

Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas
Tuesday, December 4, 2007 4:00pm
Park and Recreation Department Conference Room
Dallas City Hall

Attendees:

Kimberly Affat, Stan Aten, Sara Beckelman, Fred D. Burrell, Jr., Dick Coupe, Phil Erwin, Michael Fitzgerald, Jim Folger, Michael Hellmann, Lora Hinchcliff, Steve Houser, Kurt Kretsinger, Eric Larner, Gary Gene Olp, Jeff Quinters, Steve Worden.

UFAC Chair, Mr. Steve Houser, called the meeting to order at 4:00pm and welcomed all Committee Members and guests. The Chair asked the committee members if there were corrections or additions to the November minutes. With none noted, the minutes were approved unanimously (Motion to accept – Mr. Jeff Quinters, Second – Mr. Eric Larner).

The Public Information Office, the Office of Environmental Quality and the Information Services Webgroup worked to produce a new “Green Dallas” website. Meranda Carter Cohn with the Public Information office requested that the Chair invite all “arborist/forester/tree hugger” friends to the ceremony on January 9th, at 12:00 noon in the flag room on the 6th Floor. The Chair will e-mail the invitation to the committee. The Chair advised the members that work will soon begin on the annual report to Mayor Leppert, City Council and other city officials. The report will include a list of projects we will work on in 2008 and some of the challenges we will face. We are working to establish committee recommendations regarding the 2009 city budget and the development of an urban forestry program/department. Discussions with officials on the subject are ongoing and committee input is always welcome.

The Chair advised that the committee website is being renovated by adding a great deal of current information in an effort to increase the electronic marketing outreach of the committee. Some expense will be incurred however the site will help us become much more effective in educating the public and enlisting support.

As an advisor to the Vision North Texas partnership, the Chair recently recommended an analysis of the urban forest throughout the DFW region as well as the development of a document that guides future urban forestry efforts for years to come. The document could include general guidelines for the development of local tree related codes, formal training programs for foresters as well as tree climbers and much more. He advised that one of the primary reasons for the recommendation is the potential for obtaining funds regarding the state implementation plan (SIP) for meeting air quality standards. The Chair also reported that the EPA offered other potential funding options through their organization and discussions with a number of other groups will be ongoing.

The Chair advised the committee that we need to complete our recommendations to the city regarding the Trinity Forest Management Plan and requested that be submitted quickly. The hope is to finalize the document and forward it to city officials as well as SFA officials before the end of the year. Since any recreational activities that occur in the forest have the potential to affect the health of existing trees and various forest stands, the Chair requested committee input regarding which activities should be considered and to what degree. He also mentioned that a balanced and inclusive approach that includes something for all interested parties would be important to the public. However, we need to consider more specific details.

Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas
Tuesday, December 4, 2007 4:00pm
Park and Recreation Department Conference Room
Dallas City Hall

Mr. Michael Hellmann provided the Dallas Urban Forester Report and requested a list of groups as well as individuals assisting with the recent tree planting effort (November 17th). The Chair requested that contact information for any of the groups or individuals, be passed along to Mrs. Sara Beckelman. He mentioned that Mrs. Beckelman was introduced to the committee as the North Texas Master Naturalist President. However, she is also his executive assistant and may be more involved with the committee in the future as a result.

Mr. Hellmann informed the committee that he submitted a request to increase the management grade of the city urban forester and he was waiting for a response. He stated that as soon as an approval was received, advertisements would be released for the position, possibly after the first of the year. Mr. Hellman also noted that the Forest Hills tree planting project was well received and that the volunteer group had contacted the Park Department regarding the planting of 800 **more** trees. The group requested park department assistance in digging the holes and delivering the trees, as it was done during the November 17th planting project. Since the Park Department crews were working on overtime, the Forest Hills group was informed that type of help could not be continued through the Park Department due to budget constraints. The need for full time Forestry Staff to help plant trees as well as many other tasks was discussed further.

The Chair announced that the second stakeholder meeting was held in the southern sector at the Janie C. Tuner Recreation Center on Elam Road on Wednesday, November 28. Councilmember David Neumann attended the meeting.

The Chair noted that the city should consider incentives for the preservation of healthy, structurally sound trees or the planting of trees within a heat island problem area. Once the Houston Advanced Research Center completes the heat island study, we will have the data required to make this a part of our recommended changes to the tree ordinance.

Committee Member, Mr. David Marquis, noted that several existing task forces were recently joined together and are working to produce recommendations regarding various city codes.

Tree Planting and Transplanting Team Leader, Mr. Kurt Kretsinger, recapped the November tree planting effort and requested that any pictures or media coverage be forwarded to the Chair or his assistant.

Public Relations & Media Team Leader, Mr. Mike Fitzgerald reported that any UFAC media releases are being distributed through the public information office. Much of the recent media coverage can be found on the committee website: www.dallastrees.com .

Mr. Hellman provided an update on the status of the Trinity River Interpretive Center. The Trinity River Audubon Center, which is currently under construction, is scheduled to be up and running in 2008. The Audubon Society will run the center and it was recommended that the committee explore ways to work together.

Dallas County Master Gardener Liaison and Citizen Forester Team Leader, Mr. Eric Lerner, is working to get the 2008 Citizen Forester Program listed on the DCMG website. The Master Gardener Speakers Bureau will offer tree related training in January which will effectively add more gardeners in the community speaking on tree related subjects.

Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas
Tuesday, December 4, 2007 4:00pm
Park and Recreation Department Conference Room
Dallas City Hall

North Texas Master Naturalist Liaison, Mr. Dick Coupe, inquired if the committee would consider instituting an arborological program for the Dallas County Youth Village. A discussion ensued regarding the course design and possible curriculum. Texas Cooperative Extension Liaison, Mr. Fred D. Burrell, Jr., will locate a curriculum and forward it to the Chair.

Ms. Lora Hinchcliff, Wood Waste Recycling Team Leader, offered a brief recap of her meeting with Jared White, City Parks Department, regarding the existing programs and current objectives of the Dallas City initiative for wood waste recycling. A draft plan was initially developed and proposed by the OEQ which includes a phased program whereby mulch material is generated and applied on-site. Approximately 2,056 cubic yards of mulch was generated in 2007 by City operations and applied at 30 separate park locations. However, this figure only includes two of the six department districts. Additional effort is necessary to get the remaining districts to report their mulch application data.

With no other items introduced, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Hinchcliff
Committee Secretary