



SF Environment



GAVIN NEWSOM, MAYOR
JARED BLUMENFELD, DIRECTOR

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007 at 5:30 p.m.
City Hall, Room 416
One Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** The Urban Forestry Council meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL.** Present: Chair Milne, Vice-Chair Quirke, Members Blair, Cohen, Griswold, Nervo, Rodgers, and Sherk. Excused: Members Costello, Habert, Marks, Miller, Sacamano and Sustarich. Absent: Member Boss.
3. **ACTION:** Adoption of Minutes of the March 23, 2007 Urban Forestry Council Regular Meeting. Upon Motion by Vice-Chair Quirke and second by Member Nervo, the March 23, 2007 Meeting Minutes were approved without objection (Absent: Members Boss, Costello, Habert, Marks, Miller, Sacamano and Sustarich). (Explanatory Document: Approved Minutes of the March 23, 2007 Regular Meeting http://sfgov.org/site/sfenvironment_page.asp?id=58459.)
4. **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION:** Natural Areas Management Plan. The Significant Natural Resource Area Management Plan will guide activities and site improvements for native ecosystems in designated Significant Natural Resource Areas in San Francisco for the next twenty years. (Explanatory Document: Natural Areas Management Plan http://www.parks.sfgov.org/site/recpark_index.asp?id=1896.)

SPONSOR: Grace Ma, Urban Forestry Specialist

SPEAKER: Ms. Lisa Wayne, Recreation and Park Department

wetlands around the lakes, salt marshes, fresh water wetlands, Riparian (creeks), sand dunes that contain locally significant plant species, grasslands, rare plants, wildlife, and rare animals.

- Natural Areas Values: Natural resource values include plants, wildlife, soil and water and human values include recreational, respite from city, stewardship and environmental education.
- Natural Area Program Functions: The program is a division of the Recreation and Park Department, staffed by gardeners, volunteer coordinators, and Ms. Wayne. Work includes habitat restoration (invasive plant removal, re-vegetation), erosion control, trail maintenance, environmental education, and health and safety concerns.
- Community Based Stewardship: Since its inception, the program is envisioned as a community based restoration program with volunteers doing most of the work. Gardening staff is leveraging their time one to one with volunteer resources.
- Planning Background: 1991 General Plan Open Space Element identified the need to protect, preserve and manage native plant communities and wildlife habitat. In 1995, the Recreation and Park Commission adopted a Significant Natural Resources Management Plan which further outlined the objectives on how to protect these areas and action steps. In 1998, the Department undertook a major planning effort, a Management Plan, that refines the Significant Natural Resource Areas Master Plan.
- Management Plan History: Development of the full plan began in 1998; Citizen Task Force Draft was published in 2002; a Public Second Draft was published in June 2005; Final Draft produced in February 2006 (see explanatory document link above). Public hearings and public workshops were held. The document contains about 2700 public comments which were categorized, responded to and resulted in a change to the Plan. The Commission adopted the Plan as the project to move forward with for environmental review.
- Natural Areas Management Plan: 20 year plan. It catalogs and surveys the geology, biology and trail systems throughout the 1100 acres. It guides management and capital improvement projects so it identifies actions and recommendations for implementation for both staff as well as for capital projects and prioritizes those projects.

- Trees and Vegetation: Recommendations in the Plan for trees and vegetation is for a reintroduction of sensitive species in MA1 and MA2 areas. It identifies actions to reduce invasive plant cover (including eucalyptus trees) and tree removal for the purposes of restoration and habitat enhancement in just the MA1 and MA2 areas.

Re-vegetation in MA1 and MA2 districts: where invasive species are removed, 200 trees a year would be planted, for a total of 4,000 trees, primarily native trees.

In MA3 areas where most of the Urban Forest is, the recommendations align with the Urban Forest Plan in terms of removal of unsafe trees, diversification of the urban forest and allowing for eucalyptus regeneration.

Trees to be removed under the Plan in San Francisco: Out of a total of 64,000 existing trees in the urban forests and natural areas, the plan identifies 3400 for removal for conservation purposes to restore or protect the grasslands and native landscapes (95% of trees to remain).

Trees to be removed under the Plan in Pacifica: Ms. Wayne explained that Sharp Park in Pacifica is quite a rich eco system, and so the eucalyptus tree removal is much more rigorous. Out of a total of 54,000 trees, the plan identifies 15,000 for removal with 72,000 remaining in the canyon above the golf course.

- Public Process: Through a public draft, a number of community workshops, and scientific review, a Plan has been produced that the Commission has approved to move forward with for environmental review. Ms. Wayne stated that they are in the process of identifying a consultant and will be performing the environmental review. Public workshops and public input are to be scheduled prior to adoption of the plan. The environmental document and plans will then be brought to the Recreation and Park Commission and the Planning Commission for adoption.

Member Cohen asked if tree removal has ceased until the Plan is adopted. Ms. Wayne explained that their priority is to address health and safety surrounding trees until they reach the planning process. There would not be any large healthy trees that would be removed without posting and the regular process. Member Cohen asked if the Recreation and Park Department would not be abiding by the Landmark and Significant Tree Ordinance. Ms. Wayne stated that to her knowledge that is correct, but it was stated that the only large trees that would be removed at this time would be for health and safety.

Member Cohen asked if it was anticipated that the tree grove in Bernal Hill would become a

asked if she would follow the Landmark Tree Ordinance for a nominated or existing landmark tree under the Recreation and Park Department's jurisdiction. Ms. Wayne stated that she would follow the Ordinance and requested a list of trees. Urban Forestry Specialist Ma stated that she is not aware of any trees under the Recreation and Park Department's jurisdiction that have landmark status at this time.

Public Comment: Mr. Jake Sigg, retired employee of the Recreation and Park Department, discussed a 1980 grant to the Recreation and Park Department to do the City's first assessment of street trees. It was stated that Ms. Gravanis was hired to do the assessment. The following year, Friends of the Urban Forest was formed and Ms. Gravanis was the Executive Director of the program, and Mr. Sigg was on the Technical Advisory Committee for many years. Mr. Sigg discussed the phrase "no net loss of trees" and stated that he wants to see more street trees in the City, but that the trees in wild areas require management to maintain biological diversity and there should be a net loss because of adverse conditions, e.g. eucalyptus trees on Mount Davidson that are growing much too thickly and are not a natural forest, ivy and blackberry on the eucalyptus that are a threat to regeneration. Mr. Sigg stated that the objective of the Natural Areas Program was not to clear cut the forest, but to manage it for diversity and under-story.

Public Comment: Ms. Nancy Wuerfel stated that the Natural Areas Program defines an urban forest as "any significant stand of non-indigenous trees" and defines a tree as a plant having one vertical dominant trunk that is over 15 feet tall. Seedlings and saplings are young trees less than 15 feet tall and are not included in any of the calculations of the number of trees within natural areas, trees to be removed, or basal area because they are not considered trees. Ms. Wuerfel discussed the definitional differences between what the NAP program deals with and what the Plan deals with. Ms. Wuerfel stated that the Council has been told that there will be over 3400 trees in San Francisco that will be removed, which accounts only for trees that are over 15 feet tall. Ms. Wuerfel produced a list that identifies the location of some of these trees.

Ms. Wuerfel also expressed her concerns with clear cutting of trees at Mount Davidson and other natural areas and stated that volunteers are not taking part in preservation of trees. Ms. Wuerfel discussed page 6 of the forestry document, that states "the goal in most of the MA1 and MA2 area stands in Sharp Park is the same as for the natural areas within San Francisco: the eventual conversion of invasive forests into grasslands and scrub." Ms. Wuerfel stated that she would embrace the program if they could figure out a way not to cut down the trees simply because they want the land the trees stand on. The importance of tree maintenance was discussed and it was asked that volunteers remove the cape ivy from the eucalyptus trees. Ms. Wuerfel stated that the Natural Areas Program should embrace

University of California (UC) Davis stating that the Natural Areas Program has its place and has to be kept in its place. It cannot be allowed to trump the clear preference of parkland users in San Francisco. Ms. Wuerfel stated that she has attended lectures where Mr. Shapiro has made these statements. Member Blair stated that she has been involved with many protests in relation to NAP's objectives and expressed concern with the program stripping many of the trees and not maintaining newly planted trees. Member Blair also expressed her concern with the effectiveness of the NAP program, e.g. lack of volunteers to perform maintenance and lack of funding and public support.

Public Comment: Mr. Steven Chapman, Sierra Club, expressed support for the Urban Forestry Council's work especially with regard to street trees. Mr. Chapman stated that the Sierra Club supports the Natural Areas Program and the larger urban forest concept and would like to see all parties work together towards a collaborative, consensus approach.

Member Sherk stated that there are opportunities for collaboration on development of natural areas in conjunction with the Street Tree and Better Streets Program. It was stated that when possible, streets should be configured so they become places for people outside and inside of cars and suggested looking at underground creeks and dry tolerant spaces where they exist. It was recommended that native species be chosen as much as possible in order to expand natural areas within urban spaces. Member Sherk stated that in an urban environment, we should look at the total picture of what is natural and include people and technology and then figure out opportunities that are supportive of all of the different issues that people have. Member Sherk recommended that a lot of trees be planted and stated that she likes native trees and under story plant communities and invited Council members to view plantings along urbanized environments.

5. **DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION:** Landmark Tree Nomination Form. The Council will consider and vote on revisions to the Landmark Tree Nomination Form as recommended by the Landmark Tree Committee (Explanatory Document: Revised Nomination Form (Word) <http://web1.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/LandNomApril1107.doc>).

SPONSOR: Mike Boss, Chair, Landmark Tree Committee

SPEAKER: Mike Boss

Chair Milne suggested that this item be continued to the May meeting for Member Boss to make a presentation on the revised Landmark Tree Nomination Form.

6. **DISCUSSION and ACTION:** Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Urban Forestry Council. Council members will elect Chair and Vice Chair positions. Chair Milne stated that at the

Board and are the first landmark trees that have made it through the landmark process. Member Blair clarified that the trees will be on the Board of Supervisors agenda for a second reading.

Urban Forestry Specialist Ma reported that she is requesting funding to reprint the tree pruning brochure for the general public in the next fiscal year and will be reprinting the general urban forestry brochure in the next month or two if funding is approved. Ms. Ma discussed her conversation with Mr. Daniel Sider, Greening Director about wanting to reprint and develop more outreach materials for the Council, which also requires additional funding. Member Cohen asked if there is a recycled logo on the Department of the Environment's tree brochure. Ms. Ma clarified that all of the brochures are printed on recycled paper. Vice-Chair Quirke asked if it would be wise for the Council to advocate for brochure funding.

Council membership was discussed. It was advised that the Board of Supervisors appoints eight seats on the Council, in which six of the current eight Board-appointed members applied for reappointment. The Rules Committee supported the reappointment of the six applicants and appointments were forwarded to the full Board for their vote. It was stated that the Council's GGNRA representative did not reapply and Member Costello did not submit his paperwork, but members can continue to serve on the Council until they are replaced or reappointed. Ms. Ma indicated that a letter had been received from the Department of Public Works Department Head reappointing Member Sacamano, but that he had indicated that Ms. Carla Short would be representing the Department of Public Works in May.

Public Comment: Ms. Wuerfel asked what amount would be required to produce the publications and whether it would be under or above \$10,000. Ms. Ma stated that the required amount should be under \$10,000. Ms. Wuerfel offered to advocate for annual funding from either Outreach, who she stated are very well funded to take on this effort or from the contributions from other City departments that fund the Department.

8. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION.** Council Secretary Report. The Council Secretary will provide updates on correspondence received. (Explanatory Documents: Council Secretary Report to the Urban Forestry Council Members: (Word), <http://web1.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/CouncilSecReport.doc>, Free Parking Policy Recommendations (Word) <http://web1.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/FreeParkingPolicyRecommendations031607.doc>; Mayor's Office Letter to the Municipal Transportation Agency on Parking Reforms (PDF) <http://web1.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/MTA%20Letter.pdf>)

Council Secretary Monica Fish was not present at this meeting. Chair Milne explained that

- **Planning & Policy Committee**

Chair, Paul Sacamano was not present to give a report. Council Chair Milne stated that the Committee did not meet in April. Planning Committee Member Quirke reported that landmark tree incentives will be discussed at the May meeting.

The next meeting will be on May 17, 2007 at 4:00 PM at 11 Grove Street.

- **Landmark Tree Committee**

Chair Mike Boss was not present to give a report. Council Chair Milne reported that the item that was forwarded to the Council on the Landmark Tree Nomination Form was continued to the May Council meeting.

Member Blair indicated that she was advised that Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF) had a list 200 recommended trees. Urban Forestry Specialist Ma stated that Member Sacamano's recommendation was to select eleven trees from FUF's recommended list, and that he would assess those trees for landmark tree status.

The next meeting will be on May 8, 2007 at 4:00 PM at City Hall, Room 421.

10. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Terry Milne, Chair, Urban Forestry Council. Chair Milne announced that he would not be available for the May 25 Council meeting and asked Council Members to respond to the Council Secretary with a quorum check. Chair Milne stated that he spoke to Supervisor Peskin's office about making a Supervisor's Certificate to hand out to people connected with landmark trees and now that there are two official landmark trees, he will see what can be generated from the City. Chair Milne suggested that the Council prepare a commendation letter to Member Sacamano for having helped start the Council, chairing the Planning Committee, and all of the work that he and his Department have done.

11. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION:** New Business. Member Cohen stated that Member Sacamano's contribution has been monumental. Member Cohen expressed her concern that Ms. Wayne and the public perceive the Urban Forestry Council to be just about street trees and not the whole San Francisco landscape and questioned what the perception of the Recreation and Park Department, the City of San Francisco, and the Natural Areas Program is. Member Cohen asked that a discussion be held at a future meeting about the City's perception of the Urban Forestry Council and the urban forest.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Members of the public may address the Council on matters that are within the Council's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda. There was no public

