

Forestry and Natural Resources Commission

7:00 p.m., March 24, 2022

Microsoft Teams conference meeting

Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in

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

Guests: John Savo, Kim Selby, Brian Stout, Anne Bodine, Samantha Martino, Nicholas Cumings, Joe Chapman, Todd Leber, Taylor Lawch Rushali Patel, Grace Dials, Cindy Lewin, Felice Brychta, Bernard Berne, George Musket, Kerry Hegedus, Nick Anderson, Greta Ruedisueli, Prasad Bajjuri, Alistair Watson, Meagan Renzi, Liliana Duica Amaya

Staff: Vincent Verweij, Marco Rivero, Jeremy Smith, Michael Simmons

Public comments

Anne Bodine spoke about density on Pen Place and how to pay for services that will support the new influx of residents.

Bernard Berne supported the planting schedule of the Pen Place project, but noted high amounts of impervious area in the public space.

Pen Place Site Plan – JBG Smith and Scape Studio

Marco Rivero presented the staff presentation.

Joe Chapman and John Savo continued with the applicant presentation. Grace Dials gave the applicant's landscape presentation.

Questions were asked about bird-friendly glass, Arlingtonians for a sustainable future, and stormwater vaults.

Fiscal Year 2023 Budget letter – Phil Klingelhofer

The letter was discussed.

Passed unanimously, with one typo correction.

i-Tree Canopy – Vincent Verweij

Vincent presented on i-Tree Canopy

Introduction of Parks and Natural Resources Division Chief – Michael Simmons

Commissioner Mobley asked everyone to Upton Hill for a nature walk on April 23.

Commission Infrastructure (Work Plan, Annual Report, Memberships)

Chair Klingelhofer asked for 3 volunteers for tree maintenance funding. Commissioners Mobley, Norland, and Ames volunteered.

Staff Reports – Vincent Verweij described Site plans, preventive maintenance, and a future multiuse path in Potomac Yards.

Maintenance:

- Staff continue working on our 5th batch of **preventive pruning** in Fairlington (S Stafford St, 36th St S and 35th St S) 72 trees have been marked for this location. Three batches of preventive tree maintenance were completed in the last month
- The tree crew and the contractor are continuing to work on responding to significantly higher tree maintenance requests. Urban foresters are assisting, through the preventive maintenance program, and by managing stump treatments throughout the County.
- Staff met with Cherrydale civic association leadership to discuss tree maintenance and planting at the **Cherrydale ponds**, and around the neighborhood, after trees were removed around the pond by the contractor.

Planning:

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

Long-term planning

- **Deer study:** staff is responding to comments from the Finance department before posting the Request for Proposal
- **FNRP:** Staff is working with the contractor to answer interdepartmental questions, and will be posting an updated timeline on the website soon.
- Staff reviewed presentations for the **Missing Middle Housing Study**, and provided analyses on the capacity for proposed housing types to support County tree canopy goals

Site plans (special exception and by-right)

- In review:
 - **Crestmont Redevelopment Conceptual Plan:** Staff reviewed a conceptual plan of a project on the corner of Key Blvd and N Quinn St. The project site has a wooded area that staff will review for impact from the proposal.
 - **2025 Fairfax Dr (Wakefield Manor)** has a site plan submission. The site has a significant tree on it, and staff is trying to work with the applicant to conserve the tree as part of the project. More information can be found here:
https://archives.arlingtonva.us/publicaccess/permitarlington.aspx?OBKey_789_1=S_PLN22-00001
- Approved/Under construction
 - Pre-construction at **2001 South Clark St** took place. The site has no active tree protection in place as all the trees were removed for development. The developer was advised to schedule a pre-construction meeting before tree pit installation on the public right of way.
 - **Century Center Residential** was inspected for initial review to determine the site conditions. Better tree protection is needed on the CEP plans for onsite and offsite

trees. The critical root zone was missing from the plans, and utility conflicts need to be resolved before the application is approved.

- A small median tree at the **WETA building** in Shirlington was too impacted by a storm sewer connection and will be replaced.
- **Pentagon Industrial Center** meeting with Kyle O'Connor to resolve the conflicts for the new development. Better tree inventory and tree protection are necessary before the application can be approved.
- Pre-construction meeting at **3445 Washington Blvd** to provide the developer with proper guidelines on how to install tree pits with drainage infrastructure to mitigate stormwater runoff.
- Final inspection took place at **1731 N Veitch Street** for the certificate of occupancy. 46 trees were inspected, and three trees did not survive the planting and would need to be replaced before the CO can be released.

DES

- Staff reviewed proposals for a **multi-use trail in Potomac Yards**, from Alexandria to Long Bridge Park. The current proposal shows significant planting areas, but analyses on impact to existing trees have not been performed yet.
- We are working to limit tree loss on DES outfall projects in natural stream beds on public land in the NW part of the county, are assisting with a much-needed **culvert replacement on Dumbarton Street** where private residences are involved and have worked to add reforestation trees in the **Sparrow Pond restoration**, in addition to the scheduled planting.
- Staff are reviewing plans for the **ART bus parking lot** in Shirlington. Tree impact is low, and primarily to trees growing out of the flood wall. The site is partially in a Resource Protection area, and staff are working to maximize the value of the space in that area.
- Staff are reviewing plans to retain our **storm channel permit with the Army Core of Engineers**. This could involve significant tree loss along Long Branch and we are working to get replacements.
- The **Army Navy Drive missing link** complete street project was approved. The median will be removed and split into two protected medians to protect bike lanes, and replanted.

Parks

- The **New Park** (Cottonwood Park) Core Team 60% Review took place internally by the forestry department. The idea of this meeting was to combine shared comments of the agency to be presented to planners and developers. Most of the comments were addressed before moving towards the next step of the 90% Review phase. The DES review and the Park review were coordinated to conserve the Cottonwood.
- **Tuckahoe Park Playground Surfacing** meeting took place with a County Landscape Architect. The purpose of the meeting was to determine the best placement of the proposed trees to reduce the effects of compaction, erosion, and drainage by the playground.
- **Jennie Dean Park** is finalizing planting of trees. There were still some trees rejected that will have to be replaced.
- **Glencarlyn Bridge Replacement** took place and PNR is waiting for one tree to be planted for sign-off to be granted.

By-right projects

- By-right development permits are picking up again, up from 13 in February to 36 in March to this date.

Schools

- No updates

Federal

- **A railroad project along Long Bridge Project** will be taking place from Arlington and into Washington D.C. Trees around the George Washington Memorial Pkwy will be impacted by the construction.

Tree Planting:

- **The Spring planting list** was completed and sent to Contractor
- The tree planting coordinator is exploring new ways to grow less common native trees, with a pilot program at the County nursery.

Outreach:

- Forestry staff is teaching other parks and natural resources staff basic pruning skills, soil protection, and chainsaw safety. Parks maintenance staff often assists in tree maintenance, and are important in identifying high risk tree issues in parks.
- Forestry staff works with park managers in identifying and resolving conflicts between management, use, and resources in conjunction with Natural Resources.
- Vincent Verweij **presented on regional tree canopy recommendations** to Framing the Future, a Maryland forestry webinar, on behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC).

Personnel:

- Interviews and skills tests are starting this week for the vacant Tree Maintenance Worker position, a vacancy created by the promotion of Diego Murcia-Rojas to Urban Forester

Other:

- The forestry team is exploring best ways to provide Soil volume calculations by private projects, and discussed potential lists of native lists that we could share with developers for use on their sites.

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

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

No meeting in March

Park and Recreation Commission (David Howell)

The March meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission included a presentation on the park planning aspects of the PenPlace development project in Pentagon City. This presentation, with minor customization for the particular interest of FNRC, will be on our agenda for the March FNRC meeting as well. The PRC members also heard a report from the Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award committee, and voted to accept the committee's recommended awardee. Presentation will be

made at the April County Board meeting. The meeting also included discussion of the Clarendon Sector Plan draft and the PenPlace project, and a decision was made to prepare letters to the board on both.

Public Spaces Master Plan Implementation Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

Meeting on March 31, after FNRC

Planning Activities/SPRC (Steve Sockwell and Caroline Haynes)

The Site Plan Review Committee convened on March 14 to review the proposed updates to the Standard Site Plan Conditions. Of the seven issues raised in the FNRC letter, only one, focusing on earlier adoption of the Landscape Plan and earlier and better coordination with the Civil Engineering Plan, was addressed in the updates. Additional issues such as including biophilic design guidelines, increasing the fee for tree replacement funds to the Tree Canopy Fund and establishing more detailed metrics for the ecosystem value of existing trees were on the list of items to be studied and addressed during future update. Staff noted that the Standard Site Plan Conditions are not intended to make policy, but to carry out policies included in adopted planning documents. We specifically discussed the need to have some of these guidelines included in the upcoming Forestry and Natural Resources Plan. It was noted by staff that better coordination with the Health and Fire Departments is already in process. We may want to follow up with the Zoning Board on the two remaining items in the FNRC letter: 1) what constitutes an "administrative change" and 2) developing a process for broader community involvement when community benefits are diminished or eliminated post-approval.

Langston Highway (Caroline Haynes)

Staff are circulating summaries of the key planning elements and requesting public feedback on the first four.

The Key Planning Elements are:

- Land Use
- Economic Vitality
- Housing
- Building Form
- Transportation, Connectivity, and Urban Design
- Public Schools, Facilities, and Spaces
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Sustainability and Resilience

There continues to be push-back from some participants on the corridor-wide objectives, calling for more density along Langston Blvd. Concerns have also been raised about how long this planning process is dragging on, especially since so much work had been done by the civic associations prior to the official planning process.

Tree Stewards (Noreen Hannigan)

Tree Stewards will hold an in-person Membership Meeting and Trainee Graduation Ceremony on April 2 at Lacey Woods Park. (Party games will include a tree-ID exercise.) In addition, a Tree Stewards subcommittee is exploring ideas for continuing-education programs for 2022, and plans

are being made to plant 45 trees and assist in a tree giveaway event (at Brenman Park in Alexandria) in April.

Tree Canopy Fund (Kate Donohue)

A very successful trip to White House Natives to tag trees for spring planting took place on March 3. We were delighted to be able to source all of the trees from WHN.

We are reviewing the tree species list for fall planting; EcoAction Arlington plans to open for applications on April 4.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (Noreen Hannigan)

Chair Cynthia Palmer asked if the BAC should take any action to show support for Arlington's sister city in Ukraine, Ivano-Frankivsk. After discussion, the group settled on the idea (in light of expected global energy supply disruptions) of sending a letter encouraging the county to make public transportation and non-fossil-fuel modes of transportation safe accessible in Arlington. (Note: The County Board had passed a resolution the previous week in support of our sister city, and the BAC also applauded the resolution.)

Leah Gerber, County staff liaison, briefed the committee on her work to date regarding the 2018/2019 – 2021 Progress Targets from the Master Transportation Plan Bike Element. Topics included reduction of crash rates, efforts to encourage bike safety training in schools, Capital Bike Share use, and repaving of trails (among other topics).

Captain Kim of the Arlington Police appeared and answered questions from committee members about things such as speed limit enforcement, 3-foot-to-pass enforcement, Vision Zero, etc. The committee asked if a police officer could attend each monthly meeting, and Capt. Kim said yes, either he or one of his colleagues will attend to field questions each month.

Dennis Leach, head of the County's Dept. of Transportation, is scheduled to appear at next month's meeting, and the Committee is working on a list of questions for him.

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)

No report

Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)

No report

New Business

A letter to support the Pen Place site plan was proposed. A vote to send the letter was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Mobley mentioned a program called Scientists in the Classroom. She will be getting filmed as part of this program.

Next meeting: April 28, 2022