



SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Becca Neumann (Position 4 – Hydrologist), Co-chair

Joshua Morris (Position 7 – NGO), Co-Chair

Hao Liang (Position 6 – Landscape Architect – ISA), Co-Chair

Alicia Kellogg (Position 2 – Urban Ecologist) • **David Baker** (Position 8 – Development)

Nathan Collins (Position 9 – Financial Analyst) • **Logan Woodyard** (Position 10 – Get Engaged)

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

March 13, 2024, 3:00 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: 2493 040 8265

Meeting password: 1234

Attending

Commissioners

Josh Morris – Co-Chair

Becca Neumann – Co-Chair

Hao Liang, Co-Chair

David Baker

Nathan Collins

Logan Woodyard

Jessica Jones

Lia Hall

Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE

Guests

Absent- Excused

Alicia Kellogg

Public

Steve Zemke

Toby Thaler

Tina Cohen

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

Public comment:

Steve Zemke noted that the language in the draft Comprehensive Plan does not include the date of 2037 to reach the 30% canopy cover goal. He also noted that the example housing types depicted in the draft Plan don't illustrate how trees would fit into the housing projects. With the new tree ordinance not including flexibility in the tree protection zone, there will be little space for trees in the new multi-family housing types as depicted currently in the plan. He suggested the UFC recommend looking at alternative building designs, including building higher so that more of a lot can be available for trees.

Tina Cohen noted that she is wondering what is happening with the Heritage Tree program. If Heritage Trees are the only category of trees required to be saved, there should be a mechanism for adding more trees, but the status of the committee to evaluate nominations is unknown.

Chair and Coordinator reports:

Josh shared that a state bill was passed related to the Wildland-Urban Interface Code that will impact how that is implemented in Seattle. This means that the Code won't take effect here in Seattle in March as originally expected. He noted that the Seattle Tree Canopy group, facilitated by the Seattle Parks Foundation had a meeting recently. The group has been rebranded as the Tree Equity group. Hao and Josh met recently with OSE staff and leadership to share priorities and framing around tree protection.

Adoption of February 14 meeting notes

Action: a motion to adopt the February 14 meeting notes as written was made, seconded and approved.

Subgroup reports:**- Tree Protection Ordinance**

The group had a productive meeting with Lois Martin, a long-time Central District resident. They discussed the Connected Communities ordinance proposed by CM Morales, which didn't pass but brought up aspects to consider.

The group has been discussing how to track tree removals approved, how best to move the work forward of tracking where projects are being proposed and tracking what happens with trees in them. There is a spreadsheet that the group has been using to list addresses/projects. This will be added to the subgroup information workbook so that other Commissioners can add to it as well. Hao noted that the tree map that SDCI is working on that will show tree projects can help with this, so it will be good to get an update on the status of that map.

- Climate

Hao is working on some slides for the next meeting.

- Budget

The subgroup and Patti met with Akshay Iyengar from the City Budget Office on the city budget process and how to provide meaningful recommendations on the city's budget. Akshay offered some insights into how the UFC can be most effective in developing and providing recommendations. Josh shared some slides summarizing some of the content from last year's urban forestry expenditures Statement of Legislative Intent report.

- Diversity and Equity

At their last meeting, the subgroup discussed the land acknowledgement the UFC has been using, and aspects of it to consider and improve. They also discussed attending community meetings rather than asking community groups to host one of the UFC meetings, as part of the effort to build relationships and have stronger connections to community groups.

Draft One Seattle Plan briefing – OPCD staff

Michael Hubner provided some background on what the Comprehensive Plan is and why it gets updated. A focus of this update is challenges around housing and affordability, and the city is also responding to climate impacts and centering and elevating equity in the planning work. Michael shared the timeline for this work, noting that after the public engagement around the release of the draft Plan, there will be additional work later this year to release a zoning proposal that implements the Plan and public engagement around that. The final Plan is expected to be released by the end of the year.

In addition to the draft EIS and the draft Plan, there is a report on what is proposed for updating neighborhood residential zones given the new set of requirements in the Growth Management Act to allow a broader range of housing types in NR zones. The changes in the NR zones will impact the largest area of the city. The Growth Strategy is designed to increase the supply, diversity and affordability of housing into the future. There is also an expanded Housing Element and a Housing Appendix with data supporting the Plan policies.

Equity and opportunity was considered across all of the Plan elements, including many policies to address these aspects. Some highlights of the policies:

- Prioritizing investments in communities, particularly low-income and BIPOC communities that have experienced historic underinvestment.
- Supporting a broad range of anti-displacement tools.
- Elevating both equitable housing and inclusive engagement as the Plan is implemented.

The Growth Strategy aims to put the City in the position to increase the supply of housing, with the existing target for housing growth over the next 20 years is for at least 80,000 units and up to 120,000 units. The goal is to increase diversity of housing types and create more affordable opportunities along with the overall increase in housing. The strategy also aims to reduce and address the history of racist and exclusionary policies.

Michael described the various place types outlined in the Plan: Regional Centers, Urban Centers, Neighborhood Centers, Manufacturing and Industrial Centers and Urban Neighborhoods. He shared a map showing the locations of the new place types across the city, discussed details of each place type, and showed examples of the different housing types proposed.

Patrice Carroll provided an overview of the new Climate and Environment Element in the Plan. House Bill 1181 introduced a goal around Climate to the Growth Management Act guidelines. It includes the guidance to include a set of policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and a set of policies that address resiliency to climate impacts. The previous plan's policies around trees that were in the Land and Environment Element were moved into this new Element. Recognizing that trees have a role in emission reduction is reflected in the narrative of this Element. It also integrates the strategies from the Urban Forest Management Plan. Other aspects called for in HB 1181 won't have enough information to be included in the final Plan adopted this year, but can be incorporated into subsequent annual updates. Patrice reviewed the policies included in the Element, including the carried-over policies and new policies. The goal for this section is the city's goal of reaching 30% tree canopy.

Michael reviewed the community engagement plans for the rest of the Plan process.

Questions and comments from Commissioners included:

- Request for more detail on the open houses to be held. How is this information being disseminated to the community?
- One result of the pandemic was an increase in people moving away from urban areas. Was this reverse of urbanization considered in developing the Plan?
- What has OPCD heard from community around parks and open space, recreational forest canopy?

- Does the City evaluate/consider responsibilities around biodiversity?
- Why was the 2037 timeline for reaching the 30% tree canopy goal removed?
- Was the potential to increase wealth disparity considered in developing the Plan?

Presentation debrief

Commissioners discussed initial thoughts they have from the presentation, and what areas of the Comprehensive Plan they want to know more about. These included:

- Understanding the rationale behind the new place types/Centers and the organization of the growth strategies. Resiliency and ecological functions should be considered along with the other aspects/values; we need more trees, how can we get there with these strategies?
- Opening up neighborhood residential zones to historically barred communities is very important, but we should also weigh the fact that these communities have also been barred from the ecological functions of trees.
- Wealth disparities – prices are going up at such a high rate, how can people stay in place? How many units on a lot are one thing, but single-family homes host a lot of our trees. Consider more deeply how people can stay in place, what incentives there are for people staying to keep their trees.

The group discussed next steps and how the UFC can work to develop and approve recommendations in the two-month window for comments. The next UFC meeting is April 10. A subgroup of Commissioners can meet to start developing draft feedback before that next meeting.

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 that OPCD discussed the draft Comp Plan and not the draft EIS. He suggested the UFC review that as well to consider impacts to trees. He stressed that public health is a big reason to retain tree canopy on neighborhoods where people live, rather than relying just on canopy in parks. Tree advocates worked for years to get HB 1181 passed, ensuring that additional aspects are included in all Comprehensive Plans.

Toby Thaler suggested that the UFC should consider impacts in the right of way, and ask the City to empower SDOT to have more authority over trees in the ROW adjacent to private lands.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 PM.

Meeting chat:

from Sandy Shettler to everyone: 3:08 PM

I don't have a comment, thank you Hao!

from Joshua Morris to everyone: 3:14 PM

Thanks, Tina! The heritage tree nomination process is still an open question for sure.

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:36 PM

Would be good to coordinate amount of trees the Dept have respomy

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:37 PM

responsibiliy for and amount of spending - agree Josh

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:39 PM

Would be good to look at how the Department's responsibility overlap and could be better coordinated with a single Dept of Climate and Environment with an urban forestry division.

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:41 PM

Example seattle City Light and Dept of Transportation deal with same land area.

from steve zemke to everyone: 3:41 PM

Example seattle City Light and Dept of Transportation deal with same land area.

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 3:46 PM

Is there a link to agenda for today's meeting?

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 3:47 PM

<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/2024/2024Agendas/UFCAgen da031324.pdf>

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 3:48 PM

Thank you!

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:30 PM

Would help to add addresses to locations for community engagement

from Tina Cohen to everyone: 4:31 PM

Where is the space for large trees in this rezoning scheme?

from Patrice Carroll, OPCD to everyone: 4:31 PM

<https://engage.oneSeattleplan.com/en/events>

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:32 PM

What is encouraf

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:33 PM

What is rimpact expected on middle housing building over time on loss of tree canopy?

from Tina Cohen to everyone: 4:36 PM

One seattle plan site doesn't list the events, at least I cannot locate the info

from Tina Cohen to everyone: 4:36 PM

Where is the Loyal heights meeting?

from Urgenson, Lauren to everyone: 4:36 PM

Here is the events page <https://www.seattle.gov/opcd/meetings-and-events>

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:37 PM

Loyal Heights location is 2101 NW 77th

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:38 PM

Time is 600 to 7:30 PM

from Patrice Carroll, OPCD to everyone: 4:40 PM

Meeting is at Loyal Heights Community Center

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:40 PM

Will goal to reach 30% tree canopy by 2037 be changed as a result of this plan?

from Danielle Devier to everyone: 4:43 PM

Thanks for presenting. I'm not a commissioner but, I think that it would be helpful to see some big trees (and green infrastructure?) in the renderings that illustrate typical 5000 sf lot dense housing-typologies.

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:44 PM

Should add health benefits to benefits of trees

from Lia Hall UFC13 to everyone: 4:44 PM

Per Josh's point, Would be interesting to overlay riparian corridors, greenspace with zoning changes.

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:45 PM

UFMP says 30% by 2037.

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:46 PM

Previous Comp Plan also said strive to reach 40% over time

from Joshua Morris to everyone: 4:49 PM

Thank you!!

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:53 PM

Need to ask them to do a presentaion at your next meeting on the impact of Comp Plan changes. That is a secon document that is commented on separately.

from steve zemke to everyone: 4:53 PM

Need to ask them to do a presentation at your next meeting on the draft EIS - impacts of changes on tree canopy over time.

from Danielle Devier to everyone: 4:59 PM

gotta run, thank you!

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 5:00 PM

GMA requires disparate impact analysis

RCW 36.70A.070(2)(e) – (h)

City Code requires Race and Social Justice Initiative analysis; was botched by City for last major up zones, MHA

from steve zemke to everyone: 5:02 PM

Agree with Toby.

Public input (additional comments received):