanchez, who were expected to be confirmed as commissioners soon. Kreft graduated recently from OSU, specializing in turf and agriculture, and works in Housing and Dining at OSU. He said OSU seeks to design landscape to complement projects and the city itself. Owen Dell introduced himself as a landscape architect who was interested in the commission. Rehkugler noted that there were currently three vacant positions.

III. VEGETATION PRESENTATION.

Angelica Rehkugler highlighted the book “The Meaning of Trees”, by Fred Hageneder. Displaying samples of both native ash and the cultivar “Raywood”, she noted that ash trees were in the same family as olive trees. She related that ash trees were often found along streams, and that the wood had many uses.

Larry Passmore highlighted the characteristic palmate, compound leaf structure and the opposite branching pattern. He highlighted the much broader leaves of the native ash. Merja cautioned that Raywood ash were short-lived, poorly anchored and were being overplanted; Tim Brewer added that they often split. Passmore said the branches get too long and heavy. Rehkugler said native trees were stronger; Merja said natives get anthracnose in late summer, especially after warm winters and late springs; they do well in soggy soils, but are a poor street tree.

Matt Sanchez will make the next presentation. Passmore proposed making a master list of which trees have already been presented; Merja will do so.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES.

Passmore moved and Goslow seconded to approve the July 11, 2013 minutes as presented; motion passed.

V. VISITOR PROPOSITIONS. None.**VI. RIGHT-OF-WAY TREE PROGRAMS.**

Forester Becky Merja highlighted the memo in the meeting packet regarding staff discussions regarding two proposals: “Tree for a Fee”, in which contractors had the option of planting street trees themselves or paying the City to do so; and the City collecting appraised value for public right-of-way street trees removed during development. She said staff determined the need to ask CBUF for a recommendation to move the concepts forward to the City Council for consideration find if there was Council support for them. Parks Supervisor Jude Geist clarified the proposal sought to start outreach and to get public feedback on the two proposals. Geist and Merja related that absent commissioners Parkerson and Moon had called to express support for the proposals.

Passmore asked what builders felt; Geist related that they were generally in favor of “Tree for a Fee”, and that education was needed for the other proposal- the idea is to treat trees as we treat other parts of the City infrastructure. City Council Liaison Joel Hirsch said the proposals made sense. Rehkugler asked about the process; Merja replied that the commission first needed to express support; then the Council Liaison can test if there is Council support at its August 19 meeting; if so, there can be public outreach with the existing blue ribbon panel and further discussion with Planning staff.

Tim Brewer expected developers would be in support of “Tree for a Fee”; he expected there would be a fight about getting reimbursement on tree removal and he highlighted the need for education. Merja noted that there was industry consensus on factors to assign appraised value to trees. The TreeWorks inventory program helps calculate those values, and she was experienced in establishing values and appraisals. The valuation has held up in court and the process has worked well elsewhere in other cities. Brewer said that once established, it should work well. Passmore explained that developers will need to regard street trees as part of the City infrastructure that they need to consider. Hirsch said he didn’t see any problem in bundling the two issues together; the proposals seemed reasonable and should be included in the conversation.

Merja said the blue ribbon committee had already discussed the “Tree for a Fee” program. She related that it was common to see trees planted by the developer or builder which were required before

occupancy occurs, but those trees are often planted at the wrong time of the year and die. The committee has not yet considered the appraised value proposal.

Norm Brown emphasized that we need to establish recognition of trees having an economic value. The concept of “appraised value” is legally supported and recognized, and is similar to a property appraisal. Passmore suggested giving voters a handful of examples of the assessed values of trees. Merja said each region has a species list and each is rated. Different tree species are rated in an appraisal for the relative desirability in the region, along with characteristics of the individual tree, such as diameter, spread, the amenities it provides, and the time it takes to re-grow a similar tree.

Hirsch expressed concern about the difficulty in conveying the criterion, and the need to avoid surprises to developers. Merja noted that all trees are different; they are dynamic. Rehkugler highlighted the need to educate the public on the proposal; Passmore said the simplest way to do so is to provide a handful of examples for people to see. Rehkugler emphasized the need to avoid public negativity, especially since some developers already think it is difficult to develop in Corvallis. Merja replied that some cities, like Eugene and Seattle, were posting the values of trees that were being protected during development, such as with fencing. Rehkugler said developers may feel the appraisal process may seem arbitrary. Brown said we need to distinguish between the value of the tree and a fee; others said trees need to be seen as an asset. Brown said the value needs to be part of the process of the value of the overall site, and establishing the value of trees shouldn't be a big leap.

Hirsch suggested including language on appraisal criteria; Merja replied that there was language about the criteria used to establish value. Brown said the appraisal process had been established in courts over years. Merja highlighted the process was used in Eugene. She said that with older Corvallis neighborhoods being redeveloped, the issue is becoming more important.

Rehkugler asked if the appraisal process would be time-consuming for the Forester; Merja replied that currently it already takes staff time to negotiate with developers, and having something more solid in place will save time for both staff and developers. She related that Planning staff were supportive; sometimes just slight adjustments in design can save a valuable tree.

Goslow moved and Passmore seconded to recommend that CBUF advise staff to present the two concepts to City Council for their approval; motion passed unanimously. Goslow urged posting the value of trees being protected during development, saying that it would take little time. Hirsch said that that would help make the case with the Council. Passmore said sandwich boards were associated with tree removals, and suggested not using a format connected to tree removals, such as marking it with a yellow ribbon. Merja agreed to label several trees. Passmore noted that many people assume that orange fencing around a tree during development means the tree will be protected.

Brewer noted that it might take more money to remove a tree than it is appraised for, and both costs would have to be considered in penciling out a project; Merja replied that that is the developers' choice. Brown said it will just be the cost of doing business. Merja said trees would simply be considered much as a fire hydrant and a light pole in the right-of-way. Brown said developers will appreciate having clear guidelines. He said landscape architects and designers can help in retaining trees and thus end up a landscape with much more character.

Rehkugler said she like to help the owner of the former Albertson's site understand the advantages of adding trees to the large parking lot; Brown noted that Dr. Kathy Wolf's research has demonstrated the positive impact of trees on shoppers.

VII. STAFF REPORTS- IF QUESTIONS.

Merja highlighted the renovated “Dinosaur Bones” in Avery Park; it was originally an OSU Art Department project in the 1960’s, and spearheaded by an individual traveling the country to inject imagination in parks. She is working with Tom Cook on tree replacement on the north side of Hayes Street. The first Heritage Tree Committee meeting is August 15 and will review its first nominations; she said visitors were welcome. Members include Becky Merja, City Forester; Ross Parkerson, CBUF; Bob Chilton, retired arborist and Benton County Natural Areas and Parks Board; Al Kitzman, Benton County Natural Areas and Parks staff; Marc Vomocil, PNARB; Norm Brown, OSU Facilities landscape Manager; Vern Esplin, arborist; with BA Beierle and Pat Breen in at-large positions.

Merja highlighted residency requirements, saying she and Geist had expressed concern that it eliminates those running businesses within the Urban Growth Boundary, and proposed CBUF recommend a text change to take to the Council. Rehkugler expressed support, noting many landscapers and nursery operators live outside the UGB, and that it has been a problem over the years.

Passmore moved and Brewer seconded to recommend the Council amend the Municipal Code Chapter 1.16, Section 1.16.090 Residency, “The appointing authority may also appoint persons who reside, are employed or self employed full time in the Urban Growth Boundary”; motion passed. Passmore suggested Hirsch cite the example of nurseries, which are never within the City limits.

OSU Liaison Norm Brown related that a lot of construction was underway at OSU. A large Ailanthus “Tree of Heaven” tree will be removed at Washington and 13th during construction of a residence hall. Kreft said construction at Callahan Hall will displace some birches; Brown added that loss of birches due to birch borer was an ongoing issue, as well. Brewer highlighted a major white oak on Morgan Place likely to be removed due to disease.

Matt Sanchez highlighted a recent world tree hugging record, suggested Corvallis try to break the record, and will develop a proposal; Rehkugler suggested adding it under Pending Items.

VIII. CITY COUNCIL/OSU LIAISON REPORTS.

Liaison Hirsch related the Council was working on the upcoming levy.

IX. REPORT ON SUBCOMMITTEES.

Goslow related that letters were sent out to volunteers. She asked for help on caring for two triangles near Rite Aid. She asked for suggestions for future beautification projects. Rehkugler said the circle at Grant and 11th was looking bad; Merja explained that the circle would soon be reconstructed.

X. BREAK INTO SUBCOMMITTEES. Subcommittees did not meet.**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** The regular meeting adjourned at 10:17 A.M.