

**Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas**

**Tuesday, January 6, 2009 4:00 pm
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN
Dallas City Hall**

Attendees: Stan Aten, Sara Beckelman, Fred Burrell, Pablo Davila, Philip Erwin, Michael FitzGerald, Deborah Hill, Lora Hinchcliff, Steve Houser, John Hunt, Brett Johnson, Eric Lerner, Janette Monear, Brandon Pollard, Susan Pollard, Amanda Popken, Bill Seaman, C. Michael Stevens, Karen Woodard, Steve Worden, Bert Vandenberg.

UFAC Chair, Mr. Steve Houser, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed all Committee members and guests. The committee gave a warm welcome to Mrs. Deborah Hill with Uptown Dallas, who recently agreed to be our committee liaison for the group.

Mr. Houser asked the Committee members if there were any corrections or additions to the December 2008 meeting minutes. With none noted, the minutes were approved unanimously. A motion to accept was made by Mr. Bill Seaman and a second by Mr. Eric Lerner.

A special congratulations to Kristyn Harris of McKinney (age 14) was announced, who recently received the Girl Scout Silver Award for her work in advocacy and education of the public regarding trees. The Silver Award is the second highest national award a Girl Scout age 11-14 can earn.

At the request of Mr. Houser, a meeting was held with Councilmember Angela Hunt, Mr. Kelly High, Street Department Director and Mr. Ramon Miquez, Assistant City Manager regarding the establishment of standards relating to street trees and their maintenance. The agenda included how to promote the *Adopt a Median* program in the future, the development of a basic design for trees and landscapes in medians including recommended species, and the establishment of best management practices for street tree maintenance. Additionally, Mr. Houser recently provided Councilmember Hunt with a proposal to turn Young Street landscape into a more sustainable median design with the assistance of Ms. Karen Woodard and Mr. Bill Seaman. A copy of the proposal was made available to the committee for review. The Chair mentioned the City of Houston enacted a 1% charge on all new road construction to help fund tree planting and landscaping. He also provided more information to the group on the subject. Future meetings will be scheduled with various city department liaisons and committee members to reach a consensus and supply recommendations on the various aspects of trees and landscape in medians. Since best management practices already exist around the nation, it is believed the task could be completed in a few months.

In previous discussions with the majority of the committee members, the Chair concluded that most everyone wants to continue in their present role for 2009. As a result, a list of recommended replacements along with those who wish to continue serving was presented to the Mayors Deputy Chief of Staff on December the 30th by email. A formal printed copy was also mailed. The Chair will inform the committee of his response when it is received.

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The Chair noted that the *Sun to Moon Gallery* recently moved to a location near the Trinity River. They have been very gracious in the past by donating their time and amazing photographs for our annual reports. Mr. Scot Miller from the Sun to Moon Gallery and Mr. Houser recently discussed a possible fundraiser for both the Committee and *Groundwork Dallas* as a part of the gallery 'reopening' in February or March.

Ms. Karen Woodard, Dallas Urban Forester, is working on clarification of Park & Recreation Department operations regarding parkway trees. The department operations state that the property owner of the adjacent property is responsible for maintaining trees which are located within the parkway. Parkway trees are 'street trees' so maintenance calls should go either to the adjacent property owner or to the street department. However, there are a number of 311 calls for parkway tree maintenance being directed to the city parks department. Therefore, Ms. Woodard is working on language changes to the department operations to offer greater clarification of maintenance responsibilities. There is a need to prioritize incoming calls in order to have the ability to properly care for the trees. Ms. Woodard asked if the committee could help with public awareness to educate the public regarding who is responsible for parkway trees. Regarding city crews dealing with trees in the Park & Recreation Department, the first crew training module begins this month, the safety manual is coming along, and three employees in the west district are studying to be ISA Certified Arborists. Mrs. Deborah Hill noted an upcoming seminar that could use some help.

Chief Arborist for the City, Mr. Phil Erwin, updated the committee on two tree planting projects scheduled this weekend. For the Love of the Lake holds its event at Winfrey Point and the Dallas UFAC along the medians on Skillman. Mr. David Rhoads will help cover the activity at Winfrey Point and Mr. Erwin will start with the Skillman planting and end up at the Winfrey Point planting. Trees for both projects are scheduled for delivery at nine that morning. Also, the Little Forest Hills neighborhood had a briefing before council this week and a hearing is to follow regarding the establishment of a conservation district.

Mr. Pablo Davila, Environmental Specialist and Committee Liaison for Dallas Public Works and Transportation, Storm Water Management, announced the Integrated Storm Water Management (ISWM) committee held a meeting today to discuss water quality. Consultants Freese and Nichols Inc. are working with the ISWM committee as consultants for the process. A good Q & A session was conducted and the UFAC Chair offered to send the committee a link for the ISWM draft document in the future.

Committee supporter, Ms. Amanda Popken, was recently hired by the Dallas Office of Economic Development. She now serves as development information analyst and she will check to see how our committee might factor into future development initiatives. Her focus will be on the building community in the southern sector and she may tap into our

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resources for future median plantings, beautifying parks and/or beautifying public spaces.

Public Relations and Media Team Leader, Mr. Mike FitzGerald, reported the Skillman signature tree planting project is ready to go. Once the Skillman project is behind him, Mr. Fitzgerald will begin emailing preliminary text for our website in the coming week to gain feedback from the committee.

Citizen Forester Team Leader and Dallas County Master Gardener Liaison, Mr. Eric Lerner, has 15 Citizen Forester and six Dallas Master Gardener volunteers to help with the tree planting this weekend. Also, without any publicity, the 2009 Citizen Forester program now has over 40 candidates signed up.

Ms. Janette Monear, Executive Director of Texas Trees Foundation, brought the committee up to speed on a number of items. The foundation developed a national model based on tree planting for energy efficiency and NCDC Imaging was contracted to work directly with them. Although both Houston and Baltimore are interested in obtaining it, the model will first be presented here in Dallas. The USDA Forest Service will be in town February 11 to join Texas Trees Foundation in showing the model to Mayor Leppert. Mrs. Monear would also like to present their model to the committee at our February meeting.

Mrs. Monear informed us about the Woodall Rogers Gateway Forest, an area where IH 45 and US 75 come together. This area is TxDOT property and the Gateway Forest project was initiated in 2004 in order to sequester CO₂. A history of the site and a written report is available. Last summer 347 trees collapsed due to a number of factors including drought conditions and disruption of the on-site drip irrigation system. A number of people and businesses have contacted Texas Trees Foundation to offer assistance in replacing the trees and reinvesting in this area. A stakeholders meeting will be held in February to discuss creating a signature park area at this site. She also noted a number of large donations recently and the planting of 30 trees at Skyline High School. Of final note, the North Central Texas Urban Forestry Conference will be held February 13 in Grand Prairie, TX.

Mr. Stan Aten with Oak Cliff Earth Day informed the committee the 2009 event will be held April 19th. Registrations are not yet open, but Stan will keep us informed. Last year 6,000 people attended Oak Cliff Earth Day.

Brett Johnson, our Regional Texas Parks & Wildlife representative, was recognized at the meeting for his great support of the committee. Brett also is the Dallas Urban Wildlife Biologist and a sponsor of the North Texas Master Naturalist Program.

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Mr. Steve Worden, Dallas Park & Recreation Department announced that he is now the Interim Director for Samuell Farm. Also, that he is willing to be the committee liaison for the Park Department Standards Committee. The farm was previously managed by a private group. The farm has great potential and Mr. Worden is currently working to reclaim the camp areas. Samuell Farm is a great outdoor learning center and can host almost any indoor or outdoor learning event. On a special congratulatory note from the Chair, Mr. Worden recently completed the Dallas County Master Gardener program and will soon begin the North Texas Master Naturalist program.

The Chair requested additional comments or questions. With no other items introduced, the UFAC Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Hinchcliff
Committee Secretary