

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
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**CONVENE:** 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Trent Grantham and Boardmembers Brent Chapman, Joel Hecker, Tanya Nozawa, Dennis Olson, and Jim Sedore.

Excused absence: Boardmember Michael Jackson.

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

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

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES: TREE  
BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 7, 2022:**

**MOTION:** Boardmember Sedore moved, seconded by Boardmember Olson, to approve the November 7, 2022 Tree Board meeting minutes as presented. A voice vote unanimously approved the motion.

**TREE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:** Boardmember Sedore shared information on several sources of information and resources pertaining to trees, native plants, climate change, and the natural environment he recently obtained. He provided a list of books, materials, events, and references to Coordinator Jones Wood to forward to the Board and encouraged members to review the information and participate in webinars on climate change sponsored by the United Nations. He recommended scheduling a briefing to the Board on Tumwater's Climate Action Plan.

**COORDINATOR'S REPORT:** Coordinator Jones Wood reported on her and Manager Medrud's recent meeting with the consultant for the landscape ordinance to review sustainability measures and comments provided by staff.

Coordinator Jones Wood said staff met with *Friends of Trees* in addition to other stakeholders during meetings for the tree and vegetative preservation ordinance. The Board is scheduled to receive briefings from the consultant.

The University of Washington is sponsoring lunchtime half-hour forestry talks on different hardwoods. She participated in a talk on red alder. She offered to forward information on the talks once the information is published.

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Coordinator Jones Wood advised members to coordinate email communication with other Boardmembers through her to ensure transparency of communications and to avoid attaining a quorum of the Board discussing Board business without proper noticing of a meeting. The Board's quorum is four members. Although communication between three members is not in violation of regulations, it is discouraged because the addition of a fourth member joining the conversation could lead to a violation of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Commissioner Sedore reported he sent an email to Boardmember Hecker along with photographs of various developments in the area depicting standing water on some developed parcels and some undeveloped properties with no standing water.

Boardmember Hecker shared the photographs of the subject parcels. He explained that as a hydrogeologist, there are multiple reasons for standing water. Most standing water is the result of stormwater flow over impermeable surfaces. Development in general creates less permeable surface causing stormwater to sit longer to infiltrate.

Following more discussion on the issue of standing water, Manager Medrud advised that he would follow-up with City development engineers to review the development plans of the subject developments. Commissioner Sedore said his main concern is standing water in the area of new homes and potential flooding because of the increase in hardscape.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments.

**ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:** Chair Grantham invited nominations and election of a new Chair and Vice Chair as he has served as Chair for many years. He nominated Commissioner Sedore for Chair.

Commissioner Sedore replied that since Commissioner Grantham is familiar with the history and regulations of the City he supports nominating and re-electing Commissioner Grantham to serve as Chair if he is willing to serve.

Chair Grantham accepted the nomination.

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Sedore moved, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, to elect Trent Grantham as Chair of the Tree Board and Michael Jackson as Vice Chair. Motion carried unanimously.**

**TREE & VEGETATION PRESERVATION ORDINANCE** Coordinator Jones Wood introduced consultants Kim Frappier and Devin Melville with The Watershed Company.

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**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT  
STATUS REPORT:**

Ms. Frappier reported she and Ms. Melville are Environmental Planners with The Watershed Company. They are working with the City to complete the gap analysis of Tumwater Municipal Code (TMC) 16.08 Protection of Trees and Vegetation. Since the October briefing, the project team implemented the public engagement plan. To date, the metrics as outlined in the Public Engagement Plan has been achieved. The primary goal of the plan was to reach a broad audience of residents, organizations, and businesses reflective of the Tumwater community. That goal was accomplished through a direct mailing to 14,292 households and businesses. The mailing exceeded the metric as described in the plan. Additionally, the City continues to provide project updates to community members via email and other direct engagements. To date, approximately 75 individuals receive regular project updates by email.

Coordinator Jones Wood reported that in support of the engagement goal she attended monthly tree group meetings with the Thurston Climate Action Team. She updates the group on the status of the City's efforts. She also exhibits quarterly at the Thurston County Food bank at Mountain View Church to review efforts by the Stream Team and the City's efforts to update tree regulations.

Manager Medrud added that staff distributed posters to various locations and public buildings in the City, as well as meeting with other groups expressing interest in the update.

Ms. Frappier reported that other engagement efforts include online engagement through the Tumwater Urban and Community Forestry online open houses and social media posts. Those efforts have been successful. The metric defines success as achieving 2,500 impressions, which represents 10% of the City's population. To date, the online open house generated 369 unique visits with over 1,000 page views and nearly 1,700 social media impressions (liked or responded to social media posts on the tree code update). The stakeholder meetings were initiated through Community Conversations. Two Community Conversations have been hosted with the first held in November and the second in early December. The November meeting attracted 25 participants representing Tumwater community members and stakeholders affiliated with Black Hills Audubon, Thurston County Health Department, Thurston Economic Development Council, Thurston County Conservation District, Olympia Master Builders, Puget Sound Energy, and Restoring the Earth Connection. Fourteen individuals expressed interest in engaging in focused discussions. Those individuals were invited to the next stakeholder meeting to serve on the focus group during the meeting. Stakeholder meeting #2 attracted 23 attendees to include a seven-member focus group. Copies of the slides and video of the stakeholder meetings are posted online at [www.tumwater.treecity.com](http://www.tumwater.treecity.com).

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The third community conversation is the final stakeholder meeting scheduled on January 9, 2023.

During January, the team will continue with the code update for TMC 16.08 and launch the street tree code and street plan update. Two internal stakeholder meetings are scheduled in January with City staff to receive feedback on the gap analysis for both TMC 16.08 and TMC 12.24 and the Street Tree Plan. The team will also finalize the gap analysis and begin working on draft ordinance amendments. The Tree Board is scheduled to meet jointly with the Planning Commission in February to review the draft amendments.

Boardmember Sedore recommended clarifying the term “focus group” as the terminology was confusing during the stakeholder meetings, which he attended. However, he was uncertain whether he was a member of the focus group even though he asked questions and was included in the conversation. He questioned whether the team will provide an analysis of the feedback to assist the Board in understanding the community’s positions on current codes.

Manager Medrud explained that of the thousands of postcards mailed to the community, the City received less than 100 responses, and not all comments and responses were from individuals who live or own property in the City. He would be concerned about characterizing responses as a percentage of either support or non-support of specific codes given that the responses represented multiple individuals from the same organization while others were either individual responses or they represented a larger organization. Staff is preparing a summary of all comments received to date from both Community Conversations and other input received throughout the process. Boardmember Sedore suggested that for the comments to be of value to the Board, some analysis should be completed. Manager Medrud agreed that a summary of the feedback would be provided as well as providing a copy of all individual comments.

Ms. Frappier explained that during the first Community Conversation meeting, the final poll included a question asking participants about any interest in serving as a member of a group for a more focused discussion. The poll produced 14 positive responses. Those individuals were invited to attend the second meeting to be part of the focus group. The goal was to ensure a balance of interests with diverse perspectives. In areas that were not represented, the City plans more outreach to receive feedback and perspectives with an invitation to attend the third meeting. In terms of “focus group” the intent is having a diverse group of community members and stakeholders to participate in focused discussions.

Boardmember Chapman inquired as to whether the Board has received any information on the criteria or the process the consultant team is utilizing

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to draft amendments. Ms. Frappier advised that the process for drafting the ordinance is initiated through the public engagement plan and efforts to receive feedback of the community's understanding of the municipal code. Development of the gap analysis included a full review of the ordinance and other background materials, the City's development guide, and cross code comparison with other jurisdiction. The consultant team, using their experience and knowledge of best management practices within urban forestry, identified within the gap analysis specific areas for improvement and further discussion required with the City. All the information is consolidated to assist in drafting amendments to the ordinance. Throughout the drafting process, the team engages in discussions with the Tree Board, Planning Commission, and staff to answer questions and explore different strategies for different topics.

Manager Medrud added that the gap analysis is a draft pending the review by permitting staff. The gap analysis serves as the starting point for the development of the ordinance followed by a comment outline based on the gap analysis identifying recommended code language on important topics within the code. The outcome will produce the proposed draft ordinance to be reviewed by the Tree Board and the Planning Commission. Essentially, the process entails three steps prior to development of the final ordinance.

Boardmember Chapman offered that it would be helpful to document the process as well as the methodology for creating the draft ordinance.

Ms. Frappier acknowledged the request to add additional clarification within the gap analysis. Included in the current draft is a method section that was forwarded to the Board prior to the meeting; however, the team can expand and clarify the section to improve clarity.

**TREE &  
VEGETATION  
PRESERVATION  
ORDINANCE GAP  
ANALYSIS:**

Ms. Frappier said the review will provide the team with initial feedback and generate questions from the Board. She asked members to provide feedback on additional information desired on specific topics or information that should be expanded within the gap analysis. The Board has the option to review the document and submit written comments. The next step following feedback from permitting staff and the Tree Board is integrating the feedback and finalizing the gap analysis. The final gap analysis will guide the development of the amendments. She offered to provide the document in a Word file to enable members to include comments.

Ms. Frappier reviewed major sections of the draft gap analysis. Section 1 speaks to the purpose of the ordinance update and the policy and planning work completed to date through the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Other sections include the methodology, purpose of the gap analysis, plans and policies reviewed, and critical policy goals and objectives in support

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of the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Another section is on internal and external stakeholder engagement and the role it has within the policy update process.

Chapter 2 of the gap analysis is an analysis of the existing ordinance. Main topics identified during the review included updating the purpose and intent of the code with specific reference to the Urban Forestry Management Plan to ensure the new code incorporates all urban forestry management planning completed by the City to include integration of the 2040 canopy targets within the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Another section covers definitions.

Boardmember Sedore inquired as to how the update accounts for fauna, such as surveying fauna prior to permitting development and considering impacts to animals. Manager Medrud responded that the Urban Forestry Management Plan focuses on the forest as a whole. In terms of regulations and city codes, the proposed revisions are to TMC 16.08 covering trees and vegetation exclusively. Habitat in the forest or wetlands is addressed in TMC 16.32, which is not included in this specific update process but is reviewed and revised periodically in conjunction with the Department of Ecology requirements.

Ms. Frappier reviewed the sections addressing specific sections of the current code and described the format of proposed changes. One recommendation is development of a user guide to improve the usability and clarity of permitting provisions. The introductory user guide would summarize when a permit is needed, required elements of the permit submittal, review process, and specific conditions of issuance of a permit. A discussion is included about permit types and requirements within the section that should be reviewed. One suggestion by the team is development of a minor versus major permitting system or delineating the permitting process for development versus non-development. Minor permits would be issued for tree removal on parcels that have existing structures. New development proposals would require a major permit. The consultant team is seeking feedback from the City and the Board as it is a topic that has been addressed during stakeholder meetings.

Another component included in the gap analysis speaks to fine-tuning the requirements for the permitting process. The team recommends during the early phase of the development review process that urban forestry should be discussed and reviewed to ensure the project's design process maximizes the opportunity for the City to educate and engage the architects and the developers on the importance of protecting larger trees and tree groves on a project site. Another component increases and refines the types of information included in arborist reports as required as part of the permit application. Another section covers what is included in the tree protection or replacement plan. The current code contains much of the

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same information; however, the structure of the information is difficult to navigate. The team recommends reorganizing some of the information and including subheadings to provide clarity for users.

Boardmember Sedore noted some example of properties containing many acres of forested land recently annexed to the City. Many owners selectively harvest their trees for various purposes and want to retain the option of harvesting trees. Many property owners are unaware through annexation as they either inherited or purchased their land when it was under county regulations and were permitted to harvest the timber. Following annexation, the owners are now subject to new rules that limit their ability to manage their property. He asked about the possibility of including those types of scenarios within the permitting process as the City continues to expand its boundaries.

Manager Medrud said the issue was discussed with the particular property owner as part of the development of the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Some actions were included in the plan to address larger properties that would want to preserve woodland as part of a working forest component. Staff is exploring potential options because it would apply to a limited number of properties.

Boardmember Sedore offered a suggestion to revise a long sentence within the section pertaining to the tree account to improve clarity for readers. Additionally, the rating criteria for arborists include health, structure, and form; however, it lacks any condition component for habitat value of the plant or tree to the community. Ms. Frappier said the table within the gap analysis is modeled from ISA tree assessments. The intent is to create a streamlined consistent requirement for arborists who are assessing trees to determine whether the trees are healthy and could be retained as part of the development process. Boardmember Sedore cited forest practices that include habitat trees, such as snags for habitat for birds and hollow dwelling wildlife. He recommended incorporating that consideration within the assessment of the value of trees. The safety issues could be mitigated from retained trees by not placing buildings so close to those trees or plants.

Boardmember Chapman acknowledged the importance of the review and recommended scheduling a more focused meeting with the Board, consultants and City staff to provide comments after the Board has had an opportunity to review the draft gap analysis. His top priority as a member is the frequency of staff waiving the policy for developers. His focus is to reduce those situations where staff waives a policy as it will inhibit the City's ability in attaining goals as outlined in the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

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Manager Medrud agreed that one of the reasons for the update is to avoid situations when waivers are issued. Granting waivers for basic activities is indicative of an ineffective code. The purpose of the update is to develop a code that no longer includes waiver options and instead enables both staff and the applicant to know clearly what is and is not allowed under the code.

The Board discussed options for scheduling another meeting to focus on the gap analysis. Manager Medrud advised that the consultant's scope of work includes a specific number of meetings. The three major updates were deliberately scheduled to overlap because of similarities between the codes. Funding for the three updates is constrained because it ends in 2023, which is another reason for overlapping the projects.

The Board and the team discussed the process for the Board to receive and share information. Manager Medrud supported an earlier recommendation to provide members with a copy of the gap analysis as a Word file enabling time for the Board to provide comments and identify areas of further discussion to keep the process on topic and on track. Ms. Frappier offered to highlight some of the major changes the Board should consider.

Boardmember Sedore questioned whether the recommended review process complies with the Open Public Meetings Act. He also believes there is value for the Board to deliberate and discuss topics rather than individually submitting comments without the dynamic of discussing issues in one setting. Coordinator Jones Wood suggested an option of scheduling a Board meeting without the consultant team prior to the January meeting. Several members supported scheduling another meeting to ensure due diligence is afforded to the project. Chair Grantham pointed out that City staff and others in the community are also reviewing the document. Ms. Frappier offered that to improve efficiency, it would be preferable to receive the Board's comments as a combined document to avoid reviewing seven different versions of the document with different questions and edits. Chair Grantham recommended members should review the document and be prepared to discuss issues at a worksession to provide a comprehensive set of questions and recommendations. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she would forward information on a potential date and meeting time conducive for all members.

Ms. Frappier reviewed the expectation for finalizing the gap analysis by January 30, 2023. A meeting with City staff is scheduled on January 18, 2023 to review feedback and questions from staff.

Ms. Melville suggested receiving feedback from the Board by January 18, 2023 to enable the team to share the Board's feedback with City staff.



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Ms. Frappier advised that the Board's January 10, 2023 meeting includes introduction to the street tree code and street tree plan update, which also includes a separate gap analysis for the Board to review. Manager Medrud noted that the Board has many other meetings prior to finalizing the ordinance affording adequate time to review the gap analysis and additional comments. He recommended either scheduling another meeting or adding additional meeting time following the joint meeting with the Planning Commission. There are also some staff resource limitations to accommodate a separate meeting.

Following additional discussion on accommodating a separate meeting, the Board agreed to defer consideration of the heritage tree nominations to a future meeting.

Chair Grantham recapped the review process moving forward on the gap analysis. The consultant team will forward information on some of the topics they are seeking for Board input, will provide the gap analysis in a Word document with the Board reviewing the document and documenting questions, comments, and/or recommendations to discuss at the next scheduled meeting in January followed by a kick-off of the street tree update.

**ARBOR DAY  
DISCUSSION:**

Chair Grantham supported continuing the Arbor Day event with the Earth Day event with the Parks and Recreation Department at Tumwater Historical Park.

Boardmember Sedore said one outstanding question is whether the City intends to plant a tree on Arbor Day at the same site. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that the location of the Arbor Day/Earth Day celebration has not been determined. She will advise the Board when she learns of the location.

Chair Grantham recommended considering the North End Fire Station for a tree planting as fire department personnel expressed interest in planting a large species tree at the rear of the property.

Boardmember Sedore shared that he forwarded information to some members about the potential of expanding commemorative tree plantings in Tumwater during various times of the year. He encouraged consideration of honoring a Tumwater citizen by planting a tree. Last year, Mayor Sullivan planted a tree. He would like to develop a grove of mayoral trees located in a City park or seek opportunities to recognize and honor those who have served and benefitted the City by having them plant the tree. With the end of COVID, someone in the health sector who lives in the City could be identified to plant a tree. Coordinator Jones Wood advised of the pending retirement of City Administrator Doan, who has served in the position for the last 13 years. He plans to retire in April.

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**MOTION:** Commissioner Sedore moved, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, to collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Department to sponsor a joint Arbor Day/Earth Day event on April 22, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

**HERITAGE TREE  
NOMINATION AT 420  
D STREET**

**&**

**HERITAGE TREE  
NOMINATION AT 6005  
TYEE DR SW:**

Commissioner Sedore said he has been seeking more information about the tree and recommended deferring consideration until he receives the information. However, there is no proof the Tyee tree was planted by the Kindred family. He located Mr. Kindred's tombstone, which indicates that Kindred started the first school in Tumwater. He reviewed the information with Karen Johnson, a curator with the Olympia Tumwater Foundation who indicated it was not possible to prove where the first school in Tumwater was located because many people have claimed to have started the school within their homes. He also followed up with the cemetery director to identify the source of the text on the tombstone. The ESD Office was excited to learn that 150 years ago the current site was the location of a school and perhaps one of the first in Tumwater. It is likely the tree is not 150 years old. Commissioner Chapman has been assisting him in determining the age of the tree when a core sample cannot be obtained because the tree center has rotted.

Commissioner Chapman said some literature in the arborist community speaks to ways for determining the age by considering the tree species and measuring the diameter and the breast height and multiplying the growth factor for the particular species. The method is not completely reliable and is not based on science but may be the best option for determining the approximate age of a tree lacking a sample of the core. Essentially, it would entail estimating the age of the tree based on using that formula.

The Board recommended deferring the nomination at this time, and if more information becomes available, they reconsider the nomination.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sedore moved, seconded by Commissioner Hecker, to table the heritage tree nominations at 6005 Tyee Dr SW and 420 D Street at this time pending receipt of additional information. Motion carried unanimously.

**HERITAGE TREES  
NOMINATION AT 5725**

Members discussed the nomination and agreed that the trees are champion trees.

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**LITTLEROCK ROAD**

**SW:**

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Sedore moved, seconded by Chair Grantham, to accept the nomination and forward a recommendation to the City Council to designate two Champion American chestnut trees at Mills & Mills Funeral Home as heritage trees. Motion carried unanimously.**

**NEXT MEETING**

**DATE: -**

Coordinator Jones Wood advised that the next meeting includes an introduction to the Street Tree Plan with the Planning Commission. A discussion on Arbor Day supplies could be added to the agenda. The joint meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, January 10, 2023. Commissioner Chapman advised that he would be unable to attend a Tuesday meeting. Coordinator Jones Wood reported she asked the Planning Commission about the possibility of conducting the joint meeting on Monday, January 9, 2023. She has not received a response at this time. She reviewed the schedule of joint meetings with the Planning Commission during 2023.

The Board and staff discussed scheduling a second meeting in January 2023 to discuss the gap analysis. Coordinator Jones Wood advised that she would follow-up with Ms. Frappier on whether other follow-up questions would be provided to the Board prior to the January meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Chair Grantham adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
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