

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

May 20, 2021

5:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Larry Guenther-Chair, David Robinson, Tracy DeWit, Colin Walsh, Jim Cramer, John Reuter, Lauren Hwang-Finkelman, Alternate-Vacant

Council Liaison Absent: Will Arnold

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 Cramer, seconded by Reuter.

Approved: 7-0

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes for April 15, 2021 was made by Hwang-Finkelman, seconded by Cramer with a friendly amendment from Walsh to check if Will Arnold was present at the April meeting.

Approved: 7-0

Brief Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Staff informed the Commission that the Urban Forest Management Plan Request for Proposals was released and due June 18, 2021.

Staff informed the Commission about upcoming development projects beginning construction or in process for approval.

- Valero Gas station remodel at 4810 Chiles Road
- Arco gas station at 4480 Chiles Road
- Apartment building at 3820 Chiles Road

Director Summersille thanked all those involved in the Lois Wolk Memorial Grove program on Saturday May 1, 2021 and hosted by Tree Davis. She also informed the Commission that the public comment period for the Tree Ordinance revision is ending May 31, 2021.

Reuter asked about the Request for Proposals and if the Commission will review or be able to look at the proposal.

Guenther thanked Commissioner Hwang-Finkelman for her service to the Commission.

Hwang-Finkelman thanked the Commissioners for all the help and learning while on the Commission.

Public Comments:

Alan Hirsch made the following public comments:

- 1) The City web site is not working properly and the closure date for the ordinance has not been updated.
- 2) Asked about the plans for the Urban Forestry Department.
- 3) He is excited for the management plan and a lot on the urban forest plate with no analysis of the inventory, no downtown tree plan, no plan to retro fit parking plan, new work order system not working, but the management plan is coming.
- 4) Need to start at the top to set priorities.
- 5) He has concerns about the upcoming plan and whether it is a management plan or master plan.
- 6) What are the priorities for the "M" plan?

Regular Items:

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

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>
1. 807 Barcelona Avenue	Monterey Pine
Moved by: Robinson	
Seconded by: Hwang-Finkelman	
Motion: Remove the tree due to the extreme lean and plant a replacement tree.	
Motion Passed: 7-0, unanimous vote	
2. 2852 Loyola Drive	Canary Island Pine
Moved by: Hwang-Finkelman	
Seconded by: DeWit	
Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to prune the tree for structure and branch end weight reduction as the tree is in good health and vigor.	
Motion Passed: 7-0, unanimous vote	

B. Informational Tree Removals

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>	<u>Reason for Request</u>
		No trees were removed due to hazardous conditions.

C. Municipal Code Chapter 37 updates

The Commission continued to review the draft revision of the Tree Ordinance of the Davis Municipal Code. The Commission reviewed comments brought up by the Commissioners in reviewing the draft revision.

The comment document was introduced by Chair Guenther and discussion was led by Commissioner Reuter.

Discussion included the following:

- Discussing the remaining big issue topics of parking lot trees and maintenance and specific recommendations by the Commission to be included in comments.
- Private trees that may be hazardous to neighbors and should the ordinance cover private property trees. Topic covered enforcement of ordinance for private residential trees and amount of staff time to properly inspect and monitor. Commission determined to add clarification in ordinance that points resident to the nuisance sections of the code to use for this area.

- Violations for prohibited acts performed on Landmark Trees and if Commission wants to review any Tree Modification Permits for work on Landmark Trees.
- Discussion of the minor and major impact definitions for pruning and threshold for requiring a permit for work. Questions about the percentage of foliage that can be removed was raised and if it included dead branches. Staff advised that the threshold was for live leaf area and the percentage was for removal of leaf area in one growing season. Staff also clarified that the Tree Removal Requests are not part of a building permit but for city trees outside of development projects.
- Discussion of parking lot trees and the 2x2 Subcommittee charged with developing recommendations for updating the Parking Lot Shade guidelines. The Commission was updated on the initial meeting of the subcommittee on May 12, 2021.
- Subjects discussed to bring to the subcommittee were brought up and included: parking lot design for optimizing tree health and growth, pavements that will reduce heat island effect and be low impact to trees, review of the parking lot shade calculations, maintenance schedules for trees in parking lots, irrigation standards for trees in parking lots, storm water management for parking lots, credits or incentives for improving planting conditions, monitoring, code enforcement, and tree species planting list.
- Discussion of tree mitigation for tree removals. How to calculate the mitigation was discussed and if the lost ecosystems benefits should be included in the calculations and should larger tree sizes be planted as replacement trees versus smaller sized trees.
- Retention of trees during construction should be looked into and what incentives may be available to keep larger trees on development sites.
- Discussion of increasing the inch for inch ratio to a 3:1 ratio for increased tree canopy over time.
- Discussion of ordinance enforcement centered on the fee schedule for penalties of construction protection and if the fee schedule should be kept outside of the ordinance so updates could be more easily made.

Public Comments

Alan Hirsch made the following comments:

I noticed much of the discussion is on the policy level and is confusing.

Please put page numbers on documents as it is hard to follow during meeting.

Tree is now defined as 5" in diameter and pre-trees not protected.

Appraisal value considers location in value and important for valuation. This is important as developers are being rewarded for tree removal.

Concerned about maintenance plan and how it is put together and monitoring.

It is very, very bad that no planting specifications have been discussed, i.e. Palo Alto has tree technical manual on how to plant trees.

Commission has covered so much with this so far.

D. Election of Officers

Robinson moved and DeWit seconded to nominate Commissioner Walsh as Chair

Motion passed: 7-0, unanimous vote

Hwang-Finkelman moved and Walsh seconded to nominate Commissioner Guenther as Vice-Chair

Motion passed: 7-0, unanimous vote

Commission and Staff Communications

DeWit asked about having outreach for the Parking Lot 2x2 via Zoom or having office hours with her.

1) Subcommittee updates:

The document subcommittee had no updates.

2) Topics for next meeting:

- a. Tree Ordinance update review
- b. Parking Lot Shade Guidelines 2x2 tree subject ideas
- c. Discussion for tree technical manual
- d. May 2020 Minute clarification

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.; moved by Cramer and seconded by Hwang-Finkelman. 7-0

Next Meeting: June 17, 2021

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