

URBAN FORESTRY COMMITTEE MINUTES

OCTOBER 28, 2016 7:30AM

City Hall – Warner Room

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Keith Jones, *Chairman*
John Schwandt, *Vice Chairman*
Glenn Truscott
Bruce Martinek
Tim Kastning (left at 10:05am)

STAFF PRESENT:

Katie Kosanke, Urban Forestry Coordinator
JD Reeves, UF Inventory Worker

GUESTS PRESENT:

(None)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Bob Hallock (*out of town*)
Tom Ball
Steve Bloedel
Marie Michaelson (*Student member*)

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:35am by Chairman Jones.

AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA

John made a motion to add an inspection request to the agenda at 4101 Holmes, so it could be reviewed and the applicant did not have to wait until the November meeting since the request came in less than 48 hours prior to the meeting. Motion seconded by Bruce to add the item the agenda, motion passed.

1) MINUTES

Motion by John Schwandt to approve the Sept 16, 2016 minutes with some grammar changes, seconded by Glenn Truscott, motion passed.

2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

3) COORDINATOR'S REPORT

See attached report for October 28, 2016.

4) REVIEW OF NATURAL OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Glenn reported that at the last NOSC meeting there wasn't a quorum. He did however present information at that meeting about a recent field trip to the Sandpoint Arboretum. Glenn spoke with a representative from the Native Plant Society and he and another Urban Forestry volunteer may make

a presentation to them soon. Glenn said Bill Greenwood asked him to continue moving forward with plans for the native plant arboretum at the Veteran's Centennial Park.

5) URBAN FORESTRY ORDINANCE CHANGES

Staff gave a short presentation on the draft ordinance changes. Katie has been working with the Legal Department on the changes over the past month. The changes include various definitions and wording changes for clarification. Topping is being taken out as allowable with an approved permit, this practice is against industry standards and has not been allowed in the past. Drop crotch pruning replaces topping which is an acceptable practice in some cases when height reduction is allowed. Clarify fee in lieu of replacement tree; allows exceptions for replacement trees when planting a replacement tree is not practical. Add additional provisions for tree service licensing to ensure quality control of tree services working on public trees. Allow others to plant trees in the right-of-way; not just tree services. Not all of the city-licensed tree services plant trees and this has not been enforced as many landscape contractors plant trees through site development following city guidelines. Include new technology for root containment including engineered soil and cell planters. Outline penalties for violations to be consistent with the appraised value of the damage.

Glenn pointed out a couple of items that needed to be edited for clarification. Tim commented that two violations is excessive for a tree service. He also mentioned several items that he felt needed further clarification and updating including mention of updated ANSI A300 standards. He recommended more time to review to refine all of the changes before going to City Council. The committee discussed other changes and suggested more time for more changes. Keith asked if tabling the item would affect staff. Katie said that some of these changes staff has been working on for years and one more month to refine all of the changes would be beneficial.

Tim Kastning made a motion to table voting on this item until the November meeting. Glenn Truscott 2nd the motion, motion passed.

6) GRAND SCALE TREE REQUIREMENTS

Staff gave a short presentation on the grand scale tree requirements and proposed changes. Currently there are no standards in place to protect trees and tree roots from impact through site development. This has resulted in dieback of tree branches and/or tree decline and removals which can pose safety risks. The City's Commercial Design standards for C-17 and C-17L include a section regarding preserving private property trees called "Grand Scale Trees". These are large diameter trees on private property within 20' of a public street that a developer can choose to retain. The intent of this program is to encourage the retention of existing, larger, mature trees on private property (not street trees that are required to be retained unless approved for removal by the Urban Forestry Committee). The developer can receive bonuses for preserving grand scale trees in order to support the natural beauty of Coeur d'Alene. Recently, there were locations where Grand Scale Trees were intended to be preserved, however no measures were put in place to ensure survivability through the development process. The impact of the construction (root cutting, soil compaction, and trunk damage) resulted in tree decline and the trees had to be removed, while the developer had received bonuses for preserving them. With new requirements, developers will need to provide a tree protection plan when preserving grand scale trees. The tree protection will consist of fencing, signs, and mulch supplied by the developer to be in place throughout the duration of the project. City staff

time will be needed for pre-site inspections, review of plans, monitoring the site during construction, and increased coordination with the developer. If the tree protection measures are not followed, or the tree fails due to construction impacts within the tree protection zone, the appraised value of the tree will be charged to the developer. The appraised value of the tree will be determined at the beginning of the project following the Council of Trees & Landscape Appraisers Guide for Plant Appraisal. In addition to the appraised value, the developer will also have to plant a 2.5" caliper sized tree. The intent of having increased requirements for Grand Scale Trees is to ensure they are not significantly impacted during development. The benefits of the protection standards will result in healthier trees that live longer, minimize potential safety risks, and reduce costly pruning or removals. The new standards (attached) are simple to follow so they are not so stringent that developers will choose not to retain Grand Scale Trees which are located on private property. By taking these additional protection measures there will be increased survivability of trees and more accountability to developers that choose to retain them for bonuses. Trees on private property should be encouraged to be retained since they provide many environmental benefits throughout our city and contribute to the city's urban canopy cover.

Tim mentioned adding verbiage to allow for deviations to work in the critical root zone as long as it is pre-approved. He also commented that listing the ANSI A300 standards which is the document Coeur d'Alene's standards are based on should be listed. Staff commented that at the end of the code it does allow for approved deviations. The committee thought deviations should be outlined a little more clearly. Staff commented that a user friendly field sheet would be given to developers but the code does support the requirements. Tim asked if staff could monitor these onsite or if the developer would have to hire an arborist. Katie said that there are few projects per year that keep grand scale trees and at this time it is proposed to do in house so it doesn't further deter developers as another requirement. The committee asked if delaying this item would cause a problem for staff. Katie commented that currently no requirements are in place and so adding standards is of great benefit. With winter coming, development is slowing down and allowing for another month to review the changes would be beneficial to put in place a more precise and comprehensive plan.

Glenn Truscott made a motion to table voting on this item until the November meeting. John Schwandt 2nd the motion, motion passed.

The committee set a workshop for Wednesday, November 2nd at 8:00am to go over additional changes to the ordinance and grand scale tree requirements. Staff will post notification of that public meeting.

7) TREES AND SIDEWALK REQUIREMENTS

Urban Forestry Staff will soon meet with other city departments in regards to possible new deviations for sidewalks that have to be repaired near trees. Currently there are no standards in place and much root cutting has been occurring to trees by contractors. Locations where the sidewalk was repaired some years ago significant trees have declined and in some cases died and had to be removed. Staff briefly discussed ideas with the Legal Department who researched the ADA code and allowable deviations. Other cities such as Spokane currently allow for some ramping at trees to prevent root damage and to prevent future infrastructure damage. After initial meetings with staff,

the Urban Forestry Committee will be given updates and will be asked to assist in making recommendations for new possible ideas for allowable deviations and protection measures for street trees. Staff will also consult with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee for support as well as input from local disability groups. Tim commented that he would be interested in working on this item and he knows Gordon Mann, a consulting arborist who focuses on trees and sidewalk conflicts.

8) TREE STORAGE AND NURSERY OPPORTUNITY

Staff updated the committee that ideas were recently discussed about an opportunity to possibly grow trees at the Forest Nursery site. A meeting was held and the Forest Service could grow trees on their land by their staff for an at-cost price. Post Falls staff also attended that meeting for a possible Community Canopy tree growing partnership which had been done some years ago. Recently, the Parks Department found out that there may be an opportunity to grow trees at the wastewater compost facility. Initial meetings are being planned to see the feasibility of that location. Currently, the Parks Department doesn't have a place to store trees that are brought in for various planting projects other than a small space at the street department yard which isn't ideal. The benefits of having the trees on a city site rather than at the Forest Service Nursery site, would allow for a bit more flexibility in managing it, allowing volunteers to access the site for minor tasks such as weeding, and would also be a good location for contractors to pick up trees. Bruce asked if growing trees would be a conflict with the local private industry. Tim answered that the city purchases wholesale usually out of state so, growing some of our own would be little impact to local private industry. Staff mentioned a tree nursery/growing site could start off as a small operation and then expand if successful. Trees could be grown bareroot in the CDA Green mulch material and/or container grown from whips. Tim asked if there was a water source. Staff confirmed that there is currently irrigation on the site.

9) URBAN FORESTRY PROJECT IDEAS

None.

10) INSPECTION REQUESTS

- 715 E. Wallace Ave – request to crown reduce a black locust tree denied because the tree is in poor condition and needs to be removed/replaced.
- 1811 E Pennsylvania Ave – request to remove a ponderosa pine tree denied because it is in good condition, recommend routine pruning.
- 5758 St. Germaine Ct – request to remove two London planetrees denied because sidewalk conflicts can be mitigated and the trees retained with little impact to the roots. Recommend sidewalk deviations.
- 2025 Hogan Street – request to remove a honeylocust tree denied because it is in good condition and sidewalk conflicts can be mitigated and the tree retained with likely little impact to the roots. Recommend sidewalk deviations.
- 4101 Holmes – Request to remove purpleleaf plum trees approved for removal and replacement because they are in poor condition.

11) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:05am with John, Glenn, Keith and Bruce going out to perform the tree inspections.

Respectfully Submitted,
Katie Kosanke, Urban Forestry Coordinator