

**Urban Forestry Commission**  
**January 26, 2017**  
**Meeting Summary**

**Attendance**

Nora Palmatier  
Ed Hilz  
David Howell (PRC)  
Alex Sanders (E2C2)  
Caroline Haynes  
Elisha Rubin  
Paul Campanella  
Per (David) Midboe  
Phil Klingelhofer  
Kit Norland

**Absent**

Steve Campbell  
Scott Brinitzer

**Guests**

*none*

**County Staff**

Brian Keightley, DPR  
Vincent Verweij, DPR  
Steve Bernheisel, APS

**Guest, Commissions, and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in**

Steven Bernheisel substituting for Arlington Public Schools.

**Public Comment**

No public Comment

**2016 iTree Eco Study – Vincent Verweij, DPR Urban Forester**

Vincent Verweij, gave an overall review of the iTree Eco study that he led in 2016

The summary of results are as follows.

- Number of trees: 755,400  
Most common species of trees: Flowering dogwood, White oak, Red maple
- Percentage of trees less than 6" (15.2 cm) diameter: 56.4 %
- Pollution removal: 235 tons/year (\$3.59 million/year)
- Carbon storage: 204,000 tons (\$27.1 million)
- Carbon sequestration: 9,630 tons/year (\$1.28 million/year)
- Oxygen production: 20,687 tons/year
- Avoided runoff: 10,730,168 cubic feet/year (\$717 thousand/year)
- Building energy savings: \$1,020,000/year
- Avoided carbon emissions: 2,210 tons/year ( \$294,000/year)
- Structural values: \$1.38 billion
- Annual value in environmental benefits: \$6.89 Million/year
- Total value of our urban forest currently: \$1.41 Billion (structural + carbon stored)
- These numbers are somewhat conservative

The following topics were discussed:

- How are dead trees handled?
- Benefits of rainfall capture; add rainfall capture.
- Does the model give results on forest connectivity?
- Strong possibility of error in the canopy estimate given.
- Why doesn't Arlington County conduct an updated canopy study since the last was in 2011?

Action taken:

- Brian Keightley will follow up with DPR Director how she would like to roll this information out to the board.
- DPR staff will research what it would take to perform an updated canopy study and do a change comparison analysis.

### **2017 UFC Annual Work Plan**

Nora Palmatier presented her draft with a few unresolved items.

- Delete last sentence of the Tree Canopy Fund section
- Formalize a process to actively track the planning process. Work with new Planning Commission liaison.
- Add a sentence for tracking Joint Facilitates Commission to the Public Facilities section.
- Adding a specific budget metric relating to volunteer hours to the budget report.
- Incorporating iTree into the Outreach and Education section.
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Action taken:

- Elisha Rubin to revise.

### **Approval of December Minutes**

Approval of December minutes was deferred to February due to not having a hard copy present at the meeting.

### **Staff Reports**

**Vincent Verweij provided the following updates in an email after the meeting:**

*Planning:*

- NAIOP/Developer meeting about soil volume: Presented for this developer group. Our new soil volume targets were received well, in context of other improvements we proposed (some creating less cost, some more)
- 10th Street Flats: Finishing up tree pits.
- Potomac Yards Landbay D: Working with landscape architect to add more trees to their plan. It was approved by the CB a long time ago, but the plan has been changed a bit. We're trying to figure out how to get it as close to the approved plan as possible.

- Ballston Oak: Project started demo. Protecting 1 street tree.

*Schools:*

- Wilson school: Reviewing designs, to make sure tree replacement is met, and soil volumes are adequate.
- Stratford: Coming along well. Still minor issues to address, but landscape architect is easy to work with.
- TJ: Reviewed pre-submission plans. Issues with clarity regarding soil volume, but this will be cleared up.

*Parks:*

- Rosslyn Highlands park: The plan does not appear to match the masterplan. Working with designer to address this.
- Stratford park: Moving along well. Working out an issue with a neighbor concerned about a crape myrtle being removed on county property.

*DES:*

- ART Bus facility: Finished all landscaping and street trees.

*iTree:*

- Presented to Naturalists and Park rangers

*Outreach:*

- Continuing our posts on the Arlington Forestry Facebook page. Check it out here: <https://www.facebook.com/ArlingtonUrbanForestry/>

**Brian Keightley provided the following updates in an email prior to the meeting:**

- Tree crew experiencing an uptick in emergency pruning and removals due to recent high winds. Totalling upwards of a dozen park and right-of-way trees either coming down or having significant damage. Crew currently has had both crane truck and stump grinder being repaired.
- Fall tree planting is complete. Lois is planning for Spring.
- Urban Forester Position – new forester Adam Lipera started on 1/9/17 and has made an immediate impact on helping reduce burden of staff workloads.
- Notable Trees for FY17 – Adam will be working with John Wingard develop the February slideshow presentation.
- No progress on DPR side for revisions to the Tree Canopy Fund. Hoping to make progress on this soon. Brian has taken some of the training required to submit board reports and hopes solidify proposed amendments to review with UFC in February.
- Tree City USA application for 2016 has been accepted and we are waiting for results.
- Brian Keightley, along with Lyndell Core, Alonso Abugattas, and Patrick Wegeng is developing a unified protocol for PNR to interact with volunteer groups. Though we are very appreciative of volunteer hours, our staff is struggling to keep up with the requests and expectations of the three major groups (Tree Stewards, Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners).
- Greenhouse is being mildly renovated to be used for native plant propagation this spring.
- A grant for \$140,000 was awarded to Natural Resources Unit from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to establish a Cooperative Weed Management Area along the W&OD Trail spanning several jurisdiction including Arlington, Fairfax, and Falls Church. Dominion

Power has already begun some of the work and is proposing to plant pollinator gardens in several spots under their transmission lines.

- Staff has been struggling to deal with vegetation management (including trees) in the more “feral” areas of right-of-way in the county.

### Park Projects

#### *Planning and Design Phase*

- Nauck Town Square is moving from design development phase to construction document phase. We just reviewed plans and have some concerns, but should not be a major impact to good trees and should gain us more. There is a public art component.
- Oakland Park – staff currently reviewing 30% designs.
- McCoy Park – moving towards design phase.
- Fairlington Community Center – staff is reviewing 60% plans.
- Benjamin Banneker Park – moving towards conceptual design internally at DPR to incorporate public comments before giving NTP to contractor to proceed with design.
- DPR accessing mitigation options for installation of a fence at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. Project has just come to light, so only details are from NEPA document (I believe is an EA)

#### *Under Construction*

- Chestnut Hills Park – adding two parcels to the existing park. Demolition phase is complete. Phase II is under planning
- Woodlawn Park –final punch list for construction completion coming up
- Bluemont Field #3 Renovations and Trail Connections – tree preservation for field looks good.
- Highview – under construction. Tree preservation looks good.
- Quincy Park – Playground Renovations. Minor post construction activities such as fixing equipment and reevaluating installed landscape.

### Large or Significant Tree Removals

- A large oak is scheduled to be removed at Virginia Highlands, along path between the soccer fields. The tree is either in severe decline or dead. Has hypoxylon canker. This work is being done in concert with a general safety prune near the picnic area, where the tree crew will be pruning deadwood and removing dead trees.
- A large tree fell from Lee Heights Park on to a residential single family home causing significant property damage at approximately 9:30pm Wednesday evening. Thankfully there was no bodily injury.

### Commission Member Reports

**Budget** – No update this month

**Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (NRJAG)** – No update this month

**Park and Recreation Commission** – Caroline Haynes’ PRC report is attached.

**Planning Activities** – No update from commission member this month. See Vincent Verweij’s staff report relevant information.

**Wilson School Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC)** – Steve Campbell’s Wilson School report is attached.

**Stafford School PFRC** – Ed Hilz reported that APS did not have to remove as many trees but no exact figures; trees were not used for SWM; chose not to count existing trees for SWM; sidewalk on Vacation Lane moved to avoid tree damage; requested shade trees to be planted and tree protection fence.

**Rosslyn Highlands Park** – See Wilson School PFRC report.

**Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2)** – Alex Sanders E2C2 report is attached. Alex Sanders mentioned that residents of Douglas Park had reached out to E2C2 regarding the rezoning of the Fort Barnard community garden and dog park site. These residents may request to be on the agenda or make extended public comment at the February meeting.

**Thomas Jefferson Working Group** – No update this month; see Vincent’s staff report.

**Tree Stewards** – Steve Campbell’s Tree Stewards Report report attached.

**Tree Canopy Fund** – Nora’s Tree Canopy Fund report attached.

**Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable** – Nora’s NVUFR report attached.

**Tree Ordinance Review** – No update this month.

**Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC)** – Phil Klingelhofer’s NCAC update is attached.

**Plan for Our Places and Spaces (POPS)** – Caroline Haynes’ POPS report is attached.

**Four Mile Run Valley Working Group** – Nora’s 4MRV report attached.

**Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)** – No update this month.

**Arlington Public Schools (APS)** – Steve Bernheisel reported:

- Wakefield – clearing up planting and maintenance issues; sharing info with civic association.
- Tree Stewards volunteers have been very helpful pruning younger trees.

**Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)** – No update this month.

**New Business**

Canopy Coverage Study discussion.  
Fort Barnard resident comments.

**Next Meeting: February 23, 2017**

## **Attachments to January, 2017 Urban Forestry Commission Meeting Summary:**

### **Budget - Nora Palmatier**

No update this month.

### **Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (NRJAG) – Caroline Haynes**

No update this month; NRJAG did not meet in January.

### **Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) – Caroline Haynes**

Rosslyn Highlands Park: The PRC received another presentation on the latest iteration of Rosslyn Highlands Park. The current plan has drawn criticism, focused on deviations from the design adopted by the County Board, especially with the addition of the elevator shaft in the middle of the linear park. PRC echoed concerns raised in SPRC both about the resulting changes to the park design and the process and lack of community input on the changes. PRC will be sending a letter to the board enumerating our concerns.

South Park: Public outreach and planning for South Park, adjacent to Four Mile Run and Rt. 1 will begin in February. This is an unusual planning process in that the border line of Alexandria crosses Four Mile Run at this location and only Arlington currently has planning money for design for the park.

Annual report for 2016 and work plan for 2017 were reviewed and final drafts will be circulated one more time before sending to the board.

### **Planning Activities – (vacant)**

No update this month. See Vincent Verweij's staff report for relevant information.

### **Wilson School PFRC report – Steve Campbell**

Last I heard this project will ALSO go before the CB at their February meeting (2/25). The Planning Commission will likely review this 2/13.

Although I have been slow to come to this realization, I would suggest UFC review this project at tomorrow's meeting, if possible. For example, reviewing the applicant's slides with Vincent narrating and fielding questions would be as informative as a Penzance presentation.

There is no doubt this project would be improved if the West building created less of an 'urban canyon' effect, particularly the effect on the Rosslyn Highlands Park pedestrian path. The space between buildings would be more open and plantings there would benefit from additional light, so Scott's architectural suggestion to alter the building's form to achieve this is appropriate for UFC.

I suggest UFC also consider recommending minimizing balconies on the west facade of the West building, until at least the floor above the roof of the school. I estimate the balconies currently start at 24 ft above grade, and the school roof is 76 ft high. Although not continuous, these balconies will project up to 6ft into the space above the pedestrian path (space between the buildings is approx. 50ft). It is difficult to assess the impression the balconies would create as seen from the pedestrian path just looking at the applicant's representations. Asking Penzance to provide a 'view from below' might be useful.

As Scott has mentioned, perhaps UFC should consider recommending a wind study. I do not recall this point raised at the SPRC meetings. Wind from certain directions would certainly be re-directed and focused by the West building. I would think such winds would have their greatest negative impact on the plantings and the people along the pedestrian path.

I suggest UFC also take a look at the street tree(s) on the south side of the West building. Only one tree is shown on the latest Penzance slide presentation (1/9). It seems there should be at least two.

The door opened for narrower tree pits on the new Pierce Street during the WRAPS process, which allowed two options for this street cross-section: Option 1 had 6.5-ft wide tree pits and Option 2 had 4.5-ft wide pits on the west side and 5.5-ft wide on the east side of the street. Unfortunately the second option is the one being considered. The need for at least some on-street parking eliminated option 1. In Option 2 the southbound travel lane is immediately along the curb (no parking lane), and the trees' trunks will be only 10-ft from the building facade. Canopy spread will necessarily be limited. Therefore, the trees selected may be narrow cultivars. If this is the case, wherever possible tree spacing should be closer together than the usual 30-ft. to compensate for the reduction in canopy. One plus is continuous soil panels for the street trees. A chief reason for minimizing the street elements overall is to provide more space for RHP.

Currently the species selected for Pierce St is the Ginkgo, which are resistant to storm damage. I'd been considering suggesting a species with denser canopy (greater environmental benefit), as young Ginkgos have a thin canopy and are very slow-growing. If others think more foliage sooner is important, I would suggest this be discussed as well.

I do not know about plantings the applicant may be considering for setbacks and rooftops. I have seen some indicated but these may be minimal, although green roofs are encouraged in the Rosslyn Sector Plan. I suggest a letter should include a request for information on this.

Rosslyn Highlands Park Implementation was presented along with 1555 Wilson on 1/9. It appears the hardscape (width of the walkways) has increased noticeably in the latest concept worked up by the DPR design team. Local community members and the Parks and Rec Commission representative on the SPRC were opposed to this change. As it may reduce the potential tree canopy there, I recommend UFC consider opposing it as well.

### **Stratford School PFRC report – Ed Hilz**

No written report this month.



## **Rosslyn Highlands Park – Steve Campbell**

See Wilson School PFRC report.

## **E2C2 – Alex Sanders**

E2C2 had a unusually light agenda in January. We discussed our workplan for 2017, working group and liaison assignments, and commission priorities for the year.

The Commission has been made aware of a problem concerning the County's use of Fort Barnard at 19th and South Pollard in Douglas Park. DES has been using this park as an industrial area without community input or, it appears, proper permits. Approximately seventy-five trees have been removed, and the site is accessed throughout the day by contractors and heavy vehicles (about 50 per day), although it is in a residential area. The area civic association, the Douglas Park Civic Association, has had very little success in engaging DES to resolve some of the issues resulting from the County's use of open space as an industrial site. After months of requests from DPCA, DES met with the DPCA Executive Committee on Tuesday night and presented a proposal whereupon DES would apply for a use permit for storage of heavy items but with no explanation of why this county park must be used for such a purpose or of any consideration of alternatives. DES intends to bring this to the Board on 4/22.

I've included a link to a short video documenting the site: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/kn7nx95f3ztqx73/Fort%20Barnard%204%20min%20video.avi?dl=0>

I propose that UFC consider a letter in March prior to the April Board meeting. This would allow the Commission time to further explore the matter and devise a response.

A letter could note the following issues:

A park (open space) was turned into an industrial area without community input and continued resident pushback

- A significant number of trees were cut and should be replanted regardless of future site use
- This site is not congruent with industrial uses (R6 zone next to a community garden and residential neighborhood)
- Request that this site be returned to park use after this temporary use
- Consider a workable long term solution (if park use is untenable after the 3 year UP term) that is appropriate for a residential neighborhood located next to a community garden (tree nursery swap for industrial storage)
- Environmental Justice issues are very much at play here. This and other siting continue a trend if unequal siting of industrial activity in the County and continue to impact resident quality of life and home values.

Last, after twelve years on the Commission, I will be departing at the conclusion of my term this month. My successor should be forthcoming soon. It's been pleasure to participate on UFC.

## **Thomas Jefferson Working Group – Vincent Verweij**

No update this month; see Vincent's staff report.

## **Tree Stewards – Nora Palmatier**

- The new 2017 Tree Steward class begins February 21!
- Tree Stewards continue their pruning and invasive removal group activities through the winter months.
- If you wish to receive Tree Steward announcements and are not, OR if you have been but are not a Tree Steward, you may stop receiving announcements over the next couple of weeks.
- If so, please email [info@treestewards.org](mailto:info@treestewards.org) to subscribe, as TSAA has decided to stop using Yahoo groups and use Google groups instead.

## **Tree Canopy Fund and Tree Distribution Program – Nora Palmatier**

Need UFC members to attend application review meeting Nov. 30, Wednesday, 6:30 PM at 2700 Taylor St. Please plan on coming. ACE still recruiting Contractor for planting.

## **Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable – Nora Palmatier**

Thursday, Feb. 23, at Gainesville. Topic is Undergrounding Utilities while Preserving Trees Above. Vincent will cover importance of reviewing engineering plans as well as tree preservation plans, Jim McGlone on installing sewer pipe at his residence, Connecticut case study with large pipes from 1860, and Dominion Power's Strategic Undergrounding Project. Registration at [www.TreesVirginia.org](http://www.TreesVirginia.org)

## **Tree Ordinance Review – Nora Palmatier**

No update this month.

## **Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) – Phil Klingelhofer**

There was no Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee meeting in January, so I have nothing new to report.

The NCAC Active Project Status sheet can be found on our Commission page here: <https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/neighborhood-conservation-advisory-committee/> You'll notice that there are several projects highlighted in yellow. Those are the ones that moved from one category to the next.

Also, you can review the [Draft Fall Funding Round Booklet 2016](#), which includes four substantive neighborhood projects plus one neighborhood signage project.

### **Plan for Our Places and Spaces (POPS) – Caroline Haynes**

The advisory group has reviewed and provided comments on all of the eight major strategic directions. The consultants are now working to pull all of pieces together to develop a first draft. We hope to have something to review by the end of February or early March.

### **Four Mile Run Valley Working Group- Nora Palmatier**

Jennie Dean Park preliminary sketches were presented at the 1/18 meeting. Good news is that everyone is in agreement that area next to stream should be green space due to flood risks, and that any building should be multipurpose going up with no loss of green. Of course there is a great deal of diverse defining of "green" to be anything from natural riparian habitat, to soccer fields, to dog runs. Future meetings may be more divisive and UFC members asked to attend, but for now it's ok. Meetings are first Tuesday and third Wednesdays. Agenda and preliminary plans at [Learn more here](#)

### **Virginia Department of Forestry – Jim McGlone**

No update this month.

### **Arlington Public Schools**

No written report this month.

### **Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) – Kirsten Buhls**

No update this month.