

Parks and Community Services Department

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**Tree Commission Minutes
December 17, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

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

Commissioners Absent: Tracy DeWit-excused

Council Liaison Present: Gloria Partida

Assigned Staff: Dale Sumersille, 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 with the addition of the Landmark Tree application at 710 Miller Drive which was in the agenda packet, but not indicated on the item's list of trees, was made by Robinson, seconded by Hwang-Finkelman.

Approved: 4-0

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes for November 19, 2020 was made by Hwang-Finkelman, seconded by Robinson

Approved: 4-0

Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Staff informed the Commission that the second year of structural pruning for the young trees in The Cannery is almost complete.

Staff informed the Commission that the Cal Fire Proposition 68 grant has planted 504 trees to date which is the halfway point for the grant planting. Tree Davis is preparing to start planting again at the beginning of the New Year after a break at the end of December.

Staff informed the Commission that in-house planting is going well with the help of a temporary part-time employee. Two areas of town, Central and portions of East Davis, have had trees planted, with West and North Davis the next areas to be planted.

Staff informed the Commission that the City commission liaisons attended ethics training provided by the City Attorney.

Director Summersille wished everyone a safe Holiday season.

Hwang-Finkelman informed the Commission that she may be absent at the January and February meetings due to a field class she will be enrolled in for the upcoming quarter.

Guenther thanked staff for making the meetings happen this past year and is glad to hear of the planting successes.

Public Comments:

Alan Hirsch made the following public comments:

- Woodland is ahead of Davis by doing a Master Plan.
- He is offering tree tours over the break with bicycles or driving if comfortable.
- Encouraged the Commission to study the 2013 Tree Davis report for parking lot shade standards.

Anne Fenkner of Davey Resource Group commented that the Woodland Master Plan has been completed. She also commented about parking lot shade standards and that most parking lots do not meet a city's shade standards for any number of reasons. She stated that Davey Resource Group is currently working with Sacramento on its parking lot shade standards.

Regular Items:

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

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>
1. 4122 El Macero Drive	Chinese Tallow
Moved by:	Robinson
Seconded by:	Walsh
Motion:	As the tree is healthy and debris is not in the scope of approving a tree for removal, retain the tree and follow the staff recommendations for pruning the tree for dead branch removal and branch end weight reduction.
Motion Passed:	4-0

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>
Prior to the Commission meeting, no trees were removed due to hazardous conditions		

C. Landmark Tree Designations

Staff presented thirteen applications submitted for trees to be designated as Landmark Trees within the City of Davis. The submitted trees are in the following list:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>	<u>Reason for Request</u>
2136 Dinosaur Place	Wollemi Pine	Unusual tree species
2136 Dinosaur Place	Mexican Blue Fan Palm	Tree size, unusual tree species
240 2 nd Street	Cork Oak	Tree size
648 D Street	Orchid Tree	Unusual tree species
1614 Orange Lane	Strawberry Madrone	Tree size
1239 E 8 th Street	Formosan Flame Tree	Tree size, unusual tree species
405 Antioch Drive	European Hornbeam	Unusual tree
943 Ponderosa Place	Maidenhair Tree (Ginkgo)	Tree size
2115 Regis Drive	Kentucky Coffee Tree	Unusual tree species
913 Kent Drive	Maidenhair Tree (Ginkgo)	Tree size
939 Pecan Place	Sweet Olive	Unusual tree species
345 L Street	Formosan Flame Tree	Tree size, unusual tree species
710 Miller Drive	Modesto Ash	Tree size

Public Comments

Alan Hirsch made the following comments:

- Are there barriers for planting and growing the Formosan Flame Tree?
- Looks like the older trees have been lion's tailed, a poor pruning practice.

Greg McPherson commented about when was the last time Landmark trees were found and submitted to the Commission.

Discussion

Robinson thanked Greg McPherson for submitting the trees and staff for putting forth the applications to the Commission. He believes all the trees will be great additions to the Landmark Tree list.

Hwang-Finkelman commented about when the grafting on the Hornbeam was done and how it was performed.

Walsh thanked Greg and staff for all the submissions and commented on how he knows the Ginkgo on Kent very well and is a favorite tree for that neighborhood as it puts out a great yellow show in the Fall.

Guenther also thanked Greg for the nominations and the Great Tree Search project. He likes the Coffee trees and in researching the Ginkgo tree found that it may be an old North American Native that was reintroduced from China.

The Commission made the following action:

Moved by: Robinson

Seconded by: Hwang-Finkelman

Motion: Approve the list of Landmark Tree applications except for the Modesto Ash at 710 Miller Drive due to decay in the tree. Commission moves a recommendation for the Landmark Tree submissions to go to City Council for approval.

Motion passed: 4-0

D. Community Presentation

Community member Alan Hirsch gave the attached presentation to the Commission. The presentation was an overview of urban forest issues in Davis.

Hirsch stated the urban forest program is at a particular junction for the next few years with the Master Plan being formulated and Technical Manual being developed. He believes these important changes can be made with policy oriented Commission members.

Hirsch commented that the constraints for moving forward are with staff and the time crunch for staff to complete these projects. Is a Planning Arborist needed for the City?

He stated four other departments coordinate with the urban forest program for trees to be entered into projects.

He stated the process for the ordinance is out of order and is in the middle of the planning process for the program. He stated strategic planning and policy setting should be completed prior to the ordinance revision.

Hirsch sees the Commission as the help staff needs to make things happen and that the Master Plan will build consensus, vision, and process for the urban forest program.

Hirsch presented the question of what is the future of the Commission, one with a narrow scope or one that can provide tree policy.

He stated the Commission can push policies with the City Council and ask for more public review of projects so that punches are not pulled for urban forest issues.

Hirsch thanked the Commission for the opportunity to presenting and listening to the presentation.

Commission and Staff Communications:

The Urban Forest subcommittee gave an update on the urban forest document being developed to help inform and explain the maintenance and function of the urban forest in Davis. The document aims to put pertinent information about the urban forest in one place for ease of use by decision makers and residents.

The committee hopes it will be a living document as information changes in the future.

Public Comment

Alan Hirsch commented he would like his slides from his presentation to be included in the minutes.

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 Robinson and seconded by Walsh. 4-0

Next Meeting: January 21, 2021

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