

**Urban Forest Advisory Committee
City of Dallas**

**Tuesday, June 2, 2009 4:00 pm
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN
Dallas City Hall**

Attendees: Stan Aten, Mary Ayala, Patrick Boyd, Fred Burrell, Dawn Carter, Bob Curry, Carole Davis, Philip Erwin, Michael FitzGerald, Laura Foland, Susan Elking Grabar, Michael Hellmann, Cory Herpel, Lora Hinchcliff, Lawrence Hochberg, Steve Houser, Eric Lerner, Brad Mayfield, Kassandra McLaughlin, Amanda Popken, 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, Ms. Carole Davis with the City of Dallas Water Utilities, who will now serve as committee liaison for the department. Ms. Davis is delighted to be our new liaison and looks forward to helping strengthen the existing tree ordinance relative to storm water management while working to align any proposed changes with other city ordinances. The committee also extended a warm welcome to new guest, Ms. Dawn Carter from the Potters House. Ms. Carter briefly recapped the tree planting initiated by the Potters House this past year, including some of the lessons the group learned from the planting (for instance, proper tree selection, planting techniques and care). Ms. Carter looks forward to the Potters House partnering with the Dallas UFAC in their 2010 tree planting to depend on our knowledge and expertise.

Mr. Houser asked the Committee members if there were any corrections or additions to the May 5th meeting minutes. There was one clarification regarding Groundwork Dallas and the Buckeye Trail plus the Dallas ISWM Outreach "Stream Team" was mistakenly noted in the minutes as the "Green Team". With no other corrections noted, a motion to accept was made by Mr. Bill Seaman and a second by Mr. Mike FitzGerald. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman Houser announced The Sun to Moon Gallery opening raised \$150.00 for our Dallas Park Foundation fund. It was also our first public fundraiser and it served to educate a number of people about our work, including City Manager, Ms. Mary Suhm. It helped to establish a stronger relationship with Groundwork officials and those attending the event. There also were two other significant donations, neither of which can be announced until next meeting. One is from a friend that challenged Mr. Houser to raise matching funds for their donation. He hopes to accomplish this goal soon and will make an announcement when it is accomplished.

Mr. Cory Herpel, Environmental Coordinator for Storm Water Management and Mr. Richard Smart, Environmental Coordinator provided the committee with a storm water model demonstration. The model helps them talk to the public at events and helps to educate citizens about the consequences of non-point source pollution (polluted runoff). Mr. Herpel and Mr. Smart showcased the fact that a demonstration is 'worth a thousand words'. The model visually demonstrates the effects of pollution such as pet waste, washing cars in a driveway, grass clippings, pesticides, fertilizer and trash, when water flows from the point of pollution into the storm drain inlet and ultimately ends up in our creeks, rivers and lakes. The model further demonstrated the benefit of adding trees before the same number of pollutants were applied to the model. The trees proved to act as biological filters for storm water runoff, holding the soil and a large volume of water, thereby mitigating the amount of contaminants flowing into the storm drain inlet.

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Mr. Houser led a brief discussion regarding the Tree Ordinance and Tree Mitigation Matrix. It was suggested that full public input may not be received until a final draft is distributed, including suggestions from the development, builder and construction industry. Mr. Bob Curry, Committee Vice Chair, questioned how we can emphasize the effect of the ordinance, specifically as it might relate to redevelopment of property south of Dallas. In planning for a public hearing, Mr. Mike FitzGerald, Team Leader for Public Relations, will generate a press release to make sure we get a strong public response. Mr. Bill Seaman, Team Leader for Land Planning, Development & Codes, suggested it would be helpful to take some of the major recommended changes and adapt them to a power point presentation. Mr. Fred Burrell offered to supply a visual slide demonstrating the increase in storm water run off vs. good tree canopy cover. It was agreed that it could be a challenge to keep the meeting succinct and focused on the issue at hand, but at the same time we want to encourage feedback from the community. Ms. Woodard, Dallas Urban Forester, offered to set up the auditorium to record all comments for a meeting transcript. While Mr. Houser personally spoke with each Council Member, the committee was reminded that even when complete, our draft recommended ordinance changes will still need to be written by city attorneys and go through the city process. This typically involves going thru the Zoning & Ordinance Advisory Committee (ZOAC) then to the City Plan Commission (CPC) and then to City Council for final approval.

Ms. Karen Woodard, Dallas Urban Forester, updated the committee on the Youth Corps which is working to add 10 miles in new trails near the existing Buckeye Trail. Also, the June, July and August summer camps have 60 children enrolled.

Senior Park Planner, Mr. Michael Hellmann, mentioned in light of the current budget shortfalls, there is still a priority in the Dallas Park and Recreation Department to continue with capital projects. The city has 21,000 acres of park land and there remains \$2 billion in budget needs just for the park department alone. They will try an online survey for a capital needs inventory that was initially for the year 2010 but may now move to 2011. Mr. Larry Hochberg, Committee Liaison for the Turtle Creek Association, requested clarification of how labor versus capital is determined when formulating the budget (e.g. trucks). Such items were previously included in the maintenance budget, but the trend is to now moving toward adding big acquisitions into the capital budget. Capital needs that affect the park system need to be included in the bond program. The city has been good at using bonds for capital projects, such as buildings and other items that have a 20 year life since that is the 'life' of the bond. Other areas getting more funding consideration include green roofs for the athletic complex and maintenance building, which require LEED certification. The Audubon Center has one of the first area green roofs and Main Street Garden is coming next. It was noted that since the committee members and the public have opportunities to comment on city bond programs, the preceding projects may be good to reference.

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Ms. Amanda Popken, Committee Liaison and Development Information Analyst with the Dallas Office of Economic Development, is researching the use of sustainable landscapes in street medians. Her research caught the eye of her Department Director, Mr. Daniel Oney. The initial proposal for a sustainable landscape design of the medians in front of City Hall was submitted by Mr. Houser and Mr. Seaman at the request of Council Member, Angela Hunt. Mr. Houser was explaining the importance of sustainable landscapes and Council Member Hunt challenged him to apply the theory in front of City Hall. Mr. Houser also submitted the proposal to City Manager, Mary Suhm and Assistant City Manager, Jill Jordan as a way to save city funds and precious resources. Mrs. Nicole Cooper, OEQ Liaison, and Ms. Amanda Popken contacted Mr. Houser needing assistance with a plan to consider expanding the concept to the 14 council districts. The initial proposal for City Hall medians could produce savings of up to \$7,000.00/year just by using buffalo grass, adding native plants, mowing at higher heights, adding mulch, not shearing shrubs and watering less. Mr. Houser has a copy of the proposed City Hall median landscape modifications and offered to send it to the committee.

Dallas Trinity River Corridor Liaison, Mrs. Mary Ayala of the Trinity River Corridor Office, recently had a boy scout come out and install trail marker signs and will come back to install a kiosk at Rochester Park as part of his scouting projects. Trinity Trails Phase 1, a two-mile trail, is scheduled to be completed August 2009. The phase 2 trail is scheduled to begin construction in early 2010 followed by an eight-mile phase (based on funding) to be built by Army Corps of Engineers. This is part of the Corps \$4 million commitment to recreation although there could be a two year delay based on what happens with other parts of the project.

Land Planning, Development and City Codes Team Leader, Mr. Bill Seaman, offered one comment based on what was discussed earlier about the Tree Ordinance and Tree Mitigation Matrix. If, when reading the ordinance, one finds it is difficult to understand, send Bill an email. It could be a wording issue which can be modified to be more applicable or understandable to citizens or lay persons. Mr. Seaman and Mr. Houser have been working with the ordinance for over 15 years, so they understand there can be difficulties in understanding certain segments.

Mr. Mike Fitzgerald, Public Relations & Media Team Leader, will be working with Mr. Kurt Kretsinger, Tree Planting and Transplanting Team Leader and Mr. Eric Lerner, Citizen Forester Team Leader to provide maintenance for the Skillman Median Project. The purpose is to check any stressed trees (Texas Ash and one or two Caddo Maples seem distressed), to clean up the area and to better spread some of the thicker areas of mulch.

Mr. Eric Lerner, Citizen Forester Team Leader, will release program announcements and class locations this week. To date the 2009 class has 24-25 enrollees and will begin evening meetings on August 11th running through November. The class will meet every two weeks. Mr. Lerner is scheduled to lead an education event at the Museum of Nature and Science in Fair Park. The topic and demonstration will focus on the benefit of trees.

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Committee Liaison for Oak Cliff Earthday, Mr. Stan Aten inquired about the trees in front of the Myerson Symphony Center. Per Ms. Woodard, the trees will be removed and replaced, although the details are not yet finalized. Due to the trees size and root structure, they cannot be salvaged.

Mr. Patrick Boyd, Senior Design Associate with David Ralston Landscape Associates mentioned that the first two medians on Jefferson will be planted this fall and the plan includes Bur Oaks and Maples. The design also includes a decomposed granite trail as well as native and adapted plants along with a long term goal of removing all Bermuda grass.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Hinchcliff
Committee Secretary

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