

TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING
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CONVENE: 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners Brent Chapman, Joel Hecker, Michael Jackson, Tanya Nozawa, and Jim Sedore.

Excused absence: Chair Trent Grantham and Commissioner Dennis Olson.

Staff: Planning Manager Brad Medrud and Sustainability Coordinator Alyssa Jones Wood.

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

TREE BOARD DEVELOPMENT FIELD TRIP: Coordinator Jones Wood addressed questions raised during the August meeting. The Board's budget balance effective August 12, 2022 is \$224.53 and is available until the end of 2022. The City's Tree Fund balance totals \$73,641.25. City Administrator Doan has flagged the balance for tree plantings of \$25,000 over the next three years. Coordinator Jones Wood offered to follow up with more details.

The Heritage Tree map on the City's website is reflective of some trees, such as the Bush Butternut and some landmark trees not formally approved through the City's Heritage Tree designation process. The Board has the option to nominate those trees for formal designation. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she has contacted the funeral home where the champion chestnut trees are located to seek permission for nominating the tree. Additionally, she contacted Megan Ockerman with the Olympia Tumwater Foundation about knowledge of any other historic trees in the City. The only tree Ms. Ockerman noted was the Garry oak tree near the airport. The City has indicated support for a tree professional to confirm the age and species of all trees nominated to receive a Heritage Tree designation. She has contacted some tree professionals to visit the site of two pending tree nominations.

The Board and staff visited the Foster development site located at Israel Road and 70th. The site was developed in 1975 and extended in 1980 with construction occurring around existing trees. Commissioner Sedore advised that he suggested the location because the lots are 1/3-acre in size with mature Douglas fir and Western red cedar trees on the sites. He asked about the number of tree permits the City has waived. Manager Medrud suggested the upcoming code amendments for tree preservation should consider opportunities for saving tree clusters on sites. The Foster development was completed prior to the Growth Management Act and does not meet density requirements. Current right-of-way is much narrower than what the City requires today. Commissioner Sedore pointed out how stormwater is able to infiltrate directly on the site.

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Manager Medrud offered that the review process should also consider stormwater and tree retention, such as islands with trees, which may not be favored by project engineers.

Commissioner Sedore reported the City recently removed two trees to accommodate the ability of garbage trucks to navigate a roundabout. He asked whether the City intends to replace the trees. Manager Medrud advised that he would follow up with staff on the status of the tree replacement at the site.

Commissioner Jackson noted that the Foster development, if approved today, would require sidewalks and street trees. Commissioner Sedore said all the homes within the development are on septic systems and wells.

Staff and Commissioners visited the second site of Kirsop Crossing, a former mobile home park surrounded by multifamily zoning. The development proposal was approved by Thurston County prior to the property annexed to the City.

Commissioner Sedore pointed out how maple trees were used as street trees, which will likely create future issues.

Manager Medrud reported the development density is 9 units per acre. The stormwater facility is located under the power lines. Although, the development consists of single-family homes, the developer was able to meet density requirements. Since the development was constructed to county standards, the development would not meet the City requirements of sewer, sidewalks, and open space.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about the minimum size of a street tree. Manager Medrud replied that for low impact development, conifers are more valuable than deciduous species.

Discussion ensued on the narrowness of the alley and the inability to accommodate parked vehicles and standards applicable for the distance between streetlights and street trees. Staff advised of the requirement for sidewalks to meet ADA requirements and that in some areas sidewalks can meander to accommodate site conditions. Coordinator Jones Wood offered to forward a PowerPoint presentation of the City of Renton's street tree and sidewalk standards. City operations can assist in maintaining street trees if capacity exists, but there is no guarantee the City will maintain street trees.

Members discussed how placement of homes near power lines is determined. Manager Medrud advised that Bonneville Power Administration has implemented standards in terms of the location of homes near power lines.

Members and staff commented on stormwater infrastructure and the possibility of planting trees in stormwater ponds. Coordinator Jones Wood described

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different types of stormwater facilities. Many stormwater ponds include liners making the planting of trees nearly impossible. She offered to follow-up with Water Resources and Sustainability Director Dan Smith to obtain more information on the planting of vegetation in and around storm ponds. Commissioner Nozawa commented on the practice of topping tree around power lines and that it should not be allowed and Puget Sound Energy should prune trees versus topping trees.

Commissioners and staff visit the third site at Liberty Lane, a location that serves as a good example of infill development. The site is long and narrow and requires density to meet the requirements of the Growth Management Act. The City's minimum density requirements apply except in critical areas.

Commissioner Jackson pointed out that a large magnolia and other species of trees were supposed to be saved when the site was developed. However, the initial developer sold the site to another developer, who removed the trees. He suggested it is a potential issue the City should explore when developments change ownership as the retention of those trees likely fell through the cracks when the site changed ownership.

Commissioner Chapman inquired as to whether Arborvitae are considered trees. Manager Medrud offered to follow-up with more information. He noted that the City of Renton examines the dripline area of existing trees and if removed, the developer is required to replace the tree within the dripline footprint of the previous tree. Commissioner Chapman noted that street trees were not required at this location because the road is a private street.

Commissioner Sedore asked whether the City has regulations governing the use of gravel landscaping. Manager Medrud advised that the landscaping regulations would be reviewed during the larger review of the landscaping code. Commissioner Sedore commented that households that lack landscaping and rely mostly on gravel create problems for families with dogs that often walk their dogs to other HOA parks to potty creating another series of problems.

The fourth site visited by the Board and staff was Skyview Estates. The development's large stormwater feature was constructed to accommodate the area's high groundwater. Some large native trees were planted that likely could have been spaced more efficiently. The site will house 117 single-family homes.

Commissioner Nozawa commented on the desire to ensure large stands of trees remained protected and methods that are used to identify the presence of any endangered species. Manager Medrud advised of the City's ongoing process to develop the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the Mazama pocket gopher, Oregon spotted frog, and other species found in Tumwater and the surrounding area. Those species are under federal protection. Without a Citywide HCP, homeowners would need to contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to obtain an incidental take permit for development activity. Following approval of the

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City's HCP, developers can set-aside large tracts of land for endangered species. If the developer fails to pass the gopher screening after two site visits during specific times of the year, the developer must delay construction activity until the City's HCP is approved by the federal government. Commissioner Nozawa noted that she has observed the presence of Douglas squirrels and Fishers in the Countryside neighborhood in Tumwater.

Commissioner Sedore asked about the process for approving a mix of tree species within a development. Manager Medrud advised that tree species approval is handled by permitting staff as the City lacks an arborist to review landscaping plans. However, the City is considering contracting with an arborist as a consultant to review landscaping plans in the future. Additionally, the review of the landscaping code should also include a discussion on requirements for irrigation and the timing for constructing irrigation systems to support vegetation.

Commissioner Chapman asked whether the City requires landscape timber around street trees. Manager Medrud offered to follow-up on information, as it may be included in the City's design review guidelines.

The last site visit was to The Preserve, located off Old Highway 99 south of the Olympia Airport. The development's name was because the site is home to a gopher preserve prior to the federal listing of the species. The development was only required to replace six trees and planted more than the code required.

Commissioner Jackson commented that early fall is the best time to trim street trees. He asked whether the City could require native trees if there is space to accommodate them. Discussion followed on a goal to create requirements for planting of native species and establishing a list of desired trees that pertains to the site as well as for street trees. The Commission commented on the importance of discussing irrigation requirements during the review of the landscape code.

**NEXT MEETING
DATE:**

The October meeting is scheduled as a joint meeting with the Planning Commission to begin work on the Tree Preservation Code. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.