

**Urban Forest Advisory Committee  
City of Dallas**

**Tuesday, May 5, 2009 4:00 pm  
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN  
Dallas City Hall**

Attendees: Stan Aten, Sara Beckelman, Frank Bracken, Dick Coupe, Bob Curry, Philip Erwin, Michael FitzGerald, Laura Foland, Mary Graves, Cory Herpel, Deborah Hill, Lora Hinchcliff, Larry Hochberg, Steve Houser, Brett Johnson, Eric Larnar, Gretchen Luedtke, David Marquis, Brad Mayfield, Alexa Schirtzinger, Bill Seaman, Richard Smart, Karen Woodard.

UFAC Chair, Mr. Steve Houser, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. welcoming all committee members and guests. Mr. Houser was pleased to announce a recent addition to the committee, Mr. Larry Hochberg. The committee extended a warm welcome to Mr. Hochberg, who is Principal and President of Hochberg PC as well as Landscape Committee Chair and Board Member for the Turtle Creek Association. He will now be our Liaison for the Turtle Creek Association. The Chair also welcomed back Mary Graves, Citizen Forester, Corey Herpel, Dallas Storm Water Management Environmental Coordinator, Laura Foland, City Attorney, and extended a warm welcome to Mr. Frank Bracken.

Mr. Houser asked the Committee members if there were any corrections or additions to the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. With none noted, a motion to accept was made by Mr. Dick Coupe and a second by Mr. Eric Larnar. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman Houser announced the formal designation of Mr. Bob Curry as Vice Chair of the Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee. Mr. Curry is a Citizen Forester and the current President of Save Open Spaces. He is also employed by the City of Dallas in the Code Enforcement Department. The Chairman will seek the Mayor's official appointment of Mr. Curry as Vice Chair of the Committee. Mr. Houser informed the committee we may have one or two other Vice Chairs designated to assist with management of our affairs and in the future to eventually chair the committee.

The committee worked with Groundwork Dallas and the Sun to Moon Gallery a few weeks ago to produce a small fundraiser relating to the exhibit for the Great Trinity River Forest and featuring City Manager Mary Suhm. This brief small event will hopefully help us raise more funds in the future. It was a last minute "throw it together and run" type of event and was intended to attract a small group of prominent potential donors. We originally asked Mayor Leppert, and he was more than willing to help but his schedule prevented his attendance before the exhibit moved to Austin. With less than two weeks to put the event together, we asked City Manager, Mary Suhm. Mr. Mike Fitzgerald did a great job of speaking on behalf of the committee during the event. Groundwork Dallas was recognized for working to build trails in the Dallas area. Their work includes cleaning building trails around the Audubon Center, working with Americorps volunteers. A brochure was passed around the committee to review.

In a recent discussion with Council Member Linda Koop regarding trees, air quality and environmental health, the Chair explained we needed to work more closely with other city groups and officials on these types of issues. Council Member Koop put Mr. Houser in touch with Dr. Sheron Patterson who is the Chair for the Environmental Health Committee.

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They are very interested in working together and Mr. Houser offered to brief them or meet to discuss future opportunities. A briefing to committee regarding their group will be offered in the future as a relationship builds.

It is important to recognize the hard work of committee members that were involved in all the Earth Day and Arbor Day events within the last month or two. As such, Mr. Houser took time to recognize and thank all present for their dedication to the cause and their efforts.

Since the tree ordinance recommendations are currently a primary topic of discussion, it is important to note what we think the future will hold. City attorneys are currently looking at the draft version, primarily for any conflicts with other local, state or federal laws. If any exist, we will need to alter recommendations accordingly. By May 15<sup>th</sup> we hope to have written input from the committee regarding issues to consider. Suggestions that the committee feels are important will be included and it is our goal to complete the changes by the end of the month.

Ms. Karen Woodard, Dallas Urban Forester, will try to reserve the auditorium in the first few weeks of June for a public stakeholder meeting; preferably on an evening between 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. We need be sure the event is posted on the city website and promoted. We hope to record public comments to be submitted with our recommendations, any and good ideas we will include with the final recommendations. Once final recommendations are complete, we will submit the final version to Mayor Leppert and the Chair of the Quality of Life Committee, Councilmember Pauline Medrano. It is not clear the next steps in the process or if we will need to brief the QOL Committee. In a meeting with the Mayor last month the Chair did express concern that the issue could take years to work through the typical city process. However, Mr. Houser believes the Mayor understands the concerns and may urge officials to move more quickly.

An open discussion regarding the Tree Ordinance and Matrix was conducted by the Chairman including the format to consider regarding questions submitted and having a log of comments available to avoid repetition of questions. While we are aware of many tree related issues which are outside the purpose of article 10, this exercise is to specifically address concerns within the ordinance as it currently stands.

Mr. David Marquis, Green Building Task Force Co-Chair, recently spoke with the task force and we are seen as playing a critical role relative to the use and maintenance of trees in the planning and building phases. He noted that what the committee says has clout and that city officials will listen. Mr. Marquis would like to see Article X address preservation as well as mitigation and conservation. The idea of issuing credits for quality trees and quality forests that are saved was briefly discussed. Mr. Frank Bracken questioned why the existing tree ordinance needs modification and a brief discussion ensued. Mr. Bracken suggested a red line of what the city attorney(s) is reviewing would be helpful before providing recommendations. One item that

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seems to be missing is a financial accounting (value) of trees on site. There was also concern raised to ensure we get home owner and community input about what citizens want to see regarding trees. Last, there is concern if the ordinance will be enforced. The overall goal (of both the tree and green building ordinance) as seen by Mr. Marquis is to increase ground permeability while creating a better landscape in Dallas. He believes we are seeing a culture change in city hall regarding how land is developed and how we treat trees. Now is the time to get involved, participate and give your feedback.

Ms. Deborah Hill, Liaison for Uptown Improvement, touched briefly on the unveiling of the seven-acre Gateway Forest Park that will serve to connect the new Arts District with uptown Dallas. Texas Trees Foundation is coordinating the renovation and Lamberts Landscape Company will also be involved in the project. Uptown District, known for its signature color, is thinking about changing some of the medians for more natural plantings and some tree replacement. The committee offered Ms. Hill a number of local resources for colorful native and adapted annual and perennial plants including The Dallas Arboretum plant trials, the TNLA endowed, WaterWise Display bed at the Arboretum, Dallas County Master Gardeners, the AgriLife Research Extension Center, North Texas Master Naturalists, and the water wise display at the offices of Dallas County Commissioner Maurine Dickey, District 1. Ms. Karen Woodard will follow up with Ms. Hill regarding information and suggestions regarding the trees.

Dallas Urban Forester Report was provided by Ms. Karen "Woodie" Woodard, who has been working with the Streets and Public Works Department approving tree sites, reported that April was a month full of events. She is currently preparing for a big city employee workshop in June. The workshop will cover planning, design and construction. The design and planning stages are big issues, more than mitigation at times because planners often do not visit a site before or during the design phase. It is not uncommon to find tree decisions are sometimes best made on the site, rather than in the office.

Mr. Phil Erwin, Chief Arborist, began the Dallas City Arborist report by thanking Ms. Woodard for her help with the reforestation fund and bid package process which should lead to better quality trees, and a more efficient purchase and delivery system. This includes having vendors take a more responsible role in off loading trees, including Saturday deliveries, thereby making it as safe as possible for citizens, students and volunteers involved on these projects. In the same vein, they will modify the reforestation process by September 1, 2009. Mr. Erwin will try detailing what the process will be and have it on the GREENDALLAS.net web site. Last, Mr. Erwin suggested a web search of Green Grand Prairie ISWM for a quick concept overview of development. Without getting bogged down in detail, the link can provide a general idea of what might be included in the (revised) ordinance.

Mr. Cory Herpel reported on Dallas Public Works & Transportation, Storm Water Management (ISWM) Outreach. Pablo Davila no longer serves on the committee and will be replaced by Kathleen Neilson, Environmental Specialist. Also, the Dallas SWM Outreach Manager resigned

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effective today so there is a position open. Herbicide training is being conducted with the Park Department, and Outreach has a new active demonstration display showing the effect of fertilizers, etc. on storm water runoff. The Chair requested Mr. Herpel bring the display to the next committee meeting for demonstration purposes and that trees be added to show how they filter storm water runoff. The Texas Stream Team is posting four years of data on the city web site [www.wheredoesitgo.com](http://www.wheredoesitgo.com). Dallas SWM, Water Utilities and OEQ may be joining forces to offer a rainwater barrel building workshop. It was suggested to contact the city attorney's office first to find out what our city ordinance does or does not allow regarding rainwater harvesting before pursuing the workshop. Some cities have codes against their use.

The Chair recently met with Ms. Amanda Popken, Development Information Analyst with Dallas Office of Economic Development, to assist her with tree and forestry related facts including information about our diverse eco-system. The information is to be part of an economic development atlas geared toward attracting national and international businesses to relocate in Dallas.

Ms. Lora Hinchcliff, Wood Waste Recycling Team Leader, recently worked with Lake Highlands Community Garden to provide donated tree mulch from the park district and various tree companies for the one-year anniversary and ground breaking of 54 additional garden plots. A donation garden was also included in the expansion. Scott's Miracle-Gro and City of Dallas representatives held a 'kick off' celebration highlighting the expansion on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Hinchcliff represented the committee at the event. LHCG is the first of its kind partnership between the City of Dallas and local residents. With the help of a generous grant provided by the organic division of Scott's Miracle-Gro, the LHCG has transformed a long forgotten field into a productive organic garden supplying the local community and organizations in need with locally grown produce. LHCG serves as a learning center demonstrating the proper use of organic products, utilizing "water-wise" methods for irrigating the crops, while planting the right plant in the right space at the right time for maximum productivity. Also, the 2009 expansion will include bee hives with a bee garden to keep the plants producing naturally. City representatives attending the kick-off included Council Members Sheffie Kadane, District 9 and Jerry Allen, District 10, Dallas OEQ Director, Eric Griffin, Alan Walne, past council member District 10 and Joan Walne, Dallas Park and Recreation Board Vice Chair and District 10 representative.

Public Relations and Media Team Leader, Mr. Mike FitzGerald, is addressing the next phase of our website updates: text. Citizen Forester, Ms. Mary Graves is assisting with this segment of the project. City Urban Forester, Ms. Karen Woodard, is assisting with "Know Your Codes" section. A resident who has lived a number of years on Skillman called to personally thank the committee for the Skillman medians showcase tree planting. Mr. Eric Larner will coordinate with Mr. FitzGerald regarding future tree plantings along Skillman.

Mr. Eric Larner, Citizen Forester (CF) Team Leader and Dallas County Master Gardener Liaison, reported 21 people have officially committed to the 2009 Citizen Forester class, and Mr. Larner would like to recruit more participants. Mrs. Sara Beckelman is helping him produce and

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distribute, a CF course description. Ms. Woodard is putting together a May-June tree survey for Samuell Farm Outdoor Learning Center, and Farm Day for all Dallas area 4th grade children is scheduled next week. Additionally, the kids summer program will run June through August with Storm Water Management Outreach participation. Needless to say, there are a number of educational events on the schedule.

Mr. Larner also reported working with the Chair on helping Greenhill School with a successful Earth Day event in which the 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students joined together to formed a tree together and learned that “trees are cool”.

The North Texas Master Naturalist Report was provided by Mr. Dick Coupe, NTMN Liaison. A regional conservation conference will be held at the DISD Environmental Education Center off Highway 75 (Central Expressway) on May 16<sup>th</sup>. More information can be found at <http://NTMN.org> where you can also register for the event.

Mr. Stan Aten, representing Oak Cliff Earth Day, reported the 2009 event captured attendees from as far away as Kansas. It is estimated 8,000 people attended this year. A debriefing and wrap-up meeting will held next Sunday. Please email Mr. Aten any comments you would like to share on what the event planners did right and/or wrong to be included in the discussion.

The Chair requested additional comments or questions. With no other items introduced, the UFAC Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Hinchcliff  
Committee Secretary