



Reno Urban Forestry Commission

DRAFT MINUTES

June 22, 2021 ~ 5:00 p.m.

McKinley Arts & Culture Center
925 Riverside Drive
Reno, NV 89503

MEMBERS

Cynthia Albright (Chair)
Open (Vice Chair)
Bruce Barr
Trish Greif
Anna Higgins
Ed Hawkins
Gary Jentink
Sonya Lucatero
Jason Ludden
Krista Wahnefried
Vacant (2)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was established.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cynthia Albright (arrived 5:13 pm), Bruce Barr, Trish Greif, Anna Higgins (arrived 5:08 pm), Gary Jentink, Sonya Lucatero, Jason Ludden

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ed Hawkins, Krista Wahnefried

POSITIONS VACANT: Two

COUNCIL LIAISON: Council Member Naomi Duerr (arrived 5:17 pm)

STAFF ALSO PRESENT: Matt Basile, Urban Forester
Erin Mullenix, Office Assistant Parks Maintenance & Urban Forestry

2. Public Comment – This item is for either public comment on any action item or for general public comment and is limited to no more than three (3) minutes for each commentator.

None.

3. Approval of Agenda for June 22, 2021 Reno Urban Forestry Commission (“RUFC”) Special Meeting (for Possible Action)

It was moved by Commissioner Barr, seconded by Commissioner Ludden to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion and edits of Tree Protection Ordinance Summary (For Possible Action)- Matt Basile, Urban Forester for City of Reno

Jaime Schroder and Kelly Mullin gave a presentation. (Slideshow attached.) Afterwards, discussion and questions took place. The commission overall had concerns regarding the tiered approach for existing trees and where the tree is located on-site. Council member Duerr expressed her concern to protect the trees at whatever cost, saying that developers can incorporate existing trees into their plans. With the current code in place, only trees in front yards are covered. The commission would like different options to explore a different valuation based on the location within the property. Council member Duerr doesn't

like the simplicity of the proposed tiered system, while Commissioner Albright doesn't think that these baby steps are okay. She would like to see a more defined approach.

Urban Forester Matt Basile is working on coming up with a predictable chart regarding the Tree Appraisal system. Commissioner Ludden suggested the City should give the value of the trees to contractors, as this is the only time the City will have control over that tree.

In regards to the project timeline, staff wants to keep on track in order to follow this schedule. Concepts are needing to be identified in order to make sure we are going down the right path. The commission wants to make sure we give clarity to these rules, so that Council can approve. Language needs to be clear, and a mechanism needs to be in place to extract the value of trees. Education is a key piece of this, making sure everyone knows the benefits of trees and that they are very important. Matt Basile said that the commission focuses on tree removal and how to prevent it, but we also need to focus on properly installing and maintain trees. We need to make sure that the right trees are planted, the right soil is used, and that irrigation is properly installed. During construction, existing trees can take a lot of damage, and so it was discussed that we look at having a Tree Mitigation Permit. Matt Basile suggested that maybe this permit should be incorporated as part of the Building Permit Application. We could also build in fines for violations.

In discussing of Removal of Trees, the overall theme for the Tree Protection Ordinance has been on preserving existing trees or in planting new trees. The commission brought up re-visiting the distance suggested between planting trees. It is currently 30-45 feet apart, dependent upon tree type, location, circumstances. Perhaps the Downtown Streetscape Design Plan should be used to set the rules and standards for new plantings. It was questioned if we can use this as a starting point as a template. The Public Works design manual references specifications, however it only applies to downtown construction.

Commissioner Ludden suggested using ReLeaf Reno funds as a way to help distressed families maintain trees on their property. Council Member Dueer suggested that they could also utilize the tree giveaway program.

The commission would like some clarity in code in regards to Right of Way trees and City Trees. Also, would like clarification on what exactly "general maintenance" means.

Ms. Mullin's next step is to take this to council. She will bring this back to the RUFC in September for a workshop as an informational piece of this. Ms. Mullin also let the commission know that they can email her with comments about tonight's presentation and discussion. Ms. Mullin will invite the RUFC to the stakeholder meeting at Commissioner Albright's request.

5. Public Comment –

None.

6. Adjournment (*For Possible Action*)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.