

Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas
Tuesday, November 7, 2006 4:00pm
Park and Recreation Department Conference Room
Dallas City Hall

Attendees:

Michael Anderson, Frank Bracken, Chris Cole, Beverly Guthrie, Joshua Hathaway, Michael Hellmann, Steve Houser, Kurt Kretsinger, David Marquis, Walter Passmore, Lori Peniche, Jeff Quinters, Luis Salcedo, Bill Seaman, Bob Stimson, Michael Sultan

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Houser at 4:02. Mr. Houser handed out a sign-in-sheet and copies of the agenda. Guests were welcomed including Frank Bracken, a resident of SW Dallas; Joshua Hathaway, a staff member of the Office of Environmental Quality; Beverly Guthrie, a Master Naturalist; and Lori Peniche, a Master Naturalist. Introductions continued for the benefit of first-time attendees.

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 2006 meeting was offered by Luis Salcedo and seconded by Bill Seaman. The motion was approved unanimously pending a change recommended by Courtney Blevins, Regional Urban Forester in Fort Worth (who is on the committee list of persons to keep informed). He recommended a change to paragraph # 10, so the minutes correctly reflected that the Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council in Fort Worth be recognized as a sponsor of the annual forestry conference to be held on February 14, 2007, at the Texas Discovery Gardens in Fair Park. Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council was, in fact, noted as a sponsor during the last meeting.

Mr. David Marquis and Team Leader, Mr. Bill Seaman, discussed in the September meeting, that there is currently an effort to review the contents of the tree ordinance and other city codes regarding their negative affects on development in the southern sector. In an effort to help the UFAC understand these issues the Honorable Mr. Bob Stimson, former City Council member, was welcomed to speak on behalf of the Business Development Advisory Committee of the Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Stimson identified concerns with potential obstacles to development. Items noted included but were not limited to xeriscaping, and achieving long-term broad goals as opposed to preservation of existing conditions. He also noted the desire to reduce the requirement for the retention of junipers and mesquites, the inadequacy of 80% credit for conservation easements, the method of measurement of multi-stem trees, exceptions for special cases, increased discretion for staff approved exemptions, and the need to expedite the process for developers.

Mike Sultan, Chief Arborist, suggested that some of the concerns might have resulted from a lack of full understanding of flexibilities built into the current tree ordinance. Mr. David Marquis added that development in the southern sector is very important to economic vitality of the City of Dallas as a whole and the southern sector is where the largest concentration of developable land currently exists. Mr. Marquis also added that additional incentives should be strongly considered for developers to do the right thing by saving trees and protecting land through conservation easements. Bill Seaman will meet with David Marquis to identify specific items in the Landscape and Tree Preservation Ordinance and after review by the Land Planning, Development, and City Codes Team, present the full committee with a report and recommendations for ordinance revisions for UFAC consideration and potential endorsement.

Mr. Michael Hellman reported that the application for the UFAC sub-account with the Dallas Parks Foundation has been signed by the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department and returned to the foundation for processing.

Mr. Houser reported that Wes Harder, a member of the committee, had pledged a donation of \$10,000 to the UFAC. All present gave a round of applause. The total amount pledged to date is a \$46,500.00.

Mr. Houser reported that the recent *Dallas Morning News* article generated quite a number of responses as well as important opportunities to involve the community in Urban Forestry. UFAC is fortunate to have

an opportunity to brief the Rainbow Garden Club on our strategic plan this Sunday, November 12, 2007. Walter Passmore will make the presentation with Mr. Houser's assistance.

Dallas Urban Forester, Mr. Walter Passmore, presented an overview of the urban forestry information that will be posted or linked to the dallascityhall.com website. Interested UFAC members were asked to offer a critical review the content and return comments to Mr. Passmore.

Mr. Passmore announced the need to start collecting tree inventory information with Dallas Parks and Recreation staff, volunteers, and professionals.

TXU has offered assistance in providing public information and professional training. A training opportunity may be provided in the spring of 2007 to educate people about working on trees close to power lines.

Mr. Passmore presented a flyer for the UFAC designed to distribute at community group presentations.

Mr. Houser spoke about the Earth Day Jam 2007 event. Gary Littlefield, the event promoter, has a letter of commitment from an investor and expects to receive a letter of credit by next Monday, for the entire 3 million dollars outlined in the budget. This is a major accomplishment in that things can now progress. We will likely receive contracts from the EDJ Corporation in the next week or two. Mr. Houser has a tentative meeting scheduled later this week with several City Attorneys and Financial Staff to discuss numerous financial issues, including the Earth Day Jam.

In a previous conversation with Mr. Jesus Toscano, City Attorney, Mr. Houser explained that the Urban Forest Advisory Committee needs the public to be involved in its projects and needs all these groups and persons to feel they are a part of the committee. Mr. Houser stated the following points.

- At present, the committee has officially appointed voting and non-voting members. It also has a list of interested parties. The Chair has the authority to designate advisors to the committee. Rather than designate a large group of advisors, Mr. Houser would prefer to designate only those who attend meetings and contribute to assisting the committee. We should also be respectful of those who donate time and provide a suitable title such as "Principal Advisor". As an example, consider the amount of time and effort that Kurt Kretsinger has put into his teams effort, or Dick Coupe in working with Kurt, the North Texas Master Naturalists, and the Master Gardeners. Mr. Houser asked for committee input.
- According to Mr. Toscano, because we are not a city board or commission, the management of our meetings is not bound by any city protocol or procedures.

Mr. Houser asked for the opinion of the committee's opinion regarding name plates for the committee members and those who are primary advisors. There was a consensus that this was a good idea.

The Chair recognized Keith Thomas, committee member and architect, for recently obtaining LEED certification as a "Green Architect". He also announced that Mr. Jud Piner, Forester for DFW Airport, would provide a PowerPoint presentation to the committee during the December meeting.

Mr. Houser noted that the committee briefing in October to the Environmental Health Commission regarding our Strategic Plan, was well received.

Mr. Hellmann announced that a briefing on activities of the UFAC would be presented to the Dallas Park Board as soon as its calendar and agenda permits.

No other business was proposed and the meeting was adjourned by Steve Houser.

Respectfully submitted,
Walter Passmore, Dallas Urban Forester
Bill Seaman, Committee Member