

Parks and Community Services Department

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**Tree Commission Minutes
October 15, 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

Public Comment

Alan Hirsch commented that documents provided to the Commission should also be made publically available.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes for August 20, 2020 and September 17, 2020 was made by DeWit, seconded by Walsh.

Approved: 5-0

Public Comments

Alan Hirsch thanked the Commission for the correction to the August 20, 2020 minutes, but that his name is spelled incorrectly in one of the comments.

Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Staff informed the Commission about the Proposition 68 Cal-Fire Grant panting that occurred at Baravetto Park on Saturday October 10th. Tree Davis planted 12 trees at a train the trainer planting event. This planting also kicked off the grant's second planting year.

Staff was asked to provide service request and work order data for the Urban Forestry Division from the date of the September 17, 2020 meeting to date. The following data shows the work and outstanding requests and work orders:

West Coast Arborist

Removed 15 trees

Pruned 100 trees for regular maintenance block pruning

Performed 80 off-cycle pruning service requests

City of Davis

623 active service requests

573 in work order status

50 being evaluated

221 planting work orders for 20/21 planting season

80 work orders scheduled for Urban Forestry

402 works orders to be scheduled for West Coast Arborists

Director Summersille reported that the third quarter grant report is being submitted to Cal-Fire for processing. She also thanked Tree Davis for the successful partnership with the City.

Guenther appreciated the planting at Baravetto Park.

Robinson commented that the park planting went well and was conducted safely for all attendees.

DeWit thanked staff and Tree Davis for the plantings.

Public Comments:

Alan Hirsch made the following public comments:

- Thanked staff for the work review plan.
- There is work in a lot of parking lots downtown and when work occurs the lot should be brought up to current code. Bank of America needs to be made increase the parking lot shade to 50% per current shade standards.
- F St apartment work is in the same situation with work being performed on complex without updating the parking lot.
- Parking lots are a policy issue and lots need to be brought up to current standards.

Regular Items:

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

Location

1. 505 Hubble Street

Tree Species

Raywood Ash

Moved by: Robinson

Seconded by: Hwang-Finkelman

Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to investigate root pruning of the nuisance surface roots, and prune as necessary. If the root pruning will be detrimental to the tree's health or render it unstable then grant staff the authority to approve the removal and replacement of the tree.

Motion Passed: 5-0

2. 869 A Street

Silver Maple

Moved by: DeWit

Seconded by: Robinson

Motion: Due to the poor health and stem decay, follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree.

Motion Passed: 5-0

3. 1814 Oleander Place

Carob Tree

Moved by: Walsh
Seconded by: Robinson
Motion: Adopt the staff recommendation to remove the tree. Plant one replacement tree and offer to plant a second tree on the property with homeowner approval..

Motion Passed: 4-1; Hwang-Finkelman nay

4. 1631 La Habra Court

Moved by: DeWit
Seconded by: Robinson
Motion: Due to the continuing limb failures, 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>
913 L Street	Modesto Ash	Split tree
1509 Madrone Lane	Modesto Ash	Dead tree
720 J Street	Chinese Hackberry	Root failure
401 Balboa Avenue	Chinese Pistache	Split tree

C. Work Plan Review

The Commission completed the review and topics for the 2020 work plan

Robinson commented that the current plan has more than accomplished even with the ratings for the action items. The Commission should be judicious with its time to get some of the items completed.

Walsh commented that anything that may not be rated could be removed and then the other items can be put to a subcommittee to move then forward while the major items are being taken up by the Commission.

Hwang-Finkelman commented that the management plans and ordinance should be a priority.

Guenther commented that the tree tour could be rated a four or five. Also the Commission should either prioritize the lower items or just remove the items that are not a higher priority.

Guenther also commented that the Landmark Tree update should be easy to complete with possible help from Tree Davis. Also could remove the two and one rated items. The Tree Technical item could be done by subcommittee and should not be part of the ordinance.

Public Comment

Alan Hirsch made the following public comments:

- Commissioners should ask themselves as a volunteer what can I do.
- Changes come through the policy and oversight by the Commission and it should be taken as serious as the weed ordinance.
- There is lack of oversight of the development agreements within the city and not pushed to enforce the agreements.
- Commission should focus on accountability and enforceability of policies.

The work plan was completed and fully updated by the Commission, so staff will update and distribute to the Commission.

The Commission made the following motion during the item:

Retain the item to coordinate with realtor groups to create a “welcome wagon” informational booklet or pamphlet and create a subcommittee to research design and content.

Moved by: DeWit

Seconded by: Walsh

Motion: Keep the Urban Forestry Education item to coordinate with realtor groups to create a welcome packet for residents with tree information for a new home owner and appoint a subcommittee to research content and design.

Motion passed: 5-0

Commission and Staff Communications:

A. Topics for Next Meeting

- 1) Work plan
- 2) Draft tree ordinance update
- 3) Commission initiative proposal
- 4) Subcommittees

Public Comment:

Alan Hirsch commented that the Commission should be sent the draft ordinance as soon as possible and that the enforcement of the ordinance is of the utmost importance. This is a once in a generation chance to change the ordinance.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.; moved by Robinson and seconded by Hwang-Finkelman.

Next Meeting: November 19, 2020

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