

Urban Forest Advisory Committee City of Dallas

Tuesday, February 3, 2009 4:00 pm
Conference Room 'B' • L1FN
Dallas City Hall

Attendees: Stan Aten, Sara Beckelman, Fred Burrell, Dick Coupe, Philip Erwin, Michael FitzGerald, Deborah Hill, Lora Hinchcliff, Steve Houser, John Hunt, Van Johnson, Kurt Kretsinger, Eric Larner, Gretchen Luedtke, Brad Mayfield, Kassandra McLaughlin, Janette Monear, Micah Pace, Jeff Quinters, Alexa Schirtzinger, C. Michael Stevens, Karen Woodard, David Wright.

UFAC Chair, Mr. Steve Houser, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed all committee members and guests. Guests introduced to the committee include the following: Ms. Alexa Schirtzinger of the Dallas Observer who recently wrote a blog article that was forwarded to the committee; Mr. Brad Mayfield, our new Liaison with ONCOR, at the invitation of Mr. Jeff Quinters; Mr. David Wright from Caruth Hills and Caruth Homeplace Neighborhood; and our new Texas Forest Service representative, Mr. Micah Pace.

Mr. Houser asked the Committee members if there were any corrections or additions to the January 2009 meeting minutes. With minor corrections noted and the inclusion of our year end balance of our Dallas Parks Foundation account, the January 6th minutes were approved unanimously. A motion to accept was made by Mr. Jeff Quinters and a second by Ms. Janette Monear.

Mr. Houser expressed sincere appreciation for the hard work of all those involved in our recent Showcase Tree Planting project and for the project leadership by team leaders Mr. Kurt Kretsinger, Mr. Michael FitzGerald and Mr. Eric Larner. Additionally he expressed the committee's appreciation to Ms. Lora Hinchcliff with Living Earth Technology for the donation of 40 cubic yards of mulch. While on the subject, the Chair also thanked Ms. Hinchcliff for scheduling a meeting with Mr. Ron Smith, Assistant Director for Sanitation Services, and for her hard work in recording the minutes of our meetings.

As the committee is aware, the list of committee appointees was sent to Mayor Leppert for approval. However, a few additions to the previous appointed member list have been made to include:

- Mr. Paul Lindenberger, VP of Operations for Downtown Dallas
- Mr. Stephen Worden under a new title of Dallas Parks and Recreation Department Standards Liaison was well as interim manager for Samuel Farm
- Mr. Brad Mayfield as our liaison with ONCOR
- Mr. Fred Burrell as our liaison for Texas AgriLife Extension (not to include NTMN)
- Mr. Brett Johnson as our liaison for Texas Parks & Wildlife
- Ms. Janette Monear as our liaison for Texas Trees Foundation

The list also included all our existing liaisons that were designated in the past including Mr. Richard Smart, Mr. Pablo Davila and others. Also, very recently the Chair received

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authorization from Mr. Daniel Oney, Director with the Office of Economic Development (OED), to designate Ms. Amanda Popken, Research and Information Manager with OED as our liaison for the group.

The Chair clarified that he is only authorized to designate new positions as well as designate people to fill an existing, unfulfilled role. In some cases, the designation is to replace an existing person who is no longer able to fulfill a position for any reason. However, only Mayor Leppert can offer an official appointment. Therefore, we must await the mayor's blessing before appointments can be considered as official. Mr. Houser also informed the committee the annual report to the Mayor and City Council should be completed soon.

Mr. Mike Hellmann along with the Chair, provided a briefing to the Quality of Life Committee on Monday, January 26th. Together they had hoped to establish a division or office of urban forestry and Mr. Houser met with all but one Council member last year to discuss the issues. All were supportive of the effort. Council member Angela Hunt made a motion to move the proposal forward, however the motion died due to the budget constraints and concerns regarding the economy at this time.

Mr. Matt Grubisich with Urban Renewal, provided a power point presentation regarding the Roadmap to Planting trees for the committee. The committee expressed appreciation for the presentation and the hard work by the Texas Trees Foundation and Mr. Grubisich.

Ms. Karen Woodard, Dallas Urban Forester, continues to work diligently on past topics covered with the committee.

Chief Arborist for the City, Mr. Phil Erwin, is busy working on a number of city committees. His recent presentation to the Council of Garden Clubs was well received.

The Chair and Ms. Lora Hinchcliff, Wood Waste Recycling Team Leader, had a successful meeting last week with Mr. Ron Smith, City Assistant Director for Sanitation Services. The purpose of the meeting was to learn about Mr. Smith's green and wood waste recycling initiatives at the McCommas Bluff landfill and any prospective initiatives for a city wide bulky brush recycling program. The meeting also offered an opportunity for Ms. Hinchcliff to provide Mr. Smith with information about the Dallas UFAC mission and how wood waste and bulky brush recycling fits in our UFAC Strategic Plan for Urban Forestry Initiatives. Mr. Smith is already diverting some brush waste from the landfill, which is recycled onsite by a contractor and reapplied at the landfill for erosion control purposes and as a bio-filter medium. Ron Smith's long term goal in Sanitation Services is to divert nearly all brush or wood waste from the landfill, recycling the material for use as cover crop at the landfill and as a source of fuel (methane). Meeting this goal would extend the lifespan of the landfill from an estimated 50-year life span to 62 years. The

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Chair and Ms. Hinchcliff complimented Mr. Smith on his current efforts and plans for the future.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Smith recommended Mr. Adam Jochelson serve as Sanitation Services Liaison to the Dallas UFAC. Mr. Jochelson will be able to provide statistics and other pertinent information to the Committee to help guide our future efforts and educate various city officials.

Public Relations and Media Team Leader, Mr. Mike FitzGerald, reported the Skillman signature tree planting project is finished resulting in the flipping of a grassy median to a tree grove showcasing 27 trees (19 Caddo Maple, 6 Texas Ash and 2 Pecan). The conditions on the day of planting were interesting at 35 degrees with strong north winds. Council member Angela Hunt stopped by to encourage and thank the volunteers plus WBAP, Fox 4 and Univision provided media coverage of the planting. Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Larner and Mr. Kretsinger are reviewing what went well with the project and what can be done better for future events. Additionally, they will develop a tree planting manual to cover logistics for median plantings in an effort to help guide the public and the committee regarding future tree planting projects. Mr. FitzGerald reminded the committee that the web page is under redesign and that he will need various team leaders and committee members to review the potential language and send their responses to him for consideration.

Mr. Kurt Kretsinger, Tree Planting and Transplanting Team Leader, is moving forward with the next tree planting project. Also, in analyzing the costs associated with our signature planting project, Mr. Kretsinger met with his client representative from Sam's Club recently and they agree to put 5% of Mr. Kretsinger's Sam's Club sales toward the maintenance of the project. Mr. Kretsinger received a loud applause from the committee for his donation and commitment to the project as well as his team's hard work. Mr. Kretsinger also approached several developers to generate an interest in working with Mr. Kretsinger to assist in planting median areas, including new developments, in the future.

Citizen Forester Team Leader and Dallas County Master Gardener Liaison, Mr. Eric Larner, met with Ms. Woodard recently to discuss the 2009 Citizen Forester class. With a list of 50 new prospects, Mr. Larner will send each a survey of their interest. Classroom time is scheduled June through September followed by field training October through December. Ms. Woodard believes they can handle a class of 40-50, but the sticking point is finding a place that can accommodate such a large class. Mr. Larner announced he is giving a presentation on Trees & Storm Water Run Off to the Dallas County Master Gardeners at month end and is scheduled to give a presentation in June to the Frisco Garden Club.

Mr. Micah Pace, Texas Forest Service (TFS) Regional Urban Forester (Dallas region), was given a warm welcome by the committee and guests. TFS is pleased to have the

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role filled again. Mr. Pace announced the Annual North Central Texas Urban Forestry Workshop will be held February 13th at the Ruthe Jackson Center in Grand Prairie, Texas. State Arbor Day is scheduled for April 24th in Grand Prairie.

Mrs. Deborah Hill, Board Member and Landscape Committee Member for Uptown Dallas, as well as our Committee Liaison, noted how pleased the Uptown PID Board is to have a liaison with the committee.

Mr. David Wright from Caruth Hills and Caruth Homeplace Neighborhood would like to develop a plan for an empty lot within the Caruth neighborhood. On the west side there is a sound wall and on the other side is a residential neighborhood. Along the west corner of the intersection lays a trash gathering lot. An architect has drawn a plan to create a transition from a multi-transportation corridor lot into the neighborhood, and the community would like to see the project move forward. The committee can help by encouraging the city to save the lot for public use vs. selling it. It appears the largest issue is maintenance of the property. The suggestion was made to work with TxDOT in an effort to have them take more responsibility, or encourage city support (District 13 – Mr. Mitch Rasansky).

Ms. Janette Monear, Liaison for Texas Trees Foundation (TTF), offered a written update to the committee to help us keep up with all they are doing. TTF, in partnership with NCDC Imaging Inc. and support from the City of Dallas, NCTCOG, Texas Forest Service, EPA and the Houston Area Research Center, has developed a national model that will map, identify and prioritize tree planting sites using GIS and remote sensing technologies and environmental factors. The Roadmap to Planning & Planting Trees offers direction for urban tree planting in the City of Dallas. A condensed overview of this plan was included in the written update provided by Ms. Monear. Also, a new design is being created for Woodall Rogers Park and a public meeting will be held in late February to gather input.

Mr. Stan Aten with Oak Cliff Earth Day, April 19, 2009, informed the committee the groups' website is now open for registrations. No fee spaces are available for non-profit groups at this time, and it would be great to get the Citizen Foresters involved with the event. The Red Cross is partnering with Methodist Hospital to provide parking and shuttle service.

Mr. Fred Burrell, Liaison for Texas AgriLife Extension, announced an IPM Pesticide re-certification program will be held at the Marsh Lane office on February 12. You can also register to attend the March 4th, Urban Wildlife Conference, sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas Parks and Wildlife and the North Texas Master Naturalists, online at www.ntmn.org.

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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