

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
June 17, 2021
5:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Colin Walsh-Chair, David Robinson, Tracy DeWit, John Reuter, Alternate-Vacant

Commissioners Absent: Larry Guenther, Jim Cramer-excused

Council Liaison Absent: Will Arnold

Assigned Staff: Dale Sumersille, Parks and Community Services Director
Justis Nichols, Urban Forest Supervisor

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 Reuter, seconded by Robinson.

Approved: 4-0

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes for May 20, 2021 was made by Robinson, seconded by Dewit.

Approved: 4-0

Brief Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Staff reminded the Commission that the Urban Forest Management Plan Request for Proposals was released and due June 18, 2021. The RFP is available to review on the Public Works Utilities and Operations web page under the Bid and RFPs button.

Staff informed the Commission of Tree Davis' current focus on mulching and watering the trees planted so far for the Prop 68 grant.

Staff informed the Commission of upcoming training for Commissions that will be held on Wednesday June 30 on Conflicts of Interest for Commissioners and on Thursday September 30 on Land Use Zoning and Environmental Impacts.

Staff reminded Commission of the upcoming Joint Tree Commission and City Council meeting tentatively scheduled for Tuesday August 31.

Dale Sumersille (Director PCS) informed the Commission of the availability of the "Cooling Rooms" during the summer.

Dale Sumersille (Director PCS) informed the Commission of the transition of Urban Forestry from Parks and Community Services to Public Works Utilities and Operations.

Dale Sumersille (Director PCS) informed the Commission of the of upcoming training for Commissions that will be held on Wednesday June 30 on Conflicts of Interest for Commissioners and on Thursday September 30 on Land Use Zoning and Environmental Impacts.

Reuter asked Sumersille about the Commission's involvement with deciding the species and locations of the trees to be planted downtown as part of the Prop 68 grant.

Public Comments:

Motion to extend the public comment time limit from 3 minutes to 5 minutes was made by Reuter, seconded by Dewit.

Approved: 3-1 (3 Aye, 1 Abstain)

Agnieszka:

- Resident at 1908 Drexel
- Previously inquired about having the Modesto Ash in her front yard removed
- Frustrated that it is not on this month's agenda, when staff indicated it would be

Alan Hirsch:

- Advocates for additional tree planting downtown, and ongoing maintenance thereof
- Expresses thanks for discussing twinkle lights
- Wants to bring in an expert to talk about structural soil and suspended pavement
- Clarifies that legislators or staff may briefly answer questions without violating The Brown Act

Jeremy Taylor

- Asks that the City move faster to remove pear trees in La Playa Park.

John Reuter

- Asks staff to briefly explain tree emergency response protocol.
- Staff explains

Regular Items:

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

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>
1. 1112 Radcliffe Drive	Honey Locust
Moved by: Robinson	
Seconded by: Dewit	
Motion: Follow staff recommendation and retain the tree	
Motion Passed: 4-0, unanimous vote	
2. 606 Mockingbird Pl	Flowering Pear
Moved by: Dewit	
Seconded by: Robinson	
Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace tree	
Motion Passed: 4-0, unanimous vote	
3. 4115 Vista Way	Moraine Ash
Moved by: Robinson	
Seconded by: Dewit	
Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace tree	
Motion Passed: 4-0, unanimous vote	

B. Informational Tree Removals

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tree Species</u>	<u>Reason for Request</u>
2704 Brandywine Pl	Moraine Ash	Dead
500 Eisenhower St	Black Walnut	Dead
921 Douglass Ave	Honey Locust	Split tree
543 S. Campus Way	Japanese Pagoda	Dying/Hollow/Mistletoe

C. La Playa Park Pear Tree Removal and Replacement

Staff presented a proposal to remove 15 *Pyrus calleryana* ‘Aristocrat’ pear trees within La Playa Park, and replace them with 29 new trees that will be provided through the Prop 68 grant.

Discussion included the following:

- Commissioners ask about what underlying conditions may have brought about the need to remove several trees at once. Staff noted vulnerabilities characteristic of aristocrat pears, as well as a lack of species and age diversity at the time of planting.
- Commissioners express that they would like to approve the removal of the trees. However, would like to gain additional public input, particularly regarding replanting and placement before approving the removals.
- Commissioners expressed concern that additional notification (outside of posting the trees in question) was not conducted for the neighborhood, due to the number of trees being removed.
- Timeline of replacement sometime between October 2021 and March 2022, to be included in Prop 68 grant.

Public Comments:

Alan Hirsch

- Replanting in La Playa needs to be planned within the context of the larger bike path running north and south from South Davis to Harper Jr. High
- Interested in oaks being placed around the basketball court
- What is the long term plan to care for the new trees?
- Would like community involvement with replanting

Jeremy Taylor

Expressed that he is concerned about the safety of the trees, and would have liked them removed already.

Motion: Table item until August under the condition staff solicits community input and education on the Pear tree removal and replacement plan with the opportunity to commit and planting in October.

Moved by DeWit, seconded by Reuter

Motion passed: 4-0 Aye - Robinson, Reuter, Walsh, Dewit

D. Municipal Code Chapter 37 Updates

Subcommittee is recommending that the consultant consider the following:

- Additional protections to be considered for native trees over a certain size/age
- Detailed specs for string lights in trees near downtown businesses, along with permits
- Plans for Tree Technical Manual be made available copyright free

Public Comments:

Aaron Wedra:

Advocates for the continued use of string lights for downtown businesses as an issue of safety and beautification.

Discussion:

- String lights should be accommodated for as long as trees aren't harmed

Motion to recommend the 3 items specified by the subcommittee by Reuter, seconded by Walsh.

Motion Passed: 4-0, unanimous vote

E. Tree Commission/Natural Resource Parking Lot Shade Temporary Subcommittee

- Commission interested in communicating with public to receive feedback on the issues involved with shading parking lots with trees and solar panels.
- First 3 meetings have been introductory, and future meetings will deal with more in depth details.

Commission and Staff Communications

Topics for next meeting

- Preparation for meeting with City Council
- Staff to provide additional information about Urban Forestry shift to Public Works
- Staff to provide information about how the new budget may affect Urban Forestry

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Next Meeting: August 19, 2021

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.