

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, October 23, 2007, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall, Room 416
One Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call.** The Urban Forestry Council meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. Present: Chair Milne; Vice-Chair Quirke (5:42 p.m.), Members Blair, Cohen, Griswold, Hillan (6:30), Miller, Nervo, Sherk (10:45), and Sustarich; Excused: Members Boss and Habert; Absent: Member Marks.
2. **Adoption of Minutes of the September 28, 2007 Urban Forestry Council Regular Meeting (Discussion and Action).** Upon Motion by Member Cohen and second by Member Nervo, the September 28, 2007 meeting minutes were approved without objection (Absent: Members Boss, Habert, Hillan, Marks, Quirke and Sherk) (Explanatory Document: Approved Minutes of the September 28, 2007 Regular Meeting http://sfgov.org/site/sfenvironment_page.asp?id=69171).
3. **Urban Forestry Council's Process.** Discussion on how the Council wants to engage in meetings, entertain proposals, make decisions and take actions (Discussion) (Continued from the September 28, 2007 Meeting) (Explanatory Documents: Consensus Decision Making (HTML) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision-making; Public Policy Consensus & Mediation—State of Maine Best Practices (HTML) http://www.maine.gov/consensus/ppcm_consensus_home.htm and On Conflict and Consensus (HTML) <http://www.consensus.net/ocac2.html>)

SPONSOR: Vice-Chair Kelly Quirke

Vice-Chair Quirke proposed that Council members consider that meetings be conducted with a consensus decision-making process instead of Roberts Rules of Order in order to develop proposals, take action, and for better ways to relate to each other. (Explanatory documents above can be referenced for a description of consensus decision-making.) It was explained that consensus is proposal oriented, gives everyone an opportunity to speak, and decisions are made when a proposal is enacted. The idea is that discussion relates only to proposals directly related to the agenda item. The facilitator is empowered by the group to cut off any discussion that does not directly relate to the proposal. You can propose an amendment, but you are discussing the proposal.

Member Cohen asked for an explanation on how the Council's reactions to issues would differ if there were a consensus or a majority-voting process. Vice-Chair Quirke explained that when Work Plan items for 2008 are developed, the consensus process would keep members focused on proposals, decision-making, enactment, and follow-up actions. The focus would be changed from being reactive to proactive.

Member Sustarich stated that he would have to research more about the process. Member Sherk stated that she would like the Council to become more proactive, more visible, and be involved in making changes in the City, but is not sure that it has to be Robert's Rules or a Consensus process. Member Sherk felt that the meeting room setup for full Council meetings was restrictive in comparison to the Committee rooms, where there is open communication. Member Blair stated that Roberts Rules allows for differences in opinion and still allows for issues to move forward. Vice-Chair Quirke explained that with the consensus process, if the majority of members do not agree with the proposal or if it is a tie, you start with a new proposal or ask for amendments.

Member Rodgers stated that the Council has proactively accomplished many things. Member Miller recommended taking ideas that had previously been presented to the Council and really work toward making changes in San Francisco; e.g., the sidewalk pocket park gardens. Member Rodgers explained that the Council's role is to advise the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor who have funding for capital projects.

Vice-Chair Quirke recommended that Council members be more proposal-oriented and that the Chair be the strong-armed facilitator to keep members on track toward the proposal and to encourage everyone's participation. The Council Secretary reported that Roberts Rules would allow Council members to focus on a particular proposal by making a motion towards a proposal. Members should then be discussing that particular motion and take a vote. A member can also propose an amendment to the motion or a new motion that can be voted on. Vice-Chair Quirke stated that a motion doesn't always have a discussion focused around adopting it or not, and ends up becoming a general discussion. Member Griswold stated that he would need a presentation and training on Roberts Rules and the Consensus process in order to better understand the differences and make a decision. Member Sherk suggested that Council members spend more time on urban forestry issues rather than a meeting process.

Public Comment: Mr. Louis Dillon stated that what separates great cities from poor cities is the availability of green areas and trees. It is psychologically damaging to live in cities if there are areas without respite. Mr. Dillon stated that the Council should have more influence in the City and spoke in support of its activities.

4. **Staff Report.** Staff will provide updates on UFC administrative and programmatic operations relating to research, planning, funding, outreach, and other related activities. (Informational Report

held with Friends of the Urban Forest staff about having a tree care focus on Arbor Day, which could be a larger statement citywide that more effort needs to be put on tree-care. It was stated that the Alemany Farms manager has 40-50 trees that are in desperate need of care so it may be possible that they may be able to partner in the effort. Ms. Hui discussed a meeting with the Friends of the Urban Forest volunteer coordinator about the holiday program and initiating a landmark tree tour into their tree tour program.

Ms. Hui reported that an October 3 article in the Chronicle "The Dirt, Check guidelines before pruning street trees" <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/10/03/HO66SGV73.DTL&hw=tree+pruning&sn=003&sc=517> references the Department of the Environment's "Tree Pruning Standards in San Francisco" brochure that the Department has run out of stock on. Ms. Hui stated there have been many requests for the brochure and is trying to locate funding for reprinting. It was stated that the urban forest brochure is being reprinted and should be available by the end of next week.

Ms. Hui discussed the Planning & Funding Committee meeting's discussion on the Environmental Assistant's job assignments. It was reported that part of the Urban Forestry program is being funded by the Environmental Justice Program (\$41,000). The Urban Forestry program is running at a \$55,000 deficit right now and is looking for funding. Council members were asked to provide their input on ways to meet the deficit. It was reported that the Department of the Environment office would be closed for construction from Wednesday, October 24 at 5 p.m. until Monday, October 29 a.m.

5. Committee Reports: (Informational Reports and Discussion)

- Planning & Funding Committee, Chair, Carla Short

The next meeting will be on November 15, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. at 11 Grove Street.

Planning and Funding Committee Chair Short reported that at the last Planning and Funding Committee meeting, the Department of the Environment gave a presentation on the budget discussing the source of funding and how it is allocated. Committee members were surprised to hear that the Environmental Assistant position is funded partially with Environmental Justice funds, so a portion of the assistant's work will be focused on environmental justice issues that may in some cases relate to the Council's work. The focus on the next meeting would be to develop a Work Plan for 2008 and tasks that relate to the Work Plan for the Environmental Assistant position.

Ms. Hui stated that an effort is being made so that her assignment of environmental justice work is related to urban forestry goals. Council members asked for a presentation by Ms. Anne Eng, Environmental Justice Program Manager, on how environmental justice work relates to urban forestry work. The Planning and Funding Committee can make recommendations on what type of work can be done as part of environmental justice work, and how goals can overlap.

nomination for landmark status of the Mary Ellen Pleasant trees on Octavia Street would also be heard at the November Landmark Tree Committee meeting.

Member Cohen discussed a series of three articles in the Chronicle that discussed what does and doesn't work with the landmark tree process and asked if the Board of Supervisors had expressed an opinion on the articles.

6. **Chair's Announcements:** Terry Milne, Chair, Urban Forestry Council (Information and Discussion). Chair Milne announced that the next Council meeting is on Friday, December 14 at 10:00 a.m. Chair Milne requested that the Urban Forestry Council meeting icon on the Department of the Environment's website be located on the first page and asked Ms. Hui to update the landmark tree list on the website. Chair Milne recommended that a presentation be given at the next meeting on the sidewalk pocket park gardens and then a subsequent meeting to analyze the success of the program. Chair Milne reported that he and Vice-Chair Quirke are working on setting up meetings with Board of Supervisors members and Mayor's representatives to hear about progress made by the Council and its activities. A report would be given at the next Council meeting.

7. **New Business/Future Agenda Items** (Information and Discussion).

Future agenda item requests included (1) a presentation on the sidewalk pocket gardens, how it is succeeding, where it is going, ways to influence more pocket gardens in the City (LM), and the permit process (CB). Member Cohen offered to present on this topic and Member Short was asked to discuss the permitting process; (2) presentation on City and citizen initiatives on the urban forest; e.g., Greening Guerrero, sidewalk basin expansion projects, Living Library, Green Schoolyards, Community Challenge grants and street parks (KQ and BS); (3) Better Streets Plan presentation, how that program works, where it is going, what the intention is (TM); (4) budget process and measure on the status of older trees, and number of trees we currently have and have planted (LM); (5) presentation on the City's contract last year to plant and maintain 1500 trees primarily in the Sunset District and budget item this year to plant and maintain 1450 trees around the City (KQ); (6) Urban Forestry Council discussion on making policy decisions that include the Recreation and Park Department (LM).

Member Rodgers stated that the process for nominating landmark trees is slower than it needs to be and recommended that one member of a Board or Commission be allowed to nominate a tree instead of a full Commission. Chair Milne reported that he has scheduled a meeting with Supervisor McGoldrick and would give a future report on their proposals. Deputy City Attorney Cabrera advised that the Council can suggest amendments to legislation through the Supervisor's Office as it goes through the process.

Member Sherk asked for clarification on the agenda item scheduling process. It was explained that a Council member could schedule an agenda item by contacting the Chair for approval and then

Public Comment: Mr. Louis Dillon spoke in support of the Council's ideas for future agenda items and discussed the Southern California fires and deforestation. Mr. Dillon stated that people have overexploited the environment and Councils such as the Urban Forestry Council can start to refocus attention to long term sustainable living that in history never had financial backing. Mr. Dillon stated that historically, San Francisco inhabitants had much more respect than the current inhabitants for their environment. Native American Indians would selectively cut down trees and would not allow other tribes to cut down their trees without permission. Mr. Dillon noted that people are involved in environmental "ecocide," meaning an ecological suicide that has gone unchecked. It was stated that societies that have perished in the history of the world; e.g., Easter Island, has always been due to neglect of the environment.

9. **Adjournment.** The Urban Forestry Council meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Copies of explanatory documents are available to the public at Department of Environment, 11 Grove Street, San Francisco, California between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., by clicking on the links by each agenda item above, or upon request to the Council Secretary at the address listed below, telephone number 415-355-3709, or via e-mail at Monica.Fish@Sfgov.org.

Urban Forestry Council
San Francisco Department of the Environment
City and County of San Francisco
11 Grove Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Respectfully submitted by,
Monica Fish, Council Secretary

Approved:

