



SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Becca Neumann (Position #4 – Hydrologist), Co-chair
Joshua Morris (Position #7 – NGO), Co-Chair
Laura Keil (Position #10 – Get Engaged), Co-Chair
Julia Michalak (Position #1 – Wildlife Biologist) • **Falisha Kurji** (Position #3 – Natural Resource Agency)
Stuart Niven (Position #5 – Arborist – ISA) • **Hao Liang** (Position #6 – Landscape Architect – ISA)
David Baker (Position # 8 – Development) • **Blake Voorhees** (Position # 9 – Realtor)
Jessica Hernandez (Position #11 – Environmental Justice) • **Jessica Jones** (Position # 12 – Public Health)
Lia Hall (Position #13 – Community/Neighborhood)

The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle

Meeting notes

April 7, 2023, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Via Webex call and in-person at the
Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 1872 (18th floor)
700 5th Avenue, Seattle

(206) 207-1700

Meeting number: 2487 090 0691

Meeting password: 1234

Attending

Commissioners

Josh Morris – Co-Chair
Becca Neumann – Co-Chair
Laura Keil – Co-Chair
Falisha Kurji
Stuart Niven
David Baker
Jessica Jones
Lia Hall

Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE
Lisa Ciecko – SPR

Guests

Toby Thaler

Absent- Excused

Julia Michalak
Hao Liang
Blake Voorhees
Jessica Hernandez

Public

Steve Zemke

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at:
<https://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocuments>

Call to order: Josh called the meeting to order and offered a land acknowledgement.

Public comment:

Steve Zemke recommended removing the exemption for properties of certain size from needing to plant street trees, rather than reducing the size threshold down to 500 feet. He also recommended, regarding the pruning thresholds for reportable work, that the canopy and branch size thresholds included in the ordinance be consistent across departments.

Chair, Committees, and Coordinator report:

None

UFC recommendations on draft Urban Forest Protection ordinance

Josh thanked Hao and Becca for helping to make continued edits to the draft recommendation letter since the Wednesday meeting, and Commissioners then worked through the rest of the letter, reviewing and editing the content. Primary discussion areas included:

- The 85% hardscape allowance for development projects
- Tree replacement requirements when mitigation for removed trees is required, and ensuring adequate conditions for survival of replacement trees
- Canopy and branch size thresholds for reportable work done by tree service providers
- The payment amount for the payment-in-lieu option when tree removal mitigation doesn't happen on-site
- Penalties for violations and the city's ability to enforce them
- Expanding the reporting requirements to ensure adequate monitoring and evaluation of the ordinance and its outcomes
- Two additional recommended Director's Rules regarding invasive tree species and pest, pathogen and insect infestations
- The exemption for street tree requirements
- Tree removal limits when no development is proposed
- Refining recommendations regarding tree protection areas

Action: a motion to adopt the tree ordinance recommendation letter as amended was made, seconded and approved.

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Public comment:

Steve Zemke commented on the housing issue, noting that Portland amended their tree ordinance last year to provide for a 20% tree protection area on lots, and urged the UFC to consider the implications of potential zoning changes and impacts on tree canopy. He noted the schedule of Council meetings and votes and introduction and consideration of amendments.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Meeting chat:

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:10 AM
current code allows flexibility to city based on

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:10 AM
n what's on a lot

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:12 AM
Lots vary as to trees on lot. This change says treat all lots the same.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:16 AM

Need to do like Portland does - guarantee 20% of lot dedicated to tree retention and tree planting. Proposed change in draft does not say 15% has to be dedicated to trees.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:16 AM

People are waiting to get in to meeting but can't I've been told

From Barbara to everyone: 9:17 AM

Some team members of The Last 6000 are trying to get in but it is responding with waiting for host

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:18 AM

People are getting message host will let them in but they can't get in

From Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 9:19 AM

Webex Meeting doesn't require host letting people in. People use the meeting number and password and are automatically let in.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:21 AM

Neighborhood residential now has 34% canopy, Multifamily is 23% canopy

From Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 9:21 AM

When people use information for a previous meeting, they will get a message about the host not starting the meeting.

From June BlueSpruce to everyone: 9:22 AM

First bullet last sentence should not be worded as a question. Sounds as if the Commission doesn't doubt that it would exacerbate canopy inequities.

From Ciecko, Lisa to everyone: 9:22 AM

If you are hearing from people who can't join, please feel free to provide the meeting information from the website: <https://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingschedule>

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:22 AM

HB 1110 is now in Senate Rules already passed House

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:26 AM

HB 1110 would allow 4-plexes and 6 plexes in what are now single family zones in 16 largest cities in state.

From June BlueSpruce to everyone: 9:30 AM

David Moehring is an invaluable source of design flexibility ideas.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:30 AM

SDCI should be able to ask for alternative site plan if it looks like more trees could be protected

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:36 AM

Other cities require more trees for replacement as size of removed tree increases. Removing an 80 year old tree takes 80 years to replace

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:37 AM

Some cities actually require more

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:38 AM

One for one is tremendous loss of environmental benefits for decades

From Barbara to everyone: 9:38 AM

Will there be a requirement for type of trees? One example I heard was removing an exceptional Doug fir and planting 5 dogwoods... not really an equivalent.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:39 AM

Yes Harrell says city will require 3 for 1 replacement for healthy public trees removed

From Jim Davis to everyone: 9:41 AM

Yes. I understand a norm today is to replace the Douglas Fir with 5 ornamental trees like Dogwoods with equivalent canopy coverage.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:43 AM

If 25% not recommends means no TSP will file for pruning. Exempt fruit trees not all pruning. Pruning is removing canopy.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:47 AM

Should require permits for tree removal and replacement like SDOT does. Tree removal is area needs most oversight and data collection for.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:48 AM

shoul start \$17.87 at 12 inches to follow loss of tree benefits increasing with size of tree removed

From Barbara to everyone: 9:49 AM

Smart, because yes, cost of water will certainly increase at minimum.

From Barbara to everyone: 9:50 AM

Perhaps *Required minimum mitigation

From Joshua Morris to everyone: 9:51 AM

To the extent practicable, tree selection should consider native species, indigenous or cultural significance to the area in which it is being planted, or a climate adaptive species from a similar ecosystem that will maximize mitigation of carbon and stormwater runoff and be resilient to climate change and pests

From June BlueSpruce to everyone: 9:51 AM

Excellent language.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:52 AM

draft says replacement can be a combination of on site and off site

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:54 AM

Needs to be some equivalence to tree lost

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 9:55 AM

The landscape plans are reviewed by SDCI

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:55 AM

There are recommended trees lists based on size

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 9:55 AM

By the planners, not the SDCI arborists

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 09:55AM

Not plant invasives

From Lia Hall to everyone: 9:56 AM

Invasives plant themselves usually

From Lia Hall to everyone: 9:56 AM

By definition

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 9:56 AM

Approved street trees

https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SDOT/PublicSpaceManagement/2015-Street_Tree_List.pdf

From Lia Hall to everyone: 9:59 AM

Idk if I missed this and someone else mentioned David, but there are certain trees only allowed in planting strips under power lines, but I don't think on private property.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:00 AM

\$000 is for exceptional tree, \$17.87 applies to non-exceptional trees and quickly increases to pass \$4000

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:01 AM

excessive pruning was in 2022 draft recommend reas

From Barbara to everyone: 10:02 AM

Groves are critical travel ways for urban wildlife

From Jim Davis to everyone: 10:02 AM

Yes. They are our micro forests.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:04 AM

Permits needed for accurate reporting on tree removed outside development. Tree inventory needed front end of development Putting information on site plans is not data collection since city employees need to put in a data system

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:05 AM

Need information on tree replacements

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:06 AM

Agree with Steve. The City has invested many software dollars in making the system usable by the public. This would leverage involvement of stakeholders and reduce City staff time.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:07 AM

Permits are already done through the Accela database system by SDOT for tree removal

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:07 AM

I and replacement of street trees

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:10 AM

Should include any factors like climate change , pest infestations that have happened since previous reports

From June BlueSpruce to everyone: 10:11 AM

Thanks for all your hard work! I'm going to have to leave now.

From Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 10:17 AM

Suggest adding a sentence above the request for the Director's Rules "the UFC recommends development of two additional DRs:"

From David Baker to everyone: 10:18 AM

"The commission acknowledges that reducing the guaranteed percentage lot coverage will decrease the development capacity of residential zones and subsequently the number of housing units that can be produced. We urge City Council to find a compromise that protects trees and produces new housing units."

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:19 AM

I think the goal is to encourage the use of proven strategies such as alternative foundations (pier, non-trench options) as well as strategic building placement to build the SAME amount of housing WITH trees

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:20 AM

Current site plans are inefficient and waste space that could be aggregated to retain or plant trees

From Barbara to everyone: 10:20 AM

The same amount of housing can be achieved with many creative alternatives as well as building up.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:21 AM

Can also build up rather than spread out. If we want to save trees we need to guarantee them space on lots

From Barbara to everyone: 10:21 AM

There doesn't need to be a reduction in housing to save trees

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:21 AM

Need to balance and give space to trees

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:23 AM

Don't need to build on all lots.

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:23 AM

Agree with Becca. It's important to emphasize that we are not reducing housing units. Most trees already grow on the periphery of lots and are not being saved anyway, when they are not in the way of homes being built. Houses need trees around them for the health of their human occupants..

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:23 AM

We could recommend increasing building heights to save trees

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:23 AM

Agree with David in that we need more emphasis on how to integrate trees into new housing. Other cities are much more progressive.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:24 AM

Can cg

From Toby Thaler to everyone: 10:24 AM

The current development capacity is resulting in failure to meet City's tree canopy goals.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:25 AM

Could change what could be built on lots to increase housing units and save more trees

From Barbara to everyone: 10:25 AM

Acknowledge that there is a potential, of reduction as code currently stands, but this NOT a guaranteed reduction in development capacity, if developers are required to use creative solutions.

From Jim Davis to everyone: 10:25 AM

Speakers at Land Use Committee meetings against the current proposed ordinance are stating this will result in 150,000 less housing units. Is that what is being acknowledged?

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:26 AM

What about referencing tree-friendly design such as building placement strategies, pier foundations where seismic conditions allow, etc.

From Jim Davis to everyone: 10:26 AM

150,000

From Toby Thaler to everyone: 10:32 AM

Fix paragraph number

From Toby Thaler to everyone: 10:33 AM

Amend my prior: It's how development is regulated and managed that results in failure to meet canopy goals, not the development capacity per se

From Jim Davis to everyone: 10:36 AM

Can there be some cross sharing of duties between SDCI arborists and SDOT arborists?

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:36 AM

Thank you Toby,. The current process is what results in urban forest loss, not the number and size of homes per se.

From Francisca to everyone: 10:36 AM

I have personal experience about what Lia is saying. Would support her comments.

From Barbara to everyone: 10:36 AM

Yes Lia, its all based on calls in, and often the SDCI investigation falls flat for numerous reasons. The needs to be an Avenue for enforcement

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:37 AM

A permit required to remove a tree would help to cut down on illegal tree removal

From Barbara to everyone: 10:38 AM

Yes, agree with Steve. Plus we will then have more data with permits.

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:38 AM

Need a certified inspector to follow up on complaints

From Barbara to everyone: 10:40 AM

Please consider adding stronger enforcement to the section items missing from the ordinance

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:42 AM

Need a code compliance officer to follow up on complaints <https://silverwrightlaw.com/the-role-and-importance-of-code-enforcement-officers>

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:45 AM

6' and larger is what is in current code. draft says 12" and above on site plans and needs to be corrected.

From Francisca to everyone: 10:46 AM

Thank you for all your expertise and commitment to tree protection.

From Barbara to everyone: 10:47 AM

Please consider changing the table to say "Minimum Required Mitigation ", that way, if more are needed it's still in guidelines

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:48 AM

Need a dedicated Code Compliance Officer that has authority to follow up. on complaints

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:48 AM

how about addresses off-hours illegal activity

From Francisca to everyone: 10:49 AM that accommodates easy navigation and response to the public and private citizens

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:49 AM

SDOT seems to be able to comply on weekends and holidays

From Sandy Shettler to everyone: 10:49 AM

how about timely?

From Steve Zemke to everyone: 10:50 AM

someone on call to respond to weekend and holiday and after hours complaints

From Jim Davis to everyone: 10:50 AM

Yes, "investigate use of SDOT arborists in enforcement process"

From Jim Davis to everyone: 10:53 AM

Thank you Commissioners for the work you put in for trees.

From Francisca to everyone: 10:54 AM

Possible to send ink to Landuse meeting Joshua mentioned?

From Joshua Morris to everyone: 10:58 AM

@Francisca: public comment sign up here: <https://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>

From Joshua Morris to everyone: 10:58 AM

opens at 12 pm

From Francisca to everyone: 10:59 AM

Thanks Joshua

Public input (additional comments received):

From: Antoinette Ferrara <info@email.actionnetwork.org>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 8:42 AM

To: Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>

Subject: Please Strengthen Seattle's Tree Ordinance: Read my personal message below.

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Urban Forestry Commission c/o Patti Bakker,

When I first moved to Seattle in 1969, I thought it was as close to paradise as ever a city could be: The verdant smell that pervaded the air, the beautiful tall evergreens everywhere, with flashes of brighter green or shades of pink and white peeking out from among the giant Douglas Firs. The sounds of the city were, to a great degree, muffled by the foliage that covered the place and gave it the name of "Emerald City." How proud I was to live in a city that seemed to have its priorities right, especially compared to where I came from, Los Angeles: A city that let nature, in all its glory, have "the right of way," that even turned an old freeway into a park! Seattle had its values straight!

During my absence from Seattle for several decades, I have lived in many more cities, and the only one that compared to Seattle in terms of an urban tree canopy was Washington, D.C. - a Federal City/Park. I've seen too many urban forests fall to the ravages of age and neglect, and most importantly, development. Ah yes, where would we be without development? It appears that now, even in my beloved Seattle, the "right of way" for beautiful trees has been surrendered to development, and we have been left poorer each year by their losses: shade, cooling sidewalks, protection against erosion, blossoming trees that delight the eye of every passerby, the muting of traffic noise, homes they provide for birds and wildlife, the general beauty and civility that convey to a population strolling under an umbrella of trees. All this, and much more, are being lost. An urban forest is one of the most direct, one of the easiest steps a society can take in the fight against climate change. And yet, we still must beg for its retention and expansion - because it matters, seriously matters to all of us, young and old, and to the our generations to follow. Trees civilize a place and give it grandeur; trees also help us live by shading us and filtering our air. How is their importance not understood by one and all?

Seattle is a leader in many things, but in protecting our tree canopy, we've fallen far behind our southern sister, Portland. If they can do it, surely so can we! Please, please act now to save – and expand – the urban forest of Seattle.

I support the following provisions in SDCI's draft ordinance.

1. Lowering the upper limit for exceptional trees to 24" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) from 30" DBH.
2. Continuing protection for exceptional trees less than 24" DBH and tree groves and heritage trees
3. Defining any tree 6" DBH and larger that is not exceptional as a significant tree
4. Continuing prohibition on removal of trees 6" DBH and larger on undeveloped lots.
5. Requiring replacement of 12" DBH and larger trees removed by developers

6. Creating an in-lieu fee for developers to replace trees 12" DBH and larger that cannot be replaced on the development site.
7. Requiring in lieu fees be used to replace and maintain newly planted trees
8. Limiting removal of significant trees outside development to those less than 12" DBH
9. Protected trees and replaced trees are covered by a covenant for life of project

Here are key provisions that need to be added to the draft ordinance

1. Expand the existing Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program using the Accela database system to include SDCI to cover all significant trees 6" DBH and larger, and all exceptional trees, on private property in all land use zones, both during development and outside development.
2. Require SDCI submit quarterly reports to the Office of Sustainability and Environment on tree removal and replacement as required by other City Departments
3. Require 2-week public notice posting, as SDOT does on-site, and add online, of any 6" DBH and larger tree removal and replacement permit requests and keep posted on a lot for 1 week after removal
4. Require that tree replacement numbers increase with the size of the removed tree such that in 25 years or less they will reach equivalent canopy volume lost – either on site or pay a replacement fee that also increases with the size of the tree removed
5. All replacement in lieu fees and fines should go into a dedicated Tree Replacement and Preservation Fund (not SDCI budget or city general fund), that yearly reports on their budget to the City Council and Mayor.
6. Allow the Tree Replacement and Preservation Fund to also accept fines, donations, grants, purchase land, set up covenants and for educational purposes.
7. Require 5-year maintenance of replanted trees
8. Allow removal of no more than 2 Significant non-exceptional trees in 3 years per lot outside development
9. Require developers throughout the total development process to maximize the retention of existing trees with adequate space for trees to grow and survive.
10. Require a Tree Inventory of all trees 6" DBH and larger and a Tree Landscaping Plan prior to any building permits being approved.
11. Extend ordinance to cover all land use zones, including Industrial, Downtown and Institutions
12. Keep requirement that all 6" DBH and larger trees be on site plans
13. Require tree replacement or in lieu fees by developers for trees removed 1 year prior to property purchase
14. Allow city certified inspectors to enter property if necessary to ascertain any illegal tree activity
15. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance
16. All trees related are protected trees and not subject to removal
17. Require removal of invasive plants, like ivy, from development sites

2707 Nob Hill Avenue N
Seattle, Washington 98109-1747

From: Shambhavi Taylor <info@email.actionnetwork.org>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 9:03 AM

To: Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>

Subject: Please Protect Seattle's Trees

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Urban Forestry Commission c/o Patti Bakker,

Please act to update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance.

Important to me is the last item, 17, to require removal of invasive species, and also it is essential that trees be watered for the first three years after planting!!

As you know, trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents. A robust urban forest is critical for climate resilience and environmental equity.

Enforcement is key. Seattle's rapid growth and increased density combined with an outdated tree ordinance are reducing beneficial effects as trees are removed without serious consideration of ways to incorporate more of them in the development. Unless exceptional there is no real effort to save them. It is urgent to act now to reduce this continued loss of existing trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves and important to promote environmental equity by retaining as many trees as possible and replacing those removed for climate resiliency.

I support the following provisions in SDCI's draft ordinance.

1. Lowering the upper limit for exceptional trees to 24" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) from 30" DBH.
2. Continuing protection for exceptional trees less than 24" DBH and tree groves and heritage trees
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9. Protected trees and replaced trees are covered by a covenant for life of project

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and outside development.

2. Require SDCI submit quarterly reports to the Office of Sustainability and Environment on tree removal and replacement as required by other City Departments
3. Require 2-week public notice posting, as SDOT does on-site, and add online, of any 6” DBH and larger tree removal and replacement permit requests and keep posted on a lot for 1 week after removal
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11. Extend ordinance to cover all land use zones, including Industrial, Downtown and Institutions
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15. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance
16. All trees relaced are protected trees and not subject to removal
17. Require removal of invasive plants, like ivy, from development sites

Shambhavi Taylor
om.shambhavi@gmail.com
10742 Lakeside Ave. NE
Seattle, Washington 98125

From: Daniel Keefe <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:56 PM
To: Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: Save our Trees!

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Urban Forestry Commission c/o Patti Bakker,

Please act to update Seattle’s Tree Protection Ordinance. It’s been 13 years since the Seattle City Council first urged the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) to update the

ordinance. We appreciate the recent enactment by the Seattle City Council and Mayor to adopt registration of Tree Service Providers in the city as a first step. We also appreciate action finally by SDCI to release a more complete draft of an updated Tree Protection Ordinance.

We believe that Seattle needs to protect its existing trees while planting more trees in underserved areas with low tree canopy to address adverse climate impacts while also increasing affordable housing. It is not a question of one or the other. We need to do both.

Trees and the urban forest comprise vital green infrastructure needed to keep our city and people livable and healthy. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents. A robust urban forest is critical for climate resilience and environmental equity.

Seattle's rapid growth and increased density combined with an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed without serious consideration of ways to incorporate more of them in the development. Unless exceptional there is no real effort to save them. And what replacement requirements were in the ordinance since 2001 appears to have seldom been enforced. It is urgent to act now to reduce this continued loss of existing trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity by retaining as many trees as possible and replacing those removed for climate resiliency.

We support the following provisions in SDCI's draft ordinance.

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16. All trees related are protected trees and not subject to removal
17. Require removal of invasive plants, like ivy, from development sites

Daniel Keefe
papadan44@gmail.com
11010 28th Ave NE
Seattle, Washington 98125

From: Katy Griffith <katygr@msn.com>
Sent: Friday, April 7, 2023 1:30 AM
To: Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: Save Our Trees! Amend the draft tree ordinance

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Urban Forestry Commission c/o Patti Bakker,

Trees and the urban forest comprise vital green infrastructure needed to keep our city livable and healthy. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents. A robust urban forest is critical for climate resilience and environmental equity.

Seattle's rapid growth and increased density combined with an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed without serious consideration of ways to incorporate more of them in the development. With middle-housing zoning updates, neighborhood residential (34% tree canopy) will change to multi-family (23% tree canopy) and Seattle tree canopy will plummet unless strong and effective efforts are made to preserve trees.

We urge you to adapt these amendments to the 2023 draft Tree Protection Ordinance.

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Katy Griffith
katygr@msn.com
2131 N 132nd Street
Seattle, Washington 98133

From: Nancy Morris <taweyahnan@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, April 7, 2023 11:59 AM

To: Strauss, Dan <Dan.Strauss@seattle.gov>; Morales, Tammy <Tammy.Morales@seattle.gov>; Mosqueda, Teresa <Teresa.Mosqueda@seattle.gov>; Pedersen, Alex <Alex.Pedersen@seattle.gov>; Nelson, Sara <Sara.Nelson@seattle.gov>

Cc: Herbold, Lisa <Lisa.Herbold@seattle.gov>; Sawant, Kshama <Kshama.Sawant@seattle.gov>; Juarez, Debora <Debora.Juarez@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Andrew <Andrew.Lewis@seattle.gov>

Subject: Please support stronger protections for our urban trees

Importance: High

Attention Land Use Committee, Mayor Harrell, Council members, and colleagues:

We are in a true state of climate emergency. We are in a frightening time due to the ongoing climate crisis affecting us all locally and a lack of coordinated action nationally in approaching our climate crises. It is also an extraordinary time in that we as a community are quite aware of the climate crisis and heat island effects in Seattle and adjoining communities along with important actions that could be taken NOW to mitigate this local crisis. We must do more to protect our urban tree canopy and design around our established tree groves. So please consider the following actions to help mitigate the climate emergency:

- Increase monitoring and evaluation requirements. We cannot afford another 14-year code update saga if we learn our regulations are not serving their purpose.
- Increase replacement requirements with increasing tree size. A 1:1 replacement ratio isn't enough to address tree loss, esp. of big trees.
- Tighten up fee in-lieu system. A Tier 2 (exceptional tree) shouldn't be on the chopping block for less than a Tier 3.
- Study the 85% hardscape allowance using real world examples. Need to use real case studies, drawn to scale, with numbers.
- Collaborate with the Urban Forestry Commission, Seattle Arborists Association, builders, and tree advocate community on amendments. This is a chance for advocates of trees and density to put our money where our mouths are!

Regards,
Nancy Morris

References:

"Learn About Heat Islands," EPA report <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/learn-about-heat-islands>

"Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect," EPA Report - <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/reduce-urban-heat-island-effect>

"Why some Seattle neighborhoods are hit harder by heat waves" <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/why-some-seattle-neighborhoods-are-hit-harder-by-heat-waves/> August 25, 2022 — When extreme heat bears down on the Seattle area, communities of color and low-income neighborhoods are more likely to experience the brunt ...

"Urban Forests and Birds That Need Them :" Seattle Audubon Program Meeting - July 15, 2021 <https://vimeo.com/575918179> "Trees are one of our best hopes for becoming a climate-resilient city. They are one of the cheapest, simplest, and most effective tools for reducing temperatures in urban areas. The benefits trees provide extend far beyond the parcels where they stand. They are essential community assets."

"What Technology Could Reduce Heat Deaths?

Trees." <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/climate/trees-cities-heat-waves.html>, from the *New York Times* July 2, 2021

"Trees save lives in heat, so why aren't we saving trees?" *Seattle Times*, July 2, 2021: <https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/trees-save-lives-in-heat-s-so-why-arent-we-saving-trees/>

From: Kathleen Kerkof <katkerkof@hotmail.com>

Sent: Friday, April 7, 2023 12:56 PM

To: Strauss, Dan <Dan.Strauss@seattle.gov>; Pedersen, Alex <Alex.Pedersen@seattle.gov>; Morales, Tammy <Tammy.Morales@seattle.gov>; teresa.mosqueda@seattle.gov; Nelson, Sara <Sara.Nelson@seattle.gov>; Herbold, Lisa <Lisa.Herbold@seattle.gov>; Sawant, Kshama <Kshama.Sawant@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Andrew

<Andrew.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Juarez, Debora <Debora.Juarez@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>; Lowe, Marco <Marco.Lowe@seattle.gov>; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>

Subject: Tree Ordinance Draft

Dear Councilmembers Strauss, Pedersen, Morales, Mosqueda, Nelson, Herbold, Sawant, Lewis, Juarez, Mayor Harrell, Mr. Lowe, and Ms. Bakker

I am writing you regarding my concerns about the proposed tree ordinance and to ask you to strengthen and to add to its provisions so that trees are truly preserved, adequate root space is allowed in order for trees to survive, and is feasible for the City to meet its goal of attaining 30% tree canopy cover.

My main concerns are:

- Increasing monitoring and evaluation requirements.
- Ensuring that the regulations do not prevent us from achieving our 30% tree canopy coverage goal which is critical to climate change resiliency.
- Increasing replacement requirements with increasing tree size as a 1:1 replacement ratio is inadequate to address tree loss, especially of big trees.
- Tightening up the fee-in-lieu system.
- The impacts of the guaranteed 85% lot coverage.
- That there be collaborating with the Urban Forestry Commission, Seattle Arborists Association, builders, and tree advocate community on amendments.

Amendments recommendations:

1. **Remove the guaranteed "85% lot development area" provision.** If the current middle housing legislation passes in Olympia, almost all of Seattle would be affected by this change, with a significant loss of tree canopy city wide. The city needs flexibility to evaluate development and protecting trees lot by lot, not one size fits all circumstances. Please don't limit the city's options and please do the analysis of the actual impacts of this provision on our ability to protect the city's citizens from the growing impact of intensifying urban heat by improving our tree canopy.
2. **Require 20% lot allowance for "tree preservation and tree planting areas" in multifamily areas and 40% lot allowance for 1-4 units in the neighborhood residential zone as Portland Oregon does in their family residential zone.** Portland passed legislation in 2020 to allow up to 4plexes in their neighborhoods after the state mandated zoning updates. Portland responded in Nov 2022 to update the tree protection legislation. <https://www.portland.gov/code/11/50/050>. Adequate root space is essential for trees to survive and grow. Please allow realistic space for them.
3. **Require a Tree Inventory of all 6" DSH and larger trees and a Landscape Plan** prior to any Building Permit being issued. This information fits with collecting in lieu fees prior to issuing building permits and facilitates reporting and tracking of tree loss and replacement, rather than city workers having to pull this information from site plans. Mayor Harrell's Executive Order asked for data on trees removed and replaced. Getting this information up front from developers is the best way to do this.
4. **Require developers throughout the total development process to maximize the retention of existing trees 6" DSH and larger with adequate space for trees to grow and survive.** The current draft removes consideration of protecting 6"-12" DSH trees and also removes them from site plans. Keep them on the site plans and protect them during development. Trees 6" DSH and larger represent 45% of trees in the NR zone according to [Seattle's Ecosystem Values Report](#). Most of these trees are established potential replacement trees for existing large trees that die. Trees 12" DSH

and larger only represent 18% of the trees in the NR zone. A diversity of ages and species for trees is essential for a healthy urban forest.

5. **Retain definitions and use of exceptional and significant trees.** Language is important and these definitions give meaning and convey values that the tier designation does not. With the Tier system, one would have to lock up the definition to understand what is meant. At least consider the hybrid designations that the Urban Forestry Commission will be recommending.
6. **Require for replacement 2 trees for 12-24" DSH trees removed, 3 trees for 24 – 36" DSH and 4 trees for above 36" DSH** for more equivalency of the increasing value of services trees provide as they increase in size. One for one replacement is no equivalency for what is lost as trees increase in size. **Require that tree replacement numbers increase with the size and canopy volume of the removed tree.** such that in 25 years or less they will reach equivalent canopy volume lost. Waiting 80 years to replace an 80-year-old tree is too long.
7. **Increase in lieu fee schedule to require the \$17.87square inch in-lieu fees to start with 12" DSH trees rather than 24" DSH trees.** In-Lieu fees need to adequately cover the city's additional cost of planting and maintaining the trees for 5 years.
8. **All replacement in lieu fees and fines should go into a One Seattle Tree Fund as stated in Mayor Harrell's 's Executive Order.** It should be a dedicated Tree Planting and Preservation Fund like Portland, Oregon has (not into SDCI's budget). The Fund should be added to this draft. The Fund should report yearly on its budget to the City Council and Mayor. The One Seattle Tree Fund should be overseen by the City Urban Forester located in OSE because the distribution of funds would be interdepartmental. Allow the One Seattle Tree Fund (Tree Planting and Preservation Fund) to also accept fines, donations, grants, purchase land, set up covenants and for educational purposes as Portland, Oregon does.
9. **The role of the new City Forester position created by the Seattle City Council in OSE should be defined in this ordinance.**
10. **Create an Urban Forestry Division within SDCI with additional staff** as recommended in a separate budget provision or expand the Urban Forestry staff and responsibility in the Office of sustainability and Environment for independent oversight of trees.
11. **Expand the existing Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program using the Accela database system to include SDCI** to cover all significant trees 6" DSH and larger, and all exceptional trees, on private property in all land use zones, removed both during development and outside development. The proposed ordinance remains a complaint-based system relying on citizens which has been proven to not be effective in code compliance. SDCI only has 2 arborists who are mostly deskbound.to check site plans and in the field.
12. **Require SDCI to submit quarterly reports to the Office of Sustainability and Environment on tree removal and replacement** as currently required by other City Departments and as required yearly by Mayor Harrell's Executive Order.

13. **Extend ordinance to cover all land use zones**, including Highrise, Industrial, Downtown and Institutions.
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17. **Require that maintenance of relocated and replacement trees include “watering as needed”**
18. **Require street trees be planted if ADU’s are added to a lot.** ADU’s, particularly Detached ADU’s, reduce space for trees on site and increase tree removal and are currently exempt from original lot coverage limits in NR zone.
19. **Give the SDCI Director the authority to reduce or waive any fees assessed by this ordinance, taking into account a homeowner’s financial circumstances or ability to pay.**
20. **Split the purpose and intent section. Add to intent “address climate resiliency and reduce heat island impacts across the city”**
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Please, also, give special attention to the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Commission as it was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of the trees in the City of Seattle.

Thank you for your time and deep consideration of these important issues. After 14 years of efforts to update our Tree Ordinance and facing increasing threats from climate change, let us come together to create a strong, viable Tree Ordinance

Sincerely,
Kathleen Kerkof
2235 NW 64th St
Seattle, WA 98107
206-384-8878

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From: Chuck Dolan <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, April 7, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: No "guaranteed 85%"! Amend the draft tree ordinance

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Urban Forestry Commission c/o Patti Bakker,

Trees and the urban forest comprise vital green infrastructure needed to keep our city livable and healthy. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents. A robust urban forest is critical for climate resilience and environmental equity.

Seattle's rapid growth and increased density combined with an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed without serious consideration of ways to incorporate more of them in the development. With middle-housing zoning updates, neighborhood residential (34% tree canopy) will change to multi-family (23% tree canopy) and Seattle tree canopy will plummet unless strong and effective efforts are made to preserve trees.

We urge you to adapt these amendments to the 2023 draft Tree Protection Ordinance.

TOP PRIORITY -- We need trees where we live!

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Chuck Dolan
chucklesd2@hotmail.com
1220 NE 97th St
Seattle, Washington 98115