



SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Becca Neumann (Position 4 – Hydrologist), Co-chair
Joshua Morris (Position 7 – NGO), Co-Chair
Alicia Kellog (Position 2 – Urban Ecologist) • **Stuart Niven** (Position 5 – Arborist – ISA)
Hao Liang (Position 6 – Landscape Architect – ISA) • **David Baker** (Position 8 – Development)
Nathan Collins (Position 9 – Financial Analyst) • **Logan Woodyard** (Position 10 – Get Engaged)
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

October 18, 2023, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.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: 2482 969 3594
 Meeting password: 1234

Attending

Commissioners

Josh Morris – Co-Chair
 Becca Neumann – Co-Chair
 Hao Liang
 David Baker
 Nathan Collins
 Logan Woodyard

Absent- Excused

Alicia Kellogg
 Stuart Niven
 Jessica Hernandez
 Jessica Jones
 Lia Hall

Guests

Toby Thaler

Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE
 Sharon Lerman – OSE
 Lisa Ciecko – SPR
 Michael Yadrick – SPR
 Eric Sterner – SPR
 Danielle Devier – SPR
 Jamie Lim – SPR
 Stephanie Shelton – SPR
 Henry Arends – SPR
 Mark Malone – SPR
 Clay Antieau – SPU
 Ali Lakehart - SPU
 Anne-Marie Freudenthal – SDOT
 Katey Bean – SDOT
 Nolan Rundquist – SDOT
 Ben Roberts – SDOT
 Christy Carr – SDCI

Public

Steve Zemke
 Michael Oxman
 Ariel Medeiros
 Eric Scigliano
 Mary Manous
 Sandy Shettler
 Sage Miller

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: Patti called the meeting to order and reviewed the goals and agenda for the meeting.

State of the Urban Forest

- Recent developments

Patti started off this session covering the major milestones of the last year, noting that in this time the city conducted assessments of our canopy cover and the city's urban forestry investments, we have a new tree ordinance for trees on private lands and an updated Executive Order around replacement requirements on public lands, and our urban forestry capacity is being increased with some major grant funding and new UF positions coming on board.

In terms of our assessments, at the beginning of this year, we completed the first round of analyses around our canopy cover. The key findings of this work include the fact that we are slowly losing ground, with a net loss of 255 acres, a relative decline of 1.7% over the 2016 canopy. We also saw that this loss is not happening equitably, with neighborhoods impacted by racial and economic injustice starting with less canopy and experiencing more loss than the citywide average. The results also reinforce that trees are critical climate infrastructure helping to mitigate extreme heat, and showed that the greatest net losses were in forested parks and in residential areas.

For the Statement of Legislative Intent to gather information on and prepare a report around the city's urban forestry investments, OSE gathered information from the nine urban forestry departments' finance managers and urban forestry staff to prepare this report. Per the One Seattle Tree Plan executive order, OSE will prepare a report on a biennial basis on the city's urban forestry investments, and this report will be a baseline to use for continuing that reporting.

The new tree ordinance was passed this year. It updates regulations for trees on private property, and it includes additional elements Council is interested in, including reporting on pieces of the ordinance like the new payment in lieu option, developing strategies for reducing financial burdens on homeowners and setting up the One Seattle Tree Fund to receive the payments in lieu as well as other funds from grants or donations. Along with the tree ordinance, the Mayor also issued the One Seattle Tree Plan Executive Order to cover trees on public lands, the basics of which are that it increases the replacement requirements for healthy trees removed from public lands, introduces a replacement requirement for dead or hazard trees removed, and updates the reporting to be done by city departments around tree planting and tree removals.

Other additions to expand our funding and capacity for urban forestry work were also made this year. Seattle was awarded \$12.9 million for the two grant proposals that we submitted for the USDA Urban and Community Forestry program funding through the Inflation Reduction Act. The combined city project, which received \$12M includes three components: deep community engagement, natural area restoration that expands beyond city parklands to include neighboring property owners, and expanding job training/career pathways opportunities. SDOT also submitted a separate application for their Delridge Native Forest Garden project and that was fully funded for that \$900k request.

This grant funding will help us expand beyond the current city investments to support additional and deeper urban forestry work and goals, and the City is also making additional investments. These include funding additional positions, including the new Sr. Urban Forestry Strategic Advisor OSE will be hiring soon, and the new tree ordinance included three new positions for SDCI and one for SDOT. SPR also has additional positions that were funded through the Parks District to expand the capacity of their urban forestry crews and increase capacity of the GSP team.

Tim Reynon, member of the Puyallup Tribe and Tribal Relations Director with Seattle's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, then offered some reflections on the first ever Tribal Summit that was held this summer. This event stemmed from conversations held with Tribal Councils, which indicated interest in meeting and seeing action result from it. Attendees included staff from 11 of the federally recognized Tribes, elected leaders, six urban native organizations and all branches of city government – Mayor's

Office, 16 departments, Councilmembers and the city prosecutor's office, and discussions focused on Tribes' concerns and expectations for the City. A summary report was prepared for the discussions, themes and outcomes. Tim offered the reminder that the local Tribes have stewarded these lands since the Creator placed them here and gave them the responsibility to care for Mother Earth. Tribes have rich knowledge that they are willing to share, making sure that this sacred knowledge is protected and respected. He noted city staff would all do well to engage Tribes in any type of action as we work on tree canopy and developing policies and developing projects, from the beginning, to help inform these projects and policies.

SDOT staff Katey Bean provided information on their Delridge Native Forest Garden project. This is a pilot project stemming from groundwork that SDOT has been doing with regional Tribes to do collaborative natural area stewardship. They'll be starting work on the project early in 2024. It includes four acres of degraded forest in the Longfellow Creek watershed in West Seattle, and will include removal of invasive plants, installation of a trail and interpretive signage around the importance of upland plant species. Per the model for collaboration discussed at the Tribal Summit, SDOT is working with the Muckleshoot Tribe and the public on the project.

- Climate impacts – pests, diseases, tree health
SPR Arborist Jamie Lim and SDOT Arborist Nolan Rundquist provided information on what they're experiencing around tree health and pests and diseases in trees currently. Jamie provided an overview of the areas that SPR manages, including developed parks and natural areas. The urban forestry tree crew and the Green Seattle Partnership teams work closely together to manage these areas. They have seen a lot more tree failures due to climate impacts, a big portion of which are red alders and big leaf maple. She noted a number of the pests and diseases they have been detecting in trees, as reflected in their tree inventory data.

Nolan noted what SDOT has been experiencing as reflected in their work orders, permits and inventory data. He noted some of the challenges facing street trees and how they affect species selection and what trees will do well. They are seeing pest issues cause greater problems than they used to due to the drought conditions.

Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan – status update

Sharon Lerman, OSE's Healthy Communities Director, provided an update on the status of this planning effort. We have been discussing this work as a next phase following on from the canopy assessment work. The plan will build off of the findings of the assessment that we are losing canopy and that canopy loss is not happening equitably. The purpose for the effort will be to develop a plan for planting, growing and maintaining trees that is really focused on low canopy neighborhoods in environmental equity priority areas based on the Race and Social Equity Index and heat and air quality data, and other factors. The plan will identify maintenance and tree resilience resources needed to sustain urban canopy and pave the way for leveraging future federal, state and philanthropic funds for the resilience of the tree canopy.

The scoping of the plan will center BIPOC community voices, building new partnerships with BIPOC communities and with Tribes. Questions that we'll be answering include: what does it mean to have a canopy that's equitably distributed and that builds resilience? What does it mean to have a forest that's successful today and like tens, hundreds, and thousands of years from now, and then really getting tactical what are the strategies and action? What are the considerations we need to incorporate to ensure the canopy and the forest is resilient to climate and other impacts in our planting and in our maintenance, and what partnerships will we strengthen to ensure that BIPOC voices are centered in our efforts to grow healthy, equitable canopy?

Planting and maintenance opportunities group work

Katey Bean began by providing information on the challenges in locating street trees. Then attendees discussed input on aspects of planting and maintenance – where are the opportunities, where are the needs, where do these overlap?

Climate resilience group work

Attendees worked in groups (in the room and online breakout rooms) to discuss input on strategies that we can continue to employ, employ more of, or start to employ around our urban forestry work and care of the city's forest.

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>

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 PM.

Meeting chat:

Lerman, Sharon: 14:09

It's a bit hard to hear the folks in the room. If you're able to speak a little louder, please do!

Arends, Henry: 14:16

hi

Arends, Henry: 14:18

Howdy! I am a lead in the field with Parks Urban Forestry. My pronouns are he/him. I'm looking forward to zooming out from my usual vantage point and learn more about the big picture efforts. Sorry about my tech issue!

Ciecko, Lisa: 14:52

Here's the upcoming symposium information: <https://botanicgardens.uw.edu/education/adults/conferences-symposia/urban-forest-symposium/>

Malone, Mark: 15:19

Thats me on the right. Photo courtesy of Seattle Parks and Recreation

Malone, Mark: 15:42

AGREE!

Michael Oxman: 16:14

When the question be answered of which street trees are the homeowners or the city's responsibility?

Lerman, Sharon: 16:47

Thank you to my breakout group for the great discussion!

Michael Oxman: 16:50

Citizens also asked for a staff list in the form of a flow chart with all the duties being fulfilled across all 9 departments with authority to condemn a tree. Not just the money, but how it is being spent.

Michael Oxman: 16:59

Look for video of this meeting on Youtube

Public input (additional comments received):

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>

Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 1:02 PM

To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>

Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan

<Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi

<Naomi.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Silvernail, Devin <Devin.Silvernail@seattle.gov>; House, Erin

<Erin.House@seattle.gov>; Cuevas, Faride <Faride.Cuevas@seattle.gov>; Um, Taemin

<Taemin.Um@seattle.gov>; Ellis, Steven <Steven.Ellis@seattle.gov>; Lacson, Gabby

<Gabby.Lacson@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; Brown, Kristin

<Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle

<Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>

Subject: A Cooler Future Means a World With Less Pavement

CAUTION: External Email

<https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/asphalt-pavement-climate-cities/>

looks like the Depave movement is already moving forward around here - were city govt paying attention instead of selling out to MBACKS and more heat islands (Marco Lowe, talking to YOU).

<https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=31323334-50bba2bf-31321b84-4544474f5631-1bbef0be43d962a6&q=1&e=74444463-fc12-4874-9557-3f156beca11d&u=https%3A%2F%2Fdepavepugetsound.org%2F>

kevin orme
Seattle

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 9, 2023 2:41 PM

To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>

Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan

<Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi

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<Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle

<Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>

Subject: New York Needs to Get Spongier—or Get Used to More Floods

CAUTION: External Email

Devastating deluges around the world point to the metropolis of tomorrow: the “sponge city.” Think more parks and fewer parking lots.

<https://www.wired.com/story/new-york-needs-to-get-spongier-or-get-used-to-more-floods/>

even if Seattle somehow stays cooler than other southern cities despite MBACKS and Marco Lowe helping incentivize heat islands everywhere - there's a different half of the year that already sees a lot of water, and last time I checked, we live next to an ocean and at least one river that already floods pretty easily (and likely will again sometime this coming winter). Guess what helps absorb rainwater, storm runoff and hold soil in place - they are tall, green and have leaves or cones - they're called TREES.

kevin orme
Seattle

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 4:46 PM

To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>

Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan

<Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi

<Naomi.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Silvernail, Devin <Devin.Silvernail@seattle.gov>; House, Erin <Erin.House@seattle.gov>; Cuevas, Faride <Faride.Cuevas@seattle.gov>; Um, Taemin <Taemin.Um@seattle.gov>; Ellis, Steven <Steven.Ellis@seattle.gov>; Lacson, Gabby <Gabby.Lacson@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; Brown, Kristin <Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle <Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: The danger of urban 'heat islands'

CAUTION: External Email

<https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=31323334-50bba2bf-31321b84-4544474f5631-48bd3baae8563fb2&q=1&e=71a2494a-7aab-4745-bd0a-ec6b29ad7eb7&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hcn.org%2Fissues%2F49.10%2Flos-angeles-is-a-heat-island>

"Many of us believe that no one should die prematurely because of heat, and there are significant public costs associated with heat just in the health-care sector alone," says David Hondula, an ASU climatologist who studies heat impacts.

kevin orme
seattle

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 7:14 AM
To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>
Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan <Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi <Naomi.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Silvernail, Devin <Devin.Silvernail@seattle.gov>; House, Erin <Erin.House@seattle.gov>; Cuevas, Faride <Faride.Cuevas@seattle.gov>; Um, Taemin <Taemin.Um@seattle.gov>; Ellis, Steven <Steven.Ellis@seattle.gov>; Lacson, Gabby <Gabby.Lacson@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; Brown, Kristin <Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle <Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: Housing ****can**** preserve trees - take a look.

CAUTION: External Email

in biking around this past weekend - looky here - a big house under construction yet somehow three big, exceptional trees were saved on the lot too, and, you can see they were not hacked up to 'preserve' them (it's called token compliance with the rules).

what this means is, protecting trees isn't a burden - it's the right thing to do and a design challenge easily overcome if you aren't using 1950's era planning "skills". If only other builders like this one actually did the right thing....

kevin orme
Seattle

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 6:32 AM

To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>
Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan <Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi <Naomi.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Silvernail, Devin <Devin.Silvernail@seattle.gov>; House, Erin <Erin.House@seattle.gov>; Cuevas, Faride <Faride.Cuevas@seattle.gov>; Um, Taemin <Taemin.Um@seattle.gov>; Ellis, Steven <Steven.Ellis@seattle.gov>; Lacson, Gabby <Gabby.Lacson@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; Brown, Kristin <Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle <Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: The power of urban trees - quick video

CAUTION: External Email

Video is under 2 min but every point made directly applies to Seattle. Watch if you don't believe me. Then go out and find a great tree after work or over the weekend and just think about all it does, just by existing. Would that the rest of us could match that dedication.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EelVr0-JTS4>

kevin orme
Seattle

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 9:09 AM
To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>
Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan <Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi <Naomi.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Silvernail, Devin <Devin.Silvernail@seattle.gov>; House, Erin <Erin.House@seattle.gov>; Cuevas, Faride <Faride.Cuevas@seattle.gov>; Um, Taemin <Taemin.Um@seattle.gov>; Ellis, Steven <Steven.Ellis@seattle.gov>; Lacson, Gabby <Gabby.Lacson@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; Brown, Kristin <Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle <Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: What happens if you cut down all of a city's trees? - quick video

CAUTION: External Email

if you need to see nearly all the reasons why trees help a city, especially big, exceptional trees that the current Tree Removal Ordinance **now doesn't protect** - take 6 min out of your day and watch this video, please!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zarlI9bx6FI>

kevin orme
seattle

-----Original Message-----

From: kevinorme <kevinorme@protonmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 12:27 PM
To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>
Cc: Emery, Adiam <Adiam.Emery@seattle.gov>; Burgess, Tim <Tim.Burgess@seattle.gov>; Eder, Dan

<Dan.Eder@seattle.gov>; Hoffman, Kate <Kate.Hoffman@seattle.gov>; Lewis, Naomi <Naomi.Lewis@seattle.gov>; Silvernail, Devin <Devin.Silvernail@seattle.gov>; House, Erin <Erin.House@seattle.gov>; Cuevas, Faride <Faride.Cuevas@seattle.gov>; Um, Taemin <Taemin.Um@seattle.gov>; Ellis, Steven <Steven.Ellis@seattle.gov>; Lacson, Gabby <Gabby.Lacson@seattle.gov>; Thaler, Toby <Toby.Thaler@seattle.gov>; Brown, Kristin <Kristin.Brown@seattle.gov>; Farrell, Jessyn <Jessyn.Farrell@seattle.gov>; Caulfield, Michelle <Michelle.Caulfield@seattle.gov>; jeanie.boawn@seattle.gov; Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>
Subject: Office development in Port Orchard reaches agreement to preserve aging redwood

CAUTION: External Email

<https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=31323334-50bba2bf-31321b84-4544474f5631-383d85af39a7e392&q=1&e=196a1a8a-8977-4863-b012-01df221a038a&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.kitsapsun.com%2Fstory%2Fnews%2F2023%2F10%2F11%2Fredwood-tree-in-port-orchard-wont-be-cut-down-for-construction%2F71132894007%2F>

funny how the community ****can**** save trees at major developments if they want to - the word 'want' is the key, not the words 'ignore' or 'look the other way'

PDF of article also included for convenience.

kevin orme
seattle