

Forestry and Natural Resources Commission

7:00 p.m., January 27, 2021

Microsoft Teams conference meeting

Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in

Guests: Mary Glass, Elaine Simmons, Christina Marshall, George M. (no full last name shown), Bernie Berne

Staff: Vincent Verweij, Jen Soles, Otis Marechaux

Commissioners: Caroline Haynes, David Howell, John Carey, Josh Handler, Nat Ames, Phil Klingelhofer, Steve Sockwell, Kit Norland, Kate Donohue, Shawn Norton, Noreen Hannigan, Bill Browning, Melody Mobley

VDOF: Jim McGlone

APS: Steven Bernheisel

Public comments

Mary Glass presented on support from CivFed.

Elaine Simmons spoke about ivy-covered trees.

Bernie Berne spoke about a draft letter on budget and mowing.

Introduction of Tree planting coordinator – Otis Marechaux

Otis Marechaux introduced himself to the commission.

Updated Organization Chart – Vincent Verweij

Vincent Verweij showed the updated organization chart for Parks and Natural Resources

Invasive Plant Program and Deer planning – Jennifer Soles

Jennifer Soles presented on the program.

Questions about funding and what extra funding would mean, and on the timeline for further actions on deer management.

Subcommittee on Tree Canopy Actions – Nat Ames

Compliments were shared on the effort and amount of people involved. There was general support for recommendations, and a call for incorporation of solid measurements and metrics.

Josh Handler suggested a letter to the County Board to show the work.

The subcommittee will reconvene and refine the recommendations, seek out metrics to be followed by a vote on a letter to the board.

Standard Site Plan Conditions – Caroline Haynes

Caroline Haynes spoke about potential changes to suggest to Standard Site Plan Conditions, after the discussion at NRJAG.

Commission Infrastructure (Work Plan, Annual Report, Memberships)

Staff Reports

Commission Member Reports (**Taken in order of Action Items first**)

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

Aaron Schriber, Director of Current Planning for Community Planning, Housing and Development provided an overview of the site plan review process. He noted that the standard site plan conditions are being revised and any suggested updates should come through the respective member commissions. Attached is a summary of some of the issues that we will be discussing during the meeting.

Joan McIntyre, C2E2 Chair, also shared a rubric that C2E2 members are now using during the SPRC process.

Park and Recreation Commission (David Howell)

The Park and Recreation Commission's January meeting was the first under the new Chair Shruti Kuppa. The agenda included a final overview presentation by Matt Mattauszek, CPHD, on the latest draft of the Pentagon City Planning Study product. That plan is in the final phase of its development and slated for PC and CB in the coming months. The second major item on the agenda was consideration of the 2022 workplan. A final product and transmittal to the CB will happen in February.

Public Spaces Master Plan Implementation Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

No meeting in January, but there is a meeting scheduled to bring the new representative from Bicycle Advisory Committee to the Natural Trails working group, Gillian Burgess, up to speed on the work done to date. (Elizabeth Kiker stepped down as BAC rep).

Planning Activities/SPRC (Steve Sockwell and Caroline Haynes)

Commissioner Haynes

1300 and 1305 N. Pierce Street (Marbella Apartments) Scheduled to go before the Planning Commission on Feb. 2 and the County Board on Feb. 12.

PenPlace Jan. 24 meeting: Over 90 people were in attendance, with the focus on sustainability, transportation and phasing and construction. SPRC members were generally pleased with the responsiveness of the applicant from the previous SPRC meeting. Additional trees were added around the central green; the Pentagon City Planning Study tree canopy targets are being met on the building sites and exceeded in the park. The buildings will have bird friendly glass and will be dark sky compliant. Other improvements were made to the forest walk ramp entrance from Army Navy Drive. There continued to be opposition to the configuration of 12th Street and the lack of a dedicated bike lane. One final SPRC meeting is tentatively scheduled for early February.

Pen Place Park Master Plan: The second public engagement for the Pen Place Park Master Plan closed at the end of December, so we should be seeing the next phase of that process soon.

Pentagon City Sector Plan: FNRC wrote a letter in support of the plan, sent in January. This is on the Planning Commission agenda for Feb. 2 and on the County Board agenda for Feb. 12.

Langston Highway (Caroline Haynes)

No new updates

Tree Stewards (Noreen Hannigan)

Tree Stewards are beginning a Winter 2022 Training Class on February 1. Class size has not been finalized, but is expected to be large (probably about 35, but could go bigger). Lectures will be held on Zoom, and workshops/field trips on weekends in smaller groups. In addition, 18 Tree Steward, ARMN, and community volunteers showed up for an English ivy pull at Lacey Woods Park on January 15.

Tree Canopy Fund (Kate Donohue)

There were about 200 applications for trees to be planted this spring. Two review sessions (1/26 and 2/2 from 6:00 to 9:00 pm) have been scheduled. If you are interested in participating, please contact me.

Once the applications have been reviewed, EcoAction Arlington will contact the property owners to ask for waivers, and we will plan our trip to White House Natives in Luray, Virginia, to tag trees.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (Noreen Hannigan)

The Bicycle Advisory Committee met on Monday, January 3, 2022. The committee was expecting an in-person update on Natural Surface Trails (of interest to the BAC for mountain biking) from DPR's Principal Planner, Ryan Delaney. However, Mr. Delaney, did not appear in person; rather he communicated in writing that the County is waiting to choose a contractor to conduct trail inventories and that there was no information to report at that time. The Committee is unhappy that updates are being related in writing rather than in person. The BAC's Chair wrote a letter to Jane Rudolph, Director of Parks & Rec, to complain, and Ms. Rudolph replied. The exchange is posted on the BAC's Google Group messages posted on its site.

<https://groups.google.com/g/arlington-bac/c/SFdlU0DbL2A>

Most of the rest of the meeting concerned the "12th St. South Complete Streets" project, in which a segment of S. 12th Street with a protected bike path off S. Glebe Road. The street is being redesigned for both automobile and bicycle/pedestrian access. Kyle King and Jason Widstrom presented the County's plans and diagrams, which are still in the design and public engagement phases. The Committee expressed safety objections to losing the separate bike path and it being replaced by a bike lane adjacent to an automobile lane.

Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable (*Vacant*)

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (Phil Klingelhofer)

No report

Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (Shawn Norton)

No report

Virginia Department of Forestry (Jim McGlone)

Jim McGlone shared information with the commission on the tree-related bills in the Virginia legislature.

In addition to legislation that seeks to amend 15.2 - 961 and -961.1 in various ways there are important budget items to watch. In his proposed budget, Governor Northam included:

\$4 million for the Virginia Trees for Clean Water grant fund with 25% earmarked for equity projects.

\$3 million per year in program and position support for the DOF Urban and Community Forestry program. This is the first time state support for this program has been proposed. Until now it has been wholly funded by US Forest Service grants

\$2.9 million to bring New Kent Forestry center back into production.

\$1 million in logger BMP grants.

HB 706 (Keam)

Trees during development process; conservation and replacement. Changes the time for minimum canopy coverage for all localities from 20 years to 10 years and removes special provisions that had allowed for 10 years for the City of Williamsburg and local ordinances adopted pursuant to § 15.2-961 prior to July 1, 1990. The bill provides an additional one-quarter times the canopy area credit for preservation of trees that are taller than 30 feet, thereby increasing the canopy area credit from one and one-quarter to one and one-half.

HB 541 (Convirs-Fowler)

Conservation of trees during land development process; authorized localities. Allows any locality to adopt an ordinance providing for the conservation of trees during the land development process. Under current law, only a locality within Planning District 8 that meets certain population density and nonattainment classification criteria is authorized to adopt such an ordinance.

SB 537 (Marsden)

Powers of local government; trees during development process; replacement and conservation. Expands to all localities provisions that currently only allow certain localities to adopt an ordinance providing for the planting and replacement of trees during the development process. The bill adds more flexibility for implementation and management of tree canopy banks, tree canopy credits, and tree canopy requirements. The bill changes and updates standards, reference documents, and published reference texts. The bill expands options for localities to disburse funds to charitable organizations. The bill adds percentage specifications for ordinances related to cemeteries. The bill removes the prohibition of invalidating local ordinances adopted before July 1, 1990, the allowance of 10-year minimum requirements for pre-1990 ordinances, and the inability to invalidate an ordinance adopted pursuant to the section relating to the replacement of trees during development process in certain localities. The bill provides guidelines for the Stakeholder Advisory Group, established by the bill to provide

recommendations on the provisions of the bill, and its meetings; exemptions from the Administrative Process Act, section-specific definitions for public comment; and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. The main provisions of the bill have a delayed enactment date of January 1, 2023; the remaining provisions are effective in due course.

Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)

No report

New Business

A letter was proposed on budget for invasive plant management, tree canopy, deer management, competitive salaries and authority for employees, natural surface trails.

A letter was approved unanimously supporting these priorities Steve and Phil will work together on a letter.

Next Meeting: February 24, 2022