



## 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

**Alicia Kellogg** (Position #2 – Urban Ecologist) • **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) • **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*

### Draft meeting notes

August 2, 2023, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Via Webex call and in-person at the  
Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 1872 (18<sup>th</sup> floor)  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Seattle

(206) 207-1700

Meeting number: 2490 665 0103

Meeting password: 1234

### Attending

#### Commissioners

Becca Neumann – Co-Chair

Josh Morris – Co-Chair

Laura Keil – Co-Chair

Alicia Kellogg

Stuart Niven

Hao Liang

Jessica Jones

Lia Hall

#### Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE

#### Guests

Toby Thaler

#### Absent- Excused

Falisha Kurji

David Baker

Jessica Hernandez

#### Public

Sage Miller

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:**

Sage Miller expressed a question about how the new tree ordinance would protect the Wedgewood tree of recent concern.

**Chair, Committees, and Coordinator report:**

Patti shared information on two recent articles around heat and urban forests:

- The Natural Areas Conservancy has published a report on a nationwide study they led on the cooling potential of forests and green spaces in cities: <https://bit.ly/CoolingCitiesReport>. Seattle Parks and Recreation has been working with the Natural Areas Conservancy in recent years as part of their national network focused on natural areas management, and they participated in the study, deploying six sets of sensors in forested parklands, adjacent landscapes and neighborhoods. The results reinforce how improving urban natural areas is a vital way to disrupt elevated urban heat in cities.
  
- Climate Central recently released an urban heat island study: <https://www.climatecentral.org/climate-matters/urban-heat-islands-2023>. They analyzed how urban heat island intensity varies within 44 major U.S. cities, and calculated the urban heat island (UHI) index for each census tract within the cities to estimate how much hotter these areas are due to the characteristics of the built environment. The results of the analysis show Seattle with one of the higher UHI indices, behind NY, SF, Chicago and Miami. The data and maps can be downloaded and will be useful as continue analyses here in Seattle around the urban forest.

Patti also provided updates on planning for the annual joint meeting, noting that October 4 is likely best date and that topic ideas from the UF Core Team include:

- Discussion of grant project ideas – given the current and expected grant funding opportunities around urban forestry
- Brainstorming and planning around where to build partnerships, considering who are we not in partnership with – public health, Tribes – and how we can work to develop those partnerships
- What can this group of people – the UFC and the ID Team – do on these things together? That could include a networking mapping exercise – who knows who, where are the overlaps, opportunities.

**Adoption of July meeting notes**

**Action: A motion to approve the July 12, 2023 meeting notes as written was made, seconded and approved.**

**Action: A motion to approve the July 19, 2023 meeting notes as written was made, seconded and approved.**

**2023 Urban forestry work plans****- City urban forestry work plan and Urban Forest Management Plan Action Agenda**

Patti provided an overview of the strategies included in the last update of the Urban Forest Management Plan from 2020, and reviewed the associated action agenda, noting the prioritization process that occurred in its development, in coordination with community. The action agenda includes 19 total actions, with seven of those actions prioritized during this process.

Patti then shared the Trees for Seattle work plan, outlining how the city's urban forestry departments will implement the UFMP's action agenda. In 2022, the group migrated to using an Excel format for the work plan, similar to how the UFC set up their updated work plan format. There are spreadsheets for ongoing work and for each strategy in the action agenda, and also a spreadsheet that contains all of the actions from the action agenda, in order to track which ones are seeing action in any given year.

**- UFC Work Plan – review and update**

Patti provided an update of the UFC work plan, and Commissioners reviewed and updated tasks in the various work area spreadsheets, including in the area of city regulations and policies, Statements of Legislative Intent and the tree protection ordinance. With more work to be done to update the work plan, it was agreed that the Co-Chairs would continue to do that work and report back to the Commission at a later meeting.

### **Right of way canopy data updated findings – Hao Liang**

Hao presented right of way canopy data that he was able to update with the newly released 2021 canopy data, including additional findings for the SDOT management units. For each neighborhood, Hao showed the canopy cover and canopy change between 2016 and 2021. Things we want to understand with the canopy data include where right of way canopy was lost, how much was lost, what the causes of loss are, what it means to equity, and how can we gain canopy in the right of way.

Interpretations from the data and mapping include:

- There were canopy losses due to infrastructure projects
- Direct impacts from development and construction activities contribute to canopy losses
- Indirect impacts from development and construction activities also contribute to canopy losses

### **ANSI/ISA standards briefing follow-up letter**

Josh walked through the draft letter Becca prepared for this. Commissioners discussed potential revisions, including suggestions made by Hao prior to the tree protection ordinance being passed.

**Action: a motion to adopt the response letter for the ANSI/ISA standards briefing 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 noted related to the tree protection ordinance, that several of the provisions requested by the UFC over the years were included in the ordinance. He urged caution in continuing to work to understand the ordinance and potential impacts, especially given changes that will result from HB 1110. There is an increase in protection for trees in areas not seeing development, but in areas seeing development, protection is lowered due to the hardscape allowances. There will be tree loss in these areas, making it harder to reach the 30% tree canopy goal.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 PM.

### **Meeting chat:**

from Lia Hall UFC13 to everyone: 3:15 PM

welcome back, Josh!

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 3:40 PM

Are those 'success toward targets' results available to the public?

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 3:52 PM

Thank you, Lia!

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 3:55 PM

Thank you, Patty.

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:04 PM

city council had passed looking at coordination of urban forestry eg SDCI- Urban Forestry or ISE, also perhaps Climate and Environment Dept with UFC section

from sage miller to everyone: 4:06 PM

thanks for letting me inquire about wedgewood tree both as a CMT and exceptional tree. Hopefully the tree can be saved. Need to leave..

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:12 PM

Need to look at possible amendments to tree ordinance to council for next year's Council to consider

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 4:13 PM

Strauss said there would continue to be updates to ordinance.

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:15 PM

number of

from Lia Hall UFC13 to everyone: 4:17 PM

can it be wrapped into another topic?

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:17 PM

number of issues were covered ordinance passed, fewer issues to consider for amendments

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:18 PM

HB 1110 will

from Lia Hall UFC13 to everyone: 4:18 PM

i'm interested in assisting on 1.2.2

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:20 PM

House Bill 1110 allows 4 plexes in NR zone and 6 plexes with 1/4 mile frequent transit. Hard to see how can reach 30% canopy with inability to retain large trees on lots being developed.

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 4:22 PM

Would UFC be involved with checking out if the new TSP regulation has resulted in a decrease in illegal tree removal?

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:22 PM

Would be good to have meeting with Planning Commission as they are leading development of new Comprehensive Plan which will affect tree policy

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:26 PM

added at last minute in ordinance, two violations remove TSP from city work for a year, only for illegally cutting down 2 Tier 1 and Tier 2 trees, not for illegally cutting any Tier 3 or 4 trees

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 4:28 PM

Thanks, Steve.

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:35 PM

The reports I mentioned earlier:

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:35 PM

The Natural Areas Conservancy study: <https://naturalareasnyc.org/media/pages/in-print/951f086032-1690225094/nac-cooling-cities.pdf>

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:36 PM

And the Climate Central study: <https://www.climatecentral.org/climate-matters/urban-heat-islands-2023>

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:37 PM

Some of new trees can be seen as already dying at northgate

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:37 PM

GSP blog article on the NAC study: <https://greenseattle.org/caring-and-cooling-seattles-forests-in-a-warming-world/>; and the slides with summary and Seattle-specific data: <https://greenseattle.org/caring-and-cooling-seattles-forests-in-a-warming-world/>

from Alicia Kellogg she/her to everyone: 4:38 PM

are both of those links supposed to be the same?

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:41 PM

Sorry, no they're not; the correct link for the slides:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1D3tqmfpNBLfT1CwVZmd9yGpmGFEsizJ3F2EMMZ8NUhw/edit#slide=id.g24b243ee7d1\\_0\\_43](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1D3tqmfpNBLfT1CwVZmd9yGpmGFEsizJ3F2EMMZ8NUhw/edit#slide=id.g24b243ee7d1_0_43)

from Alicia Kellogg she/her to everyone: 4:41 PM

thank you!

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:42 PM

Thanks for catching that!

from Chris Gaul to everyone: 4:42 PM

Thanks, Hao!

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:44 PM

Good analysis Hao.

from Alicia Kellogg she/her to everyone: 4:47 PM

very helpful and clear, thank you!

from Hao Liang to everyone: 4:48 PM

@Steve, for tree dead in these projects. Contractors are responsible to replace them. Some warranties of these projects could be as long as 10 years

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:50 PM

Agree Hao, just noting not all trees surviving and need to be replaced.

**Public input (additional comments received):**