CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Trent Grantham and Boardmembers Brodrick Coval, Michael Jackson, and Tanya Nozawa.

Excused: Boardmembers Brent Chapman and Jim Sedore.

Staff: Sustainability Manager Alyssa Jones Wood, Urban Forester Brian Caughlan, and Associate Planner Dana Bowerss.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

TREE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS: Chair Grantham inquired as to the status of a question by a member as to whether the Tree Board could be responsible for or assist in paying for the maintenance of the Davis Meeker Garry oak tree. Manager Jones Wood advised that the City plans to fund the maintenance of the tree.

The Board discussed Boardmember Nozawa's suggestion to help owners of developing properties save smaller mature trees and vegetation. She referred to a property located off Littlerock Road with several large mature rhododendrons. Staff recommended contacting Native Plant Salvage for possibly saving or re-homing plants.

Boardmember Nozawa commented on a recent incident involving an arborist who inappropriately topped a tree. She asked about any City codes that prevent such actions or requires a licensed arborist to trim a tree. Manager Jones Wood advised of the City's code banning all tree topping in the City with some exceptions, such as Puget Sound Energy.

Boardmember Nozawa suggested publishing information on the City's webpage to advise the community of the City's codes to guide residents on tree trimming or removal of trees in the City. Staff and the Board discussed potential measures to ensure the community is informed.

MOTION: **Boardmember Coval moved, seconded by Boardmember Nozawa, to recommend the City consider posting targeted messaging on external communications and social media platforms to further communicate the mission and work of the Tree Board and the City's municipal code regarding Tree U.S.A. Motion carried unanimously.**

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Jones Wood reported on the recent resignation of Boardmember Alex Chacon because of his recent move from the City.

Boardmember Chapman resigned effective the end of June 2025, as the City has hired an urban forester, which was a goal important to Boardmember Chapman and a reason he rejoined the Board.

The City is working on a detailed work plan for moving forward with the consultant's recommendation of Option B of focusing on public safety and tree health for the Davis Meeker oak tree.

Manager Jones Wood introduced newly hired Urban Forester Brian Caughlan. He, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Adams, and Manager Jones Wood are working together to develop a project charter to ensure a structure is established outlining deliverables for the oak tree to include frequent communications with the public.

The Approved Street Tree List, previously approved by the Board, was reviewed by Urban Forester Caughlan. He added some additional trees to the list and is scheduled to present the list to department directors and to the City Administrator before the end of June. Following the presentations, the goal is to gain approval of the list to incorporate any changes to development guidelines and publish on the website.

Review of the tree and vegetation and landscaping ordinances will begin in September/October. Planner Bowers is leading the review.

Mayor Sullivan sent letters to local tribes to receive saplings from the Davis Meeker oak tree, if they so chose.

The third draft of the Climate Element will be posted on the website at the end of the June.

Chair Grantham recommended meeting bi-monthly moving forward.

MOTION: **Boardmember Coval moved, seconded by Boardmember Nozawa, to meet bi-monthly for remaining calendar year 2025 and revisit the meeting schedule in January 2026. Motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.

2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE – CONSERVATION: Planner Bowers briefed the Board on the update of the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan includes a new and consistent format for all elements. Each element includes two parts. Part 1 includes Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions. Part 2 includes technical information supporting goals, policies, and implementation actions.

Chapter 1 is an introduction section identifying the legal framework and the importance of the element. Chapter 2 focuses on Growth Management Act (GMA) goals and relevant element goals supporting GMA goals.

Chapter 3 includes the County-Wide Planning Policies. Chapter 4 includes element goals and policies in a table format. Appendix A is a draft of implementation actions. Each action is tied to a policy or policies.

Part 2 of the element includes technical information. Chapter 1 is the introduction section. Chapter 2 includes information on natural resources, and Chapter 3 covers critical areas. Chapter 2 includes information meeting the requirements of Thurston County and the state. Appendix A includes foundational documents for best available science. An Open Space Citation Act summary is a program that guides some of the City's natural resource lands or lands set aside as a preserve. Part 2 also includes a section on soils in the City.

The Natural Resources chapter includes three classifications of urban agriculture, forest lands, and mineral resources.

Because one GMA goal is to increase density within the City and utilize land for housing, economic growth, commercial development and industrial uses, the amount of sprawl can be limited within the county where more agricultural resources and larger parcels are more conducive to sustainable agriculture. The City has 7% of soils classified as prime farmland. Other lands are classified as prime farmland soils if those lands were drained and irrigated. Those two classifications comprise 70% of all City soils. However, the amount is not aligned with the City's other water and soil conservation priorities. Draining of wet soils was not included as part of the calculation for prime farmland in the assessment because it would not be a viable, long-term resource for farming.

Current uses for agriculture in the City include urban agriculture (smaller plot sizes), farm stands, corn mazes, and animals and livestock. As agriculture uses is often limited because of water resources and the amount of land available, those resources within the City are often used for other uses.

Some land in the City falls under the Open Space Taxation Act for parcels classified as forest land. An incentive program offers a reduced tax rate to enroll in the program if the property owner of five acres or more preserves forest land, although harvesting is allowed with required replanting. The City has approximately 371 acres of land categorized as forest land to include the City's urban growth area (UGA). The largest parcel is 120 acres.

Local protections for trees are guided by Tumwater Municipal Codes (TMC) 12.24, 15.08, and 18.47. The requirements are not stipulated by state law but are reflective of the City's priority to protect trees. The City's critical areas ordinance also protects trees through the endangered species

list as well as by the City's design regulations, subarea plans, and the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

The chapter on Mineral Resource lands includes an introduction, classification, identification of resources, and protection of resources. The Department of Natural Resources created maps of mineral resource locations in the county. Data is obtained from Thurston County on mineral resource areas in the City. Protection of mineral resources is a two-fold process of protecting nearby uses and the mineral resource to ensure the City has a local source. The City's only zone district allowing mining is the Heavy Industrial zone district. Mineral resources in the City are primarily aggregate (crushed rock).

The Conservation Element supports and aligns with the City's Urban Forestry Management Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the City's development codes. The City's Development Code implements the plans and the Conservation Element.

Critical areas are sensitive areas not necessarily conducive for development or are a conflict with other state, local priorities, or obligations. Critical areas can include aquifer recharge areas, wetlands, frequently flooded areas, geological hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. State guidelines are used to classify the types of wetlands.

Goals for wetlands include a short-term goal of no-net loss and long-term goal of enhancing and improving wetlands. Wetlands are classified as to how they function and the type of species present. Some wetlands can be improved and preserved despite a lower classification because of the presence of a rare species.

Critical aquifer recharge areas protect drinking water. Criteria identify recharge areas that speak to the depth of groundwater, size of the aquifer, and type of soil, etc. Buffer distances of critical aquifer recharge areas are identified by the time it would take one drop of water or contaminant to reach a well. Wellhead protection areas (buffers) are identified in six-month, one-year, five-year, and 10-year increments (time of travel).

Planner Bowers reviewed the sections on Frequently Flooded Areas, Geologically Hazardous Areas, and Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.

Staff addressed questions on the protection and conservation of pocket gophers and Oregon white oak tree habitat.

Planner Bowers shared that resident Nancy Partlow requested inclusion of Oregon white oak trees (by name) within the element.

Boardmember Nozawa asked about the intent of increasing the number of retained trees required by a development proposal. Manager Jones Wood advised that based on early work for revisions to TMC 16.08, one proposal would provide a higher weight to older trees that store more carbon and provide more habitat, such a number of points that are weighted in favor of mature trees with some allowances to ensure that some tree species that are mature but not as large would also receive some credit. The intent is moving away from a percentage system to a credit system to encourage the retention of more mature trees.

Planner Bowers reviewed element goals and requested feedback:

- Goal C-1 – Recognize the significant role played by natural features and systems in determining the overall environmental quality and livability of Tumwater.
  Highlights:
  - *Natural systems make Tumwater livable*
  - *Protect and enhance environment*
  - *Use adopted plans*
- Goal C-2 – Promote conservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment in cooperation with residents, property owners, other jurisdictions, and tribes.
  Highlights:
  - *Support education programs*
- Goal C-3 – Support urban agriculture for access to local food production.
  Highlights:
  - *Work with partners to ensure agricultural viability*
  - *Support local food production*
- Goal C-5 – Support urban forestry.
  Highlights:
  - *Canopy retention*
  - *Conversions compatible with surrounding development pattern*

Boardmember Coval inquired as to whether the City has established any goals or policies surrounding urban wood utilization, such as using downed trees for compost, fire wood, or other reuse purposes. Urban Forester Caughlan responded that he is working on a local program for utilization of wood with local artisans, the school district, and local colleges to learn about responsible ways to recycle wood. Boardmember Coval recommended including the effort as a specific implementation action within the Conservation Element. Planner Bowers suggested adding a goal that supports programs to develop and improve salvaging urban wood.

Discussion ensued on the intent to reuse wood as well as save costs the City incurs when removing and disposing trees.

- Goal C-6 – Protect mineral resource lands.
  Highlights:
  - *Allow extraction where it will not cause degradation*
  - *Protect sites from incompatible uses*
  - *Restoration of extraction sites*
- Goal C-7 – Protect and enhance water quality.
  Highlights:
  - *Enhance ecological functions*
  - *Support restoration of stream channels and wetlands*
  - *Allow public access for monitoring and education*
  - *Balance habitat, water supply, recreation, and all other needs*
- Goal C-8 – Improve natural drainage systems.
  Highlights:
  - *Develop watershed management plans and fish conservation measures*
  - *Improve drainage systems for water quality*
  - *Use best management practices to control erosion through construction and redevelopment*
- Goal C-9 – Improve air quality.
  Highlights:
  - *Support and entrust state programs*
  - *Require appropriate vegetation retention*
  - *Reduce vehicle miles traveled*
- Goal C-10 – Protect and enhance rivers, streams, and lakes.
  Highlights:
  - *Protect, enhance and restore water channels*
  - *Require mitigation for alterations*
- Goal C-11 – Protect and enhance wetlands.
  Highlights:
  - *Protect wetlands where possible*
  - *Use buffers to preserve functions*
  - *Allow reasonable use to avoid regulatory taking*
  - *Maintain stormwater treatment facilities and flow control*
- Goal C-12 – Protect groundwater.
  Highlights:
  - *Protect aquifers, recharge areas, and wellheads*
  - *Protect waterways*

Chair Grantham recommended integrating the protection of groundwater within the landscaping ordinance during the upcoming review of the code.

- Goal C-13 – Protect geologically hazardous areas.
  Highlights:
  - *Regulate development intensity, site coverage, and vegetation*
  - *Minimize soil disturbance*
  - *Require erosion control throughout construction*
- Goal C-14 – Preserve floodplains and floodways
  Highlights:
  - *Minimize changes that impact flow*
  - *Require mitigation for engineered flood control measures*
  - *Emphasize non-structure flood control*
  - *Allow low-impact development only*
- Goal C-15 – Protect and enhance wildlife habitat.
  Highlights:
  - *Minimize fragmentation*
  - *Protect habitat for listed species*
  - *Encourage vegetated buffer areas*
  - *Control invasive and noxious species*

Planner Bowers reported the next review of the element is by the General Government Committee. Stakeholder engagement continues on the element. She encouraged members to submit any comments or suggestions. The element is scheduled for adoption as part of the Comprehensive Plan update.

Members and staff discussed language preferences, such as interested parties versus stakeholders.

INTRODUCE URBAN FORESTER:

Manager Jones Wood reported that many members met Urban Forester Caughlan during his attendance to a meeting prior to his interview. Forester Urban Caughlan started approximately one month ago in his new position.

Urban Forester Caughlan said he is looking forward to working with members and learning about the Board's goals and interests. His goal to protect as many trees in the future as possible and find alternative solutions that will improve Tumwater. He plans to work with the Transportation Engineering Department on new development and will review plans, work with the Tumwater Street Department on street trees, train staff to ensure best management practices are applied, review planting plans, and work with homeowner associations.

Urban Forester Caughlan shared information on his professional background and previous work experience.

Boardmembers provided self-introduction and described their professional experience and interest in serving on the Tree Board.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled on July 14, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT: **Boardmember Coval moved, seconded by Chair Grantham, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.**

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