City of Davis
Tree Commission Minutes
Remote Meeting
Thursday, August 19, 2021
5:30 P.M.

Commissioners Present:	Colin Walsh-Chair, Larry Guenther-Vice-Chair, David Robinson, Jim Cramer, Tony Gill, John Reuter
Commissioner(s) Absent:	Tracy De Wit - Excused
Council Liaison(s) Present:	Will Arnold
Staff Present:	Stan Gryzcko, Director of Public Works Utilities & Operations Rob Cain, Urban Forest Manager
Also in Attendance:	

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1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
   Chairperson Walsh called meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda**
   Guenther moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Cramer. Approved by the following votes:
   Ayes: Walsh, Robinson, Reuter, Guenther. Cramer, Gill
   Noes:
   Absent: DeWit

3. **Brief Announcements from Staff, Commission Members, and City Council Members**
   - Staff informed the Commission that urban forestry is preparing for the upcoming planting season.
   - Staff informed the Commission that the next Temporary Parking Lot Shade 2x2 meeting is August 25 at 5:00 p.m.
   - Staff informed the Commission that Tree Davis and urban forestry is preparing for the upcoming Proposition 68 CAL FIRE grant plantings. Seven planting events are tentatively scheduled and the community check the Tree Davis website for more information and sign up to volunteer.
   - Commissioner Walsh informed the Commissioners that he was in Florida for the meeting and may need to leave the meeting.

- Guenther informed the Commission Cool Davis conducted a webinar on sustainability and it was recorded for future viewing.
- Guenther informed the Commission Tree Davis is in contact with the Mark Rivera family to plant a tribute tree by the compassion bench. Planting will occur this Fall.

4. Public Comment

Motion: Allow two extra minutes for public comment for the entire meeting.

Moved by Reuter, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed by the following votes:
Ayes: Guenther, Reuter, Robinson, Cramer, Gill, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

Two members of the public provided comment/s.

- NAME: Alan Hirsch
  Thank you and I am concerned and disturbing as Sutter Phase I trees are removed. I have tried to have a discussion with Sutter; and requested a meeting but received no answer. This has turned a hospital expansion into a community conflict. This can be avoided in the future with using the theme of the Lorax that things can be too big to fail. We need to make Rob successful and work through the political process. Suggest the hard work has a solution when working with Council and provide information to the public before found out in the public. Need to share what Rob does and need results in real time and accountability with enforcements and monitor plantings. Work plan tasks taken up and nobody does. Work on policy and work on First 5 for trees. No one is following up on this work. Protected trees covered and make Rob successful.

- NAME: Hannah Safford
  Chair of the Natural Resources Commission speaking in this capacity on the Climate Adaptation and Action Plan (CAAP). This is an important process and see the effects of climate change. The Natural Resources Commission not overseeing the process, but the main Commission for the project, which has interests across multiple Commissions. CAAP meetings are posted online and liaisons can ask questions at the meeting. Draft CAAP coming in the Fall with the wrap up of current public outreach.

5. Consent Calendar

A. Tree Commission Minutes – June 17, 2021

B. Tree Removals List (*Informational*)

Motion: Move consent items less the June 17, 2021 meeting minutes

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Robinson. The motion passed by the following votes:

Ayes: Walsh, Robinson, Reuter, Cramer, Gill, Guenther
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

The item was opened for public comment, and one public comment was received:

- Alan Hirsch: Commission passed a resolution on the planning of the park planting.

Walsh asked that the Commission's motion to notify the La Playa Park area residents prior to tree removal and replanting.

At the conclusion of the brief discussion Walsh moved, Cramer seconded, to approve the Consent Calendar with the addition. Approved by following votes:

Ayes: Robinson, Cramer, Gill, Reuter, Guenther, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

6. Regular Items

A. Street Tree Removal Requests.

The item was introduced by Rob Cain

Location	**Tree Species**
1. 1133 Halifax Avenue	**Chinese Tallow**

Motion: Follow staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree due to decay in the stem and declining tree health.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Robinson. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

2. 524 Anderson Road Japanese Pagoda

Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree due to declining tree health.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Cramer. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

3. 631 Villanova Drive Yellow Box Eucalyptus

Discussion also included the following:

- Check habitat for a California native replacement tree

The item was opened for public comment, and one public comment was received:

- Joseph Medina: We would like a California native replacement tree, but will also look at the list for choices.

Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree due to continuing limb failures.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Cramer. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

4. 1908 Drexel Drive Modesto Ash

Discussion also included the following:

- The report does not have a recommendation, but would city recommend removal and replacement of the tree?
- Staff would recommend removal and replacement.

Motion: Accept staff's clarification of the recommendation and approve removal and replacement of the tree.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Reuter. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

5. 1216 Pole Line Road Canary Island Pine

Discussion also included the following:

- Trunk looks girdled in the photo
- The tree provides a lot of shade

Motion: Accept the staff recommendation to retain the tree and prune to reduce branch end weights.

Moved by Cramer, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

6. 1602 Madrone Lane Modesto Ash

Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to remove and replace the tree due to declining tree health and poor tree structure.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Reuter. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

7. 1613 Costa Verde Canary Island Pine and Afghan Pine

Discussion also included the following:

- Who planted the trees and were they planted that close to the fence
- With no area for replanting would the trees be replaced
- Class A bike paths have 80% shading

Motion: Follow the staff recommendation to remove and plant four replacement trees. Replacement trees shall be planted along Florinda Lane to the south of the trees.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Walsh. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

8. 3049 Bryant Place Canary Island Pine (4)

Discussion also included the following:

- Where would replacement trees be planted
- Pruning up the trees harmful to the tree
- Length of time for report to be completed and letter received by homeowner only had black and white photos
- Pruning the tree recommended for removal to reduce risk
- Matrix for risk assessments

The item was opened for public comment, and two public comments were received:

- Alan Hirsch: Mastery for tree assessment and curious about how long the assessments take to perform. Looks like lion's tailing pruning. Are the trees being watered to keep them healthy?
- Randy Schuster: Color photos were sent along with request and can be provided if needed. Many interesting things during the discussion and I help water the plants.

Motion: Follow staff recommendation to remove the southern tree and follow the pruning recommendations in the risk assessments for branch end weight reduction to reduce the risk level of the remaining three trees.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Reuter. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:
Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

B. Urban Forest Management Plan Scope of Work

The item was introduced by Rob Cain. As part of the CAL FIRE Proposition grant, an Urban Forest Management Plan will be developed. The City of Davis issued a Request for Proposal to solicit project proposals from qualified consultants to prepare the plan. After an internal review process, Davey Resource Group (DRG) was selected to be the consultant for the project. Staff is looking for comments and or additions to the attached scope of work for the project. Staff is also for a recommendation from the Commission to City Council to accept DRG as the consultant.

Discussion also included the following:

- Ensuring the consultant tailors the project for Davis and does not take a standard format approach to the project.

- The possible extension of the grant for one year and the implications on the extent of public outreach for the project. Staff answered the extension has been applied for but to date not approved, but if approved the scope would include changes to the outreach plan.
- Engagement of community groups for public outreach including Tree Davis and a number of other groups. The earlier the engagement the better.

The item was opened for public comment, and four public comments were received:

- Alan Hirsch: City Council Presentation in May thanked council for all the things promised from staff and the City tree program. The plan needs social justice component and annexation gap fixed, but wonderful things here. Question is how to do all the things. Promises each year not reached. What is the priority? Six months late and concerned about the transparency and acknowledge promises and problems. Tree ordinance no public meeting and no work plan. Grant promised 18-24 month plan. Consultant plan needs to be extended for staff. Once in a generation thing.
- Russ Kantz: Plan should include fire risk. West Davis Pond should be included and why is it not included, as a major part of it is trees.
- John Johnston: Echo what Alan is saying about process of the plan being from September to January. Ordinance results of the Parking lot Shade 2x2 coming and lack of capacity. Ask for the extension and as much of an extension as possible.
- Chris Granger: Member of Cool Davis, but speaking for self. The timing of work we are doing with CAAP and Downtown plan is a lot. Get as much extension as possible in collaboration with Tree Davis. Assess the needs in the community and fires in region. Canopies under threat. General plan update needed since 2000 so work of commissioners can drive neighborhood resilience. City is under resourced and under planned for work. Move forward thinking with deliberative framework.

Discussion also included the following:

- Plan containing social equity, resilience, and climate ready sections
- Having clear outreach plan moving forward will be key piece with or without an extension
- Emphasis on visioning for plan and possible working group to develop
- Using the best technology to assess canopy health metrics and for differing areas of town.

- Extension needed for outreach and desirable for other aspects of the plan. Staff commented that the Commission will play a key role in plan development and regarding the scope of the outreach will come back to Commission with draft outreach plan.
- Specific section for downtown

The Commission made the following motions for the item:

1. Motion: Encourage staff to seek extension and if granted use the time for public outreach.

Moved by Walsh, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

2. Motion: Recommend City Council allocate more funds to complete the Urban Forest Management Plan.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Cramer. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

3. Motion: Add to scope of plan how climate change affects the Urban Forest and how the urban forest affects climate change.

Moved by Cramer, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

4. Motion: Have qualified community groups be involved in the process for community outreach.

Moved by Reuter, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

5. Motion: Use the eco-systems section to evaluate current habitat conditions and recommended improvements.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Cramer. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

6. Motion: Evaluate canopy cover for resiliency to fire risk.

Moved by Cramer, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

7. Motion: Include in the scope of work the recommendations in the letter submitted to the Commission from Tree Davis.

Moved by Walsh, seconded by Reuter. The Motion passed 3-0-1 by the following votes:

Ayes: Gill, Reuter, Walsh
Noes:
Abstain: Cramer
Absent: DeWit
Guenther and Robinson recused due to conflict of interest

8. Motion: Recommend City Council engage Davey Resource Group as consultant for the Urban Forest Management Plan with the recommendations added by the Tree Commission.

Moved by Guenther, Seconded by Cramer. The Motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

C. City Council and Tree Commission Joint Discussion

The item was introduced by Colin Walsh-Chair and is a continuation form the August 5, 2021 Special Meeting of the Tree Commission. The Commission finalized the presentation and discussion topics for the joint discussion with the City Council on August 31, 2021.

Discussion also included the following:

- Add the advisory role of the Tree Commission on the charter slide for the presentation
- Possible name and charter change discussion to the Urban Forest Commission
- Clear vision from City Council for Tree Commission projects
- Augmentation funding for Urban Forestry Division to help with management plan and for short-term division resource needs.
- Council feedback on items addressed by the Commission.

The item was opened for public comment, and one public comment was received:

- Alan Hirsch: Tree Commission to review all tree removals and real conflict over trees and need to acknowledge the problem. Sutter is a manifestation because it has turned into a conflict. Talk about the elephant in the room and discuss. City Council sets up, puts public comment at the end, and should be for public to be involved. Important to what should be first and delay ordinance and other priorities. Help prioritize. Talk about role of the Commission, as it needs help. Staff not using expertise. Not have friction but help set up win-win. Police reform and housing are Council priorities and use the Commission to help Council with other items.

No formal action was taken on this item

D. Tree Commission Liaison Appointment to Climate Adaptation and Action Plan (CAAP)

The item was introduced by Colin Walsh-Chair and item appointed a liaison to the Climate Adaptation and Action Plan process.

Discussion also included the following:

- Appointment of Commission member to be liaison.

The item was opened for public comment, and two public comments were received:

- Alan Hirsch: Wonderful doing this before the Urban Forest Management Plan and help define where we do not plant trees and plant trees where people are
- John Johnston: Invited liaison to the CAAP briefings

Motion: Nominate Commissioner Cramer as liaison

Moved by Reuter, seconded by Guenther. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

E. 2000 Sutter Place – Phase II Solar Project Discussion

The item was introduced by Colin Walsh –Chair- Commission discussed a draft letter with recommendations to City Council regarding the Sutter Hospital Phase II solar installation project.

Discussion also included the following:

- Points outlined in the draft letter
- Project has appeals being brought before City Council
- Gaps in the development process for commission review of projects
- Stakeholder involvement in the process for project review
- Process of the two phases of the project one administrative and one through the Planning Commission

The item was opened for public comment, and three public comments were received:

- Alan Hirsch: Clarify process and staff time on development. Staff passed project administratively. Process issue only on homeowner and not on business trees. Question law as it states 50% shade by trees and rule of law can only be changed by Council. Question solar enhancing the neighborhood and process needs to be overturned. Who is important and who is not and includes unconscious bias. Health concerns not discussed and EIR not followed. Close the loophole.
- Russ Kantz: Interesting issue with the EIR form 30 years ago and solar not included and CEQA is clear. I sent a letter to City Council about helipad and with the substantial changes need supplemental EIR, but solar not included and hope a supplemental EIR is prepared.
- John Johnston: Frame discussion with legal procedure with City's procedures. If not legal and bad procedure ask City Council to ask for project to go to Tree Commission and review prior Plan Commission. May not have time to weigh in on discussion.

Discussion also included the following:

- Timing of appeals to City Council
- Timing of letter to be sent to City Council
- Language and content of letter
- Ensure language does not compromise appeal process
- Recommendations for project to be sent to the Tree Commission
- Possible formation of a subcommittee to complete draft letter

Motion: Tree Commission resolution states the Tree Commission advises the City Council on tree related issues. The Tree Commission respectfully recommends the City Council take no action on the Sutter Davis Solar Project until presented to the Tree Commission for recommendations and that projects of similar scope in the future be sent to the proper commissions before being sent to the Planning Commission.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Cramer. The motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

Motion: Form a subcommittee to write recommendation letter and add members Guenther, Gill, and Cramer

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Walsh. The Motion passed 6-0 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit

7. Commission and Staff Communication

A. Subcommittee Updates.

The item was introduced by Reuter and updates given for the Temporary Parking Lot Shade 2x2.

Discussion also included the following:

- Finalizing incorporation of stormwater infrastructure
- Photovoltaic discussion coming soon.

B. Next Meeting Topics.

The item was introduced by Rob Cain

Discussion also included the following:

- City Council discussion debriefing
- Sutter Davis Solar Project recommendation letter
- Climate Adaptation and Action Plan presentation

8. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the Tree Commission meeting at 11:15 p.m.

Moved by Guenther, seconded by Cramer. The motion passed by the following votes:

Ayes: Cramer, Guenther, Gill, Reuter, Robinson, Walsh
Noes:
Absent: DeWit