

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group Meeting Minutes 2-6-17

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm in the auditorium of Long Branch Nature Center.

In attendance were: Caroline Haynes, Nereide Ellis, David Howell, Bill Ross (Park & Rec), Sarah Meservey, Gabriel Thoumi (E2C2), Elizabeth Gearin (Planning Commission), Alonso Abugattas (DPR), Jen Hull, Kate Donahue, Debora Southwell, Alan Kinsman, Eileen Grant, Carolyn Barton, Noreen Hannigan, Rich Fortwengen, Lori Bowes, Jane Longen, Paul Konenock, Deborah Wood, and Marion Jordan (Public).

Guest: Vincent Verweij, Urban Forester, DPR.

No public comment

Analysis of iTree Study in Arlington

Vincent Verweij, Urban Forester, provided an analysis of the iTree study he led throughout Arlington County. This study used the iTree format to help formulate a value for the County's trees and provide some information on make-up and health of its trees. Two-hundred and one study plots, each one acre in size, on both public and private land were evaluated. This resulted in 1023 trees identified and measured.

The study showed that the most common tree species were flowering dogwood, white oak, and red maple, though 122 species were found. Most trees (56.4%) were less than 6" in trunk diameter. These provided 9,630 tons a year in carbon sequestration valued at \$1.28 million, 20,687 tons a year in oxygen production, \$1,020,000 a year in building energy savings, and \$6.89 million a year in environmental benefits. When all factors were taken into account, Arlington's trees were valued at \$1.41 billion.

Native trees made up 64% of the total number and 72% were rated as being in good health. Only 8% were rated as being in poor health. Among invasive tree species, white mulberry and tree-of-heaven were the most common and made up 15% of the invasive totals.

Staff Updates:

Alonso Abugattas provided the following updates:

- DPR has 2 new environmental staff in a new stormwater specialist and another urban forester.
- Part of the greenhouse, about 8 tables and extra space, has been given to the Natural Resources Unit to use in plant propagation.

- DPR's Sarah Archer received a tentative grant in the amount of \$140,000 to initiate the formation of a multijurisdictional Cooperative Weed Management Area along the W&OD Trail. It is awaiting final County Board approval.
- Natural Resources staff will lead a County-wide Arlington Bioblitz on May 20th.
- The individual natural resource management plan for the Barcroft Natural Resource Conservation Area is close to approval, awaiting the division chief's approval.
- The first quarterly summary report on the County's Monarch Pledge was submitted, with most of the action items well underway.
- The Natural Resources Unit will have the assistance of a natural resources specialist helping to collect information on meadow management and other work in support of the new update of the Natural Resources Management Plan tentatively scheduled for the end of 2018. Her work is being provided pro bono.

Member Reports:

- Sarah Meservey reported that E2C2 is discussing inviting staff from the Urban Design Team to discuss what practical things the County is doing to prevent bird collisions.
- Gabriel Thoumi suggested that the County's energy plans should take into account iTree benefits.
- David Howell reported that he had presented photographs of Rusty Blackbirds to Alonso Abugattas and that Kurt Moser from the Four Mile Run Conservation Foundation had captured them on their game cameras. This is increasingly rare bird species.