

Parks and Community Services Department

23 Russell Boulevard – Davis, California 95616
530/757-5656 - FAX: 530/297-5410 – TDD: 530/757-5666



**Tree Commission Minutes
November 19, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

Commissioners Present: Larry Guenther-Chair, David Robinson, Tracey DeWit, Lauren Hwang-Finkelman, Colin Walsh, Alternate-Vacant

Council Liaison Present: Gloria Partida

Assigned Staff: Dale Summersille, Parks and Community Services Director
Rob Cain, Urban Forest Manager

Opening Statement

Welcome to the monthly meeting of the City of Davis' Tree Commission.

Members of the Tree Commission are all volunteers and appointed by the Davis City Council.

The Tree Commission provides leadership and guidance to the Urban Forest Manager and to the City Council regarding tree removal and replacement requests.

The Tree Commission provides for the protection, preservation, and enhancement of Davis' urban forest. The Tree Commission is charged to recommend the removal of a City tree on a case-by-case basis for the following reasons:

- Poor health, identifiable diseases, exceedingly slow growth, large scale limb failure and decay;
- Potential for hazardous conditions that are caused by the street tree and cannot be mitigated without the removal of the tree.

The Tree Commission does not have the authority to recommend the removal of a City Tree for its debris, such as leaves, fruit, nuts, pollen, pine cones, needles, etc., nor does it have the authority to recommend the removal of a tree for its potential as an allergen or for solar collector installation per Municipal Code Section 40.38.00. The Tree Commission does not have the authority to remove a tree if it is healthy.

All Tree Commission decisions can be appealed to the City Council for their consideration.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Robinson, seconded by Hwang-Finkelman.

Approved: 5-0

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes for October 15, 2020 was made by DeWit, seconded by Robinson with a correction by Walsh for the 1814 Oleander tree removal request. Walsh's motion was to offer the property owner a second tree and not to plant the second tree as a requirement.

Approved: 5-0

Public Comments

Alan Hirsch commented that his name is spelled incorrectly in one of the comments and would like it corrected.

Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Staff informed the Commission about the Proposition 68 Cal-Fire Grant plantings that occurred at Baravetto Park. With the plantings, 102 trees have been planted in the park along the walking and bike paths.

Staff informed the Commission that the Urban Forestry crew has begun planting replacement trees at residences. The City will plant approximately 220 trees this year.

Staff informed the Commission that the City has received 14 Landmark Tree applications to process and present at the December or January Tree Commission meeting.

Staff informed the Commission that the tree removal at 1907 Alameda Avenue was appealed to the City Council and the City Council overturned the ruling to retain the tree and approved the removal and payment of mitigation fees.

Director Summersille reported that a Proposition 68 grant sign has been installed at Baravetto Park to inform the public of the funding source for the new trees.

Walsh informed the Commission that the declining Willow tree at the corner of Eighth Street and Oak Avenue has been removed.

Public Comments:

Alan Hirsch made the following public comments:

- Unitrans bus stops are shade less and trees need to be part of the designs for bus stops.
- Spoke at the Council appeal for 1907 Alameda Avenue
- Gave a brief presentation on the tree protection during construction projects. Slides included in minutes.

Regular Items:

A. Street Tree Removal Requests were discussed with the following actions taken:

- | <u>Location</u> | <u>Tree Species</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. 2422 Bucklebury Road | Chinese Tallow |
| Moved by: Robinson | |
| Seconded by: Hwang-Finkelman | |
| Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to retain the tree and prune the tree to remove the large dead branches and reduce branch end weights. | |
| Motion Passed: 5-0 | |
| 2. 604 Isla Place | Chinese Pistache (2) |
| Moved by: Walsh | |
| Seconded by: DeWit | |
| Motion: Move the staff recommendation to remove the two trees and plant two replacement trees; and offer a third smaller species tree for the side center location of the property. | |
| Motion Passed: 5-0 | |
| 3. 2712 Brentwood Place | Aristocrat Pear |
| Moved by: Robinson | |
| Seconded by: Hwang-Finkelman | |
| Motion: Due to the poor structure and continued limb failures, follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree. | |
| Motion Passed: 5-0 | |
| 4. 4104 Vista Way | Moraine Ash |
| Moved by: DeWit | |
| Seconded by: Robinson | |
| Motion: Due to the extensive mistletoe, follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree. | |
| Motion Passed: 5-0 | |

B. Informational Street Tree Removals

The following trees were removed due to being in an imminently hazardous condition:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>	<u>Reason</u>
5 th Street behind Mallorca Ln.	Aristocrat Pear	Dead tree
505 Miller Drive	Modesto Ash	Severely declining tree
632 El Toro Way	Moraine Ash	Dead tree
882 Linden Lane	Modesto Ash	Split tree
1711 Lehigh Drive	Modesto Ash	Split tree
1837 Tahoe Place	Chitalpa	Severely declining tree
2608 Quail Street	Chinese Tallow	Dead tree
2738 Montefrio Lane	Chinese Pistache	Split tree
2775 Belmont Drive	Chinese Hackberry	Split tree
2805 Prado Lane	Aristocrat Pear	Dead tree
Community Park	Moraine Ash	Severely declining tree
1709 Costa Verde Street	Aristocrat Pear	Severely declining tree

C. Urban Forest Budget Overview

Staff gave a budget overview presentation to the Commission. The presentation described the main components of the Urban Forestry Division budget and how each part functions.

Staff covered the areas of human resources, expenditures, and revenues. Staff also went over the Tree Preservation Fund and how it is funded and how funds are spent.

Staff has attached the presentation slides for review

DeWit asked where the funds for the budget come from.

Walsh asked about the following areas:

- Any Measure O funding in the budget?
- Any Parks Tax funding in the budget?
- Any areas in the budget lacking funding?
- Have there been any impacts due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- Have there been any budget cuts due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- Are permit fees a revenue source and is there any compliance issues with paying the fees?

DeWit commented on the slides presented during public comment and believed some good points were presented.

Guenther commented on the mitigation fees paid to the Tree Preservation Fund and the Mitigation fees approved by City Council for Tree Commission appeal tree removal.

Guenther also commented if there was adequate funding for tree planting.

Guenther asked about the CIP acronym, which stands for Capital Improvement Project.

Public Comment

Alan Hirsch made the following public comments:

- Questioned the budget and trends for funding.
- Asked about the cost per tree for maintenance and funding.
- Asked about finding locations for tree replanting
- Asked about change in staffing levels over time and trends of in-house work versus work being contracted out.

Discussion

Guenther discussed the presentation of the amount of work orders last month and the amount of work back logged for staff.

Guenther discussed the problematic species like the Pear trees and the Commission is learning about the changing needs for tree planting species in connection with climate change. Commented that exotics can have drought tolerance and could be used as necessary.

Guenther discussed that the projections are to have 50% less snow fall so water will be a future problem for any urban forest and what will happen to the trees with the impact of 50% less water availability.

Guenther discussed that the tree canopy will be very important for the future climate of Davis. He stated that Davis has a good canopy, but it is aging and the turnover of the urban forest is happening. He stated that a push to a good palette of climate ready, longer-lived trees will be necessary.

Guenther also discussed the issue that the Urban Forestry Division should look to shift from the need to have from the nice to have and get funding in place for the upcoming changes and needs of the division.

Hwang-Finkelman discussed possible solutions available and the monetizing the benefits of trees for funding.

Dewit discussed trying to raise the value of trees for public education of the importance of the tree canopy. Dewit also discussed the need to look forward to the future forest and the change to low water using trees.

Walsh discussed shade as a social justice issue for communities. The environmental piece for communities is important, but also planted across socio-economic areas in a city. Climate change will make shade important. Walsh also discussed the Davis Innovation and Sustainability Campus and the need to educate the public on the case for trees and the work they do for a community.

The Commission made the following motion during the item:

Create a temporary subcommittee for the urban tree canopy and value the canopy in eco-systems, social justice, and aesthetic benefits to the community. Subcommittee to use the values to create budget policy and priorities. Subcommittee will create a resolution for the urban forest work.

Moved by: Guenther

Seconded by: Walsh

Motion: Create a temporary subcommittee for the urban tree canopy and value the canopy in eco-systems, social justice, and aesthetic benefits to the community. Subcommittee to use the values to create budget policy and priorities. Subcommittee will create a resolution for the urban forest work.

Motion passed: 5-0

DeWit, Guenther and Walsh were appointed to the subcommittee

The subcommittee will report back each month and will have a draft resolution for the February 2021 meeting.

Commission and Staff Communications:

A. Topics for Next Meeting

- 1) Tree Ordinance update

Public Comment:

Alan Hirsch commented that the Commission did great work on item 6C. Need a long range plan for moving forward. Need history and background for fixing ordinance and parking lots.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.; moved by Walsh and seconded by DeWit. 5-0

Next Meeting: December 18, 2020

Meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. Requests for alternative agenda document formats, meeting assisted listening devices or other considerations should be made through Rob Cain by calling (530) 757-5656 extension 7326 (voice) or 757-5666 (TDD). Davis, CA 95616 as soon as possible, and preferably at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.