

Urban Forest Advisory Committee City of Dallas

Tuesday, January 8, 2008 4:00pm
Park and Recreation Department Conference Room
Dallas City Hall

Attendees:

Sara Beckelman, Nicole Cooper, Dick Coupe, Michael FitzGerald, Matt Grubisich, Michael Hellmann, Steve Houser, Eric Lerner, Cassandra McLaughlin, Janette Monear, Jeff Quinters, Bill Seaman.

UFAC Chair, Mr. Steve Houser, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and welcomed all committee members and guests. The chair asked the committee members if there were any corrections or additions to the December minutes. With none noted, the minutes were unanimously approved as presented. Motion to accept – Mrs. Kassie McLaughlin, Second – Mr. Dick Coupe.

Mr. Houser advised the committee that the City of Dallas Office of Environmental Quality (OEQ) is launching a new website called “Green Dallas” on January 9, 2008 at 12:00 in the flag room on the 6th floor. An invitation was emailed to the committee after our December meeting and committee members were encouraged to attend.

It was noted that a rough draft of the annual report to the Mayor and City Council is complete. The report details the committee’s accomplishments in areas that relate directly to the strategic plan. It also lists a work plan for 2008. Mr. Houser will email it to the committee soon, including a request for quick response with any input.

The committee recommendations regarding the management plan for the Trinity forest are nearly complete and should go out very soon.

According to the chair, much of what we recommend for Dallas is also being recommended to regional authorities. As an example, a regional forest survey and analysis is important in establishing baseline data that is sorely needed for many purposes. One of the big reasons is the implications to air quality. The EPA has yet to act on the current State Implementation Plan (SIP) submitted in June of 2007. The primary question is if the EPA will accept “weight of evidence” (WOE) arguments relating to biogenic sequestration offered by trees or their affect on energy use and the heat island effect. Trees primarily affect air quality in the following ways:

1. Trees remove ozone from the air through dry deposition at the same time contributing VOC’s, which are precursors to ozone formation (both of these phenomena are included in SIP air quality modeling).
2. Trees sequester carbon dioxide, which is a climate change issue rather than a SIP issue.
3. Trees help cool cities, which can reduce ozone formation.
4. Trees reduce wind speeds, which can worsen ozone.
5. Trees can shade buildings helping to reduce energy use and some portion of emissions from power plants.

Mr. Bryan Kilburn, Senior Project Manager for the Trinity Forest, was not in attendance.

During the last stakeholder meeting for the Trinity Forest Management Plan, Mr. Kilburn mentioned that the city recently authorized a governance study to investigate the possibility of establishing a Department for the Trinity River. The chair noted that he believes a Department of Urban Forestry would be a better route to take. The study should begin soon. We believe the committee chair has been added to the working group.

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The Dallas Urban Forester report was provided by Mr. Michael Hellmann. Mr. Hellmann advised that Mary Kay Cosmetics and the Arbor Day Foundation are planning an event for Arbor Day. Ms. Janette Monear will attend the planning committee. The Home Depot Foundation, through the Arbor Day Foundation, also has plans to plant 25-50 trees at a local elementary school in May.

The committee chair mentioned he will get with Mr. Hellmann to help develop a budget for Forestry for 2009, which will be submitted to the City Manager and the City Council. It was noted that the budget for forestry in Austin, Texas, is 1.3 million. Ms. Monear advised that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) has its own taxing authority and the full budget comes from those taxes. Their recommended budget for forestry alone in 2008 is 9.7 million. The City of Minneapolis supplemented the MPRB budget by \$100,000 for tree planting in 2006 and allocated \$200,000 in their budget for 2006/2007 for tree planting on private lands with the local, nonprofit Tree Trust.

Ms. Lora Hinchcliff, Wood Waste Recycling Team Leader was not in attendance.

Mr. Luis Salcedo, Forest Surveys, Inventory and Tracking Team Leader, was not in attendance.

Mr. Bill Seaman, Land Planning, Development and City Codes Team Leader, reported the Green Task Force met on December 4th regarding subdivision development and redevelopment. The task force will recommend that the city incorporate the concepts of the Integrated Storm Water Management (ISWM) plan into city plans. The ISWM was produced by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The next meeting is scheduled for January 15th and the agenda includes a discussion to consider allowances for drainage from lot to lot to eliminate extensive grading, which results in either damage or removal of existing trees. During a discussion of the Grady Niblo site, the committee was advised that this neighborhood hired an outside contractor to help put a program together to effectively eliminate the change in character of existing neighborhood property by developers.

The first set of the recommended changes to the Tree Ordinance from the committee (rough draft) is complete. During a discussion, Mr. Jeff Quinters suggested recommendations should include requirements to show existing power lines on all site plans. It was also recommended that the Chief Arborist be authorized to allow variances for placement of trees on new development so they are not planted under power lines or too close to structures.

Mr. Mike FitzGerald, Public Relations and Media Team Leader advised that he has a couple of public relations projects pending and will get with the chair to discuss.

Mr. Kurt Kretsinger, Tree Planting and Transplanting Team Leader, was not in attendance.

Mr. Houser noted that the committee is recommending the city look for funding for tree planting through the EPA regarding SIP and air quality issues as well as for management of the urban forest. Our Tree Planting and Transplanting Team Leader was asked to establish guidelines for adopting street medians. The chair also advised that planting efforts should be concentrated on heat island problem areas in the city.

Mr. Eric Larner, Citizen Forester Team Leader advised that he is working on setting up the 2008 Citizen Forester class. There are several options regarding days for the class, as well as locations. He expects to

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have these established within the next few weeks. When location and dates have been established, instructors can be lined up and he will contact Mr. FitzGerald for publicity on the program. Mr. Larnar also advised that he was in discussion with the Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council (CTUFC) and Melanie Migura, with the city of Fort Worth, regarding the possibility of combining our two classes for a regional training class. The CTUFC currently covers 17 counties so their classes are large. According to Mrs. Migura, the main stumbling block is getting someone from each city to record the volunteer hours for the Citizen Foresters who volunteer with each city. He will keep the committee chair informed on the progress. Mr. Larnar advised that he has asked Mr. Jim Folger to take a lead role in activities and planning. He has requested that Mr. Folger work with the city to prepare a short page of tree ordinance issues for the Citizen Foresters.

In his position as Dallas County Master Gardener Liaison, Mr. Larnar will be giving presentations on trees at the Dallas Home and Garden Show on January 12th and 13th.

The chair noted that the first public information ad for Oncor, entitled "Know before you grow", appeared in the current Neil Sperry's *Gardens Magazine*. Mr. Jeff Quinters advised that Mr. Sperry will also be doing 30 second spots on his radio program based on this theme. It covers where citizens should and should not plant trees on their property and the height requirements for locations near power lines. It is hoped that this program will help educate the public on the problems and dangers of planting trees under power lines and also advise them of the most beneficial locations for trees.

Mr. Matt Grubisich, Regional Urban Forester with the Texas Forest Service advised that an Urban Forestry Workshop will be held on February 8th at the Ruthe Jackson Center in Grand Prairie by the Trinity Blacklands Urban Forestry Council. The main topic for this conference is "Roots and Pavement Conflicts". Instructors are Dr. Jason Grabosky, Dr. Michael Merchant (Pest Management) and Dr. Kevin Org. (Did Disease or Environmental Factors Kill the Tree?) It was noted that Mr. Ian Hanou, with the NCDC Imaging Company, will speak on mapping, imaging and canopy coverage analysis. Mr. Hanou will also speak on canopy coverage analysis at lunch during the workshop. CEU credits will be available for the workshop. Mr. Houser requested an electronic copy of the registration form to pass along.

Mr. Dick Coupe, North Texas Master Naturalist Liaison, advised that a local neighborhood association (Prestonwood-on the Park) has contacted him and requested they work together on a tree planting initiative with the committee. Mr. Coupe advised the organization that he will be glad to meet with them, assist in obtaining trees and offer help in planting them. The new president of the association asked for a booklet on planting trees. Mr. Coupe will meet with the neighborhood association and forward a copy of the "A, B, C's of Planting Trees in Dallas".

Mrs. Nicole Cooper, Liaison for the Office of Environmental Quality (OEQ) reported that David Hitchcock with the Houston Advanced Research Center has advised the OEQ that the heat island survey will be completed this month.

Ms. Janette Monear, with the Texas Trees Foundation, reported they are putting together a work plan for the year and have 100% buy-in from their Board of Directors. Education is a major component and they are looking at establishing a "Shadekeepers Program" for this purpose. They are also looking at increasing the capacity of their program site and growing some new native plants. They are currently growing 40,000

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trees at two sites. They will be potting another 20,000 this month. Ms. Monear advised the committee she personally enjoys working on tree and forest related projects and education. She advocates integrating urban forestry into the community infrastructure. The chair noted that Ms. Monear teaches Advocacy 101, which is something many folks need to learn. Ms. Monear also advised that we should position ourselves to talk with representatives in Congress about funding for urban forestry through earmarks for Oak Wilt, as well as air quality.

Mr. Houser advised that the EPA has a process to quantify canopy cover by use of their MIST program software, which is a really cool tool! You can set the percentage of canopy cover you need and set a certain time period and it will quantify the number of trees that need to be planted to reach that percentage. The link to the site was sent to the committee by e-mail.

Mr. Stan Aten, with the Oak Cliff Earth Day Event, advised that the Oak Cliff Earth Day group is celebrating their Birthday by establishing its 2nd annual event. Meetings are scheduled on the first and third Sundays in January and February at the Hampton/Illinois library at 2951 S. Hampton Road at 1:00 pm. Lake Cliff Park is currently being renovated for this event. Mr. Aten encouraged the committee and any other group to participate in the event, which will be held on Sunday, April 20th, from 11:00am to 5:00pm.

Regarding previous budget discussions, Mr. Aten suggested that the committee adopt a strategy of establishing talking points and have a representative at all town hall meetings to speak on the items needed in the budget. He also suggested that we get funding for the committee's efforts included in bonds issued by the City. Mr. Aten thought that putting a dollar amount to each talking point would help in establishing the budget for 2009. The current budgeting process is called Budgeting for Outcomes.

As there were no further items to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Sara Beckelman
Committee Advisor/Supporter
Acting Secretary for the meeting