

# Forestry and Natural Resources Commission

7:00 p.m., July 22, 2021

## Microsoft Teams conference meeting

Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in

Public comments

Bernie Berne: Pen place project. Noted concerns about the size of lawns on the park. No milkweed. Suggested to follow up with Alonso on plant selection.

Pen Place Update – Matt Mattauszek

Matt spoke and presented on the Pen Place project.

Questions about eminent domain, and park master plan, and how the plan is informed by public comment.

No action items.

Tree Equity Map – Vincent Verweij

Vincent presented on the Tree Equity Map from American Forests

Commission Infrastructure (May Minutes, Work Plan, Annual Report, Memberships)

Tree Canopy Fund applications were discussed.

Staff Reports

### **Maintenance:**

- Tree requests are continuing to flow in, at 166 for July already. Last year saw a total of 162 requests in July
- The County got hit by a large storm over the July 4 weekend. Over 80 trees were cleared from roads and pathways.

### **Planning:**

(Projects with high impact or high opportunity highlighted in **bold**)

#### Long-term planning

- Staff continues to work on LDA2.0, to best include tree conservation in the **Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance guidance manual**, in context of reducing stormwater quantity loads.
- The first draft of the Pentagon City Planning Study is being reviewed by staff. This plan hopes to integrate new ideas on biophilic design, and a “green ribbon” through the Pentagon City area.

### Site plans (special exception and by-right)

New and under review:

- **Macy's in Ballston** – A new site plan, redeveloping the Macy's. This is an opportunity site, with potential for tree canopy on the roof and in the streetscape.
- **2351 Richmond Hwy (Century Center)** – An amendment to an original site plan, now showing tree removal of street trees impacted by the project, a change from the original site plan. Opportunity for conservation and planting exists.
- Crystal City Water Park – impacts to existing trees are being reviewed.
- Army Navy Country Club Pool Renovation – Landscape plans are being reviewed
- Courthouse landmark plaza – project is being reviewed for issues with street tree planting area widths, to be resolved by the applicant.

Approved and/or under construction:

- 6711 Lee Hwy – trees are being planted
- 1555 Wilson Blvd – Final inspections are being performed for this site.
- 241 18<sup>th</sup> St S plaza – permits are being finalized, and construction will start soon.

### DES

- Salt Storage – A small stormwater feature will be added to this site, to help increase water quality filtration of the site. A tree inventory is forthcoming, but the project has a small footprint.
- Donaldson Run – Tributary B – Site fencing is up, root pruning was performed, and the trees impacted by the project are being removed.

### Parks

- Zitkala-Sa – Park to be completed soon.
- Towers – The park will go out to bid shortly. Due to costs associated with the Pandemic, some play equipment had to be altered. Tree impact is still very low.

### By-right projects

- Staff is handling regular workloads of by-right plans, but with severely short staff. No violations were issued this month, but follow-up on existing violations are still outstanding.

### Schools

- Walter Reed school is finishing up tree planting. They are watering every day, to help deal with higher temperatures. Tree protection fencing has been removed.

### Federal

- No major projects.

### Tree Planting:

- Tree planting lists for fall are being completed in the next two weeks. Tree Planting requests stand at about 64 and we hope to clear most of these out with the fall planting.
- We are not quite up to full staff with watering but are running three trucks most days.
- Warranty checks are ongoing for spring 2020 planted trees.
- Staff participated in an SPR demonstration event and worked with EcoAction of tree planting approvals for fall.

**Outreach:**

- Eden Stern, a student of University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, is helping pilot the Arlington Forestry Instagram account. We are seeing how much engagement we can get with this form of outreach. You can find it here: <https://www.instagram.com/arlingtonforestry/>

**Personnel:**

- We will be scheduling the first round of interviews in early August, for 3 urban forester positions. The position is still open for applications. See the following link for the vacancy: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/arlington/jobs/3135235/urban-forester-multiple-vacancies?keywords=forester&pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

**Other:**

- The tree crew and forestry staff helped give a demonstration of Soil Profile Rebuilding at Bon Air Park, a technique to be used in future land disturbance projects, to remediate construction-impacted soils.

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

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

No meeting in July. John Griffin from the Humane Society of the United States will be presenting on deer management strategies at the August 2 meeting.

Public Spaces Master plan Implementation Advisory Group

The working group on natural trails will begin meeting next week to discuss next steps on an engagement process and more information on best practices in managing natural trails.

Park and Recreation Commission (David Howell)

No report

Planning Activities Notification (Steve Sockwell)

The Pen Place (Amazon HQ) Long Range Planning Committee July 13th meeting. If you recall, this is a 15 story conference center and 3 22 story

residential/ retail buildings, Generally, the surrounding community remains unhappy with the height and blah (a useful planning term) massing of the three residential buildings. There are also transportation issues (due to the effects of creating such a large block) that will have to be resolved.

The applicant has made the rooftops more interesting with well designed solar arrays, but that's about all. I pointed out that there was a disparity between the green nature of the Helix conference center and the limited appearance of plants or trees on the residential towers. This is a detail typically often brought up in Site Plan meetings which will occur in the future. I also asked about public access to the Helix conference center; the public can enter 2-4 weekend days every month.

Note that there is a Master Planning process running parallel to the discussion of the buildings. Because its very difficult to say much in a large group on the LRPC or site plan committees, I think we might have more impact in that process.

Also, the ongoing Clarendon Sector Plan group will meet on July 27. No posting yet on topics.

Lee Highway (Caroline Haynes)

At the July 17 meeting the County Board officially renamed Lee Highway to Langston Blvd. Some home and business owners are becoming more vocal in their opposition to the planning process and the possibility of upzoning. There was a spirited exchange at the County Board meeting about the possibility of the County exercising eminent domain as part of the redevelopment process. County Board members pushed back on that assertion.

Tree Stewards (Kate Donohue)

No activities to report

Tree Canopy Fund (Kate Donohue)

We are in the process of reviewing 227 applications for trees to be planted this fall. Below are the requested trees by species, which will change a bit as we review the applications and take into consideration the quantities of any given species available at White House Natives Nursery. This round, the only species that WHN is short on is Celtis. We may suggest applicants opt for their second choice, or suggest an alternative.

Species	Requested
Carpinus caroliniana - American hornbeam	42
Quercus palustris - Pin oak	47
Betula nigra - River birch	40
Celtis occidentalis - Sugarberry	24
Platanus occidentalis - American sycamore	15
Quercus bicolor - Swamp white oak	34
Tilia americana - American linden	25
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>227</b>

Noreen Hannigan is organizing a trip to White House Natives to select and tag the trees that will likely take place in early September

Bicycle Advisory Committee (Noreen Hannigan)

Nothing related to forestry or natural resources.

Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable (Vacant)

No report

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (Phil Klingelhofer)

The Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) held its July meeting on July 15, 2021.

The meeting agenda included one item: Neighborhood Conservation Program Review (NCPR) Summary & What's Next.

County staff has completed a comprehensive review of the NCAC program over the last 18 months and an overview of the findings and recommendations was presented to the NCAC membership. I have attached the presentation and want to highlight slide 14 where you will find the six areas of focus for the implementation of the plan review recommendations.

Also, the recorded presentation and discussion can be found at the Committee page: <https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/neighborhood-conservation-advisory-committee/>.

Recommendations involve the following areas: Vision & Policy, People, Process, Funding, with the intension to clarify the program mission with a better focus, rebrand the program, better focus the program, work more closely with the neighborhoods to update neighborhood plans, restructure the project evaluation process, and expand County resources to keep pace with cost increases.

These changes may lead to more opportunities for neighborhoods to use the NCAC program to advance objectives that support the preservation and

expansion of natural resources and the tree canopy within and adjacent to those neighborhoods and explicitly incorporate equity into the project process.

Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (Teresa Leonardo)

No report

Virginia Department of Forestry (Jim McGlone)

No report

Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)

No report

9:00 PM

New Business

Bird friendly backgrounder by David Howell. Four categories of threats: Structures, night lighting, chemicals, habitat destruction. 3 Billion birds less than 50 years ago, and still under pressure. 350 mil-1 billion struck glass. 40% of annual loss of birds by window strike on private residence. Spoke about feral cats.

**Next Meeting:            September 23, 2021**