

**Urban Forestry Commission
February 27, 2020**

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Phil Klingelhofer, Chair
Kit Norland
Kate Donohue
David Howell
Nora Palmatier
Caroline Haynes
Teresa Leonardo
Noreen Hannigan
Tanja Crk
Josh Handler
John Carey
Evelio Rubiella

County and State Staff

Vincent Verweij, DPR
Christina deMariano, DPR
Kurt Louis, DPR
Angela Lucas, DPR
Kellie Brown, CPHD
Russell Schroeder, CPHD
Steven Bernheisel, APS

Guests

Anne Bodine
Susan Land
Oehme van Sweden Landscape Architecture
Staff

Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in

A video recognizing Nora Palmatier’s service to the County was shown before the meeting

Public Comment

Susan Land spoke about current staffing level. Susan suggested 2 more foresters on staff. She spoke about workload and assets managed, and referenced complaints from public on clearcuttings. She asked for more enforcement and follow-up, and assistance on tree deferral in summer months.

Anne Bodine spoke about the views from Arlingtonians for our Sustainable Future. A handout was given to commissioners. Anne asked for an impact statement of missing middle housing, noting concern about impervious surfaces, tree impact, and what value will be added by this study, as well as impact to schools in parks.

Missing Middle Housing Study – Kellie Brown and Russell Schroeder

Russell and Kellie presented on the housing study.

Questions included on:

- Defining sustainability
- How tree canopy is presented in presentations, and how it will be integrated in the study
- How to analyze the results

- The diminished value of housing stock without tree canopy.
- Understanding the context in an urban ecology
- Impacts of lot size on tree canopy
- How will the study be sequenced
- Suggested additional briefings in different phases
- Biophilic design and its relationship with density.
- Make sure final result has room for trees.
- Comparison to other communities, and success stories
- Tying into energy issues
- Green roofs on mid-rise
- Including tree pictures in presentation

Commissioner Handler asked about what to provide input on. Commissioner Howell suggested providing input on study design to include a clear stopping point to consider all the data. The Chair suggested a letter to support redesign. Commissioner Howell will draft a letter. Commissioner Palmatier suggested folks also comment on the survey online. A draft of a letter was approved unanimously.

Parks and Recreation Budget – Angela Lucas and Kurt Louis

Angela Lucas and Kurt Louis presented on the proposed budget.

Support was shown for the proposed budget.

Commissioners suggested increasing natural resources, park rangers and Conservation & Interpretation.

A letter of support was suggested, including data collection suggestion, using existing letters to collect ideas, and include biophilic design. Commissioner Norland offered to draft the letter.

A letter will be drafted, and edits to be sent to the Chair. A motion passed unanimously.

Notable Trees – John Wingard

All the trees proposed for Notable status were approved by the Commission, unanimously.

Key Bridge Marriott – Oehme van Sweden Landscape Architecture

Oehme van Sweden staff presented their proposal for the Key Bridge Marriott site plan.

Questions were asked about invasives and NPS. Native plants, green roofs on bare roofs. The design was commended for its biophilic design.

Commissioner Haynes noted this project as a success story. Suggested a letter be drafted to support this project. The letter was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Crk asked about using the US Green Building Council Sustainable SITES certification as a site plan incentive and suggested this could be a presentation for a future meeting.

November Minutes and Commission Infrastructure (Work plan, Annual report, Memberships)

The minutes were approved unanimously

Staff Reports

Vincent Verweij introduced Christina deMariano, new urban forester, spoke about ISA certification for our tree crew supervisor, Alan Brady, and highlighted projects at Landbay C in Potomac Yards, and the project to create new tree pits along Washington Blvd.

Arbor Day!

Arbor Day will be on April 17, at the Carlin Springs Elementary School. A time has not been decided yet, but often these events start around 10 AM. More announcements to come, including invitations! [post-meeting note: Arbor day was cancelled for this year]

Maintenance:

- We received 32 requests for tree maintenance in February, which, along with staff assessments, led to 41 tree removals and 75 prune jobs.
- Christina deMariano is working with other parks staff and NOVA parks staff to remove invasive honeysuckle and some trees to improve sight lines at Glencarlyn park, where we've had some issues with illegal activity.

Planning:

- *Overall:*
 - Staff performed 79 plan reviews, 28 certificate of occupancy inspections, 13 preconstruction meetings, 11 follow-up inspections, and 14 meetings to discuss comments.
- *Site plans (showing projects with updates):*
 - Current:
 - Ames Center: Reviewing potential for new planting
 - LCOR/Verizon site plan: Reviewing landscape plans
 - Key Bridge Marriott: Reviewing resubmitted landscape plans.

- Artis Senior Living: Reviewing resubmitted landscape plans
- Met Park 6/8: Reviewing landscape plans and civil engineering plans
- 1900 Crystal Drive: Exploring options to expand planted areas on project.
- Potomac Yard Landbay C: New conceptual plan, completing one side of the final Potomac Yard development.
- Under construction/final approvals:
 - 1555 Wilson Blvd/WRAPS: Stormwater tree pits being installed. Monitoring how these hold up, and how well installation works, practically, to consider whether we allow these in the future.
 - Pentagon Center Building C/Skyview: Starting site preparation. Protecting large willow oaks along 15th St S..
 - 2910 S Glebe Rd/The Berkeley: Trees had to be moved farther from transmission power lines, but solutions are being worked out with Dominion. Tree pits are partially done.
 - Ballston Quarter Residential: Final check on trees on roofs. All trees survived. 1 street tree needs to be replaced.
 - Gables: Installed all trees. Need to replace 1 planted oak in Three Oaks park
 - Pentagon Center Building A/Widmer: Trees on roofs survived well. Some street trees need to be replaced.
 - 1201 S Ross St: Inspecting final tree planting.
 - Red Cross: Demolition complete.
 - 750 N Glebe: installed street trees and roof trees.
- *DES/NC:*
 - DES staff is working to address drainage issues at a house at 4121 N Randolph Street. This project may impact a significant amount of trees on National Park Service property, and forestry staff is working to reduce impact, and work with natural solutions to the problems.
 - Forestry staff met with facilities staff to discuss tree replacement at Fire Station 8. Options are being discussed to find space for replacement trees, within project parameters.
 - Staff checked on 6 improperly marked trees at the recently-acquired Urgent care site on Carlin Springs road and helped communicate with survey crews that white X's may not be the most appropriate use during surveys.

- Staff met about a Neighborhood Conservation project at Little Falls conceptual meeting for installing sidewalks along Little Falls Rd between Washington Blvd and N Van Buren St. Tree impact will be high for the block nearest Washington Blvd.
- Donaldson Run Tributary B: Reviewing plans
- Gulf Branch Stream Restoration: Reviewing plans
- *Parks:*
 - The Lubber Run Community Center is installing a boardwalk leading to the trail. Urban forestry staff met on site to discuss potential tree impact, and reduced tree impact to only dead trees, by slight tweaks in the design.
 - Upton Hill Regional Center: Project installed site controls, and is waiting for minor changes to be approved before proceeding.
 - Alcova Heights: Reviewing impacts to trees from park renovation.
 - Bluemont Tennis Courts: Reviewing options for park renovation project.
- *Schools:*
 - APS is proposing to increase density on their Arlington Career Center site, which may have some impact to some existing trees, but also offer opportunities for rooftop tree planting.
 - Stratford/Dorothy Hamm school is completing landscape installation and working on finalizing building

Planting:

- DES staff helped create openings for tree pits along Washington Blvd and Utah St. Forestry staff will work to remediate soil in these tree pits.
- Urban forestry tree maintenance crew remediated tree islands at the Trades Center for better tree growth.

Outreach:

- Aftab Hussain presented to the Tree Stewards on Biotic and Abiotic factors causing damage to trees on 2-25-20
- Forestry and park maintenance staff attended and a presentation on Deer population issues in VA.

Personnel:

- Alan Brady Jr., the tree crew supervisor, obtained his Certified Arborist certification this month. This will help him improve his tree risk assessment, and prioritize work where it is most needed.

Commissioner reports

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

Bill Browning with Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN) presented a program that ARMN volunteers have been giving to civic associations, county staff and county board members on the impact of forest health from the overpopulation of deer in our region. The presentation is also scheduled for Sunday, March 8 at Arlington Central Library at 6:30 PM. (Flyer attached.)

The county is still jumping through the hoops in bringing on the consultant to begin the update of the Integrated Forest and Natural Resources Management Plan.

Park and Recreation Commission (David Howell)

In January PRC met after UFC, and the February meetings are on the same day because of the PRC joint meeting with the Sports Commission on their day this year, which is the 4th Thursday. So, this is catching up from last month.

Three primary items made up the January PRC agenda. Megan Abney, of Washington REIT, presented on a proposed park name (Selena Gray Square) for a new public space planned in The Trove (Wellington Apartments) development. She told the commission that she had heard back from a small number of people from the nearby civic associations who supported the proposed name. Megan had a letter of support from the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee but did not have a letter yet from the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board yet, but she said they supported the proposed name. She will submit the letter to the commission when she receives it. The PRC discussion included but was not limited to the following items: Other names for the park that were considered, what letters of support were provided for the name, placement of a sign in the park to commemorate Selina Gray, and who will own the park. The process for park naming includes formal review by HALRB, input from civic associations, and a formal recommendation by PRC to the County Board. The commission voted to recommend approval to the County Board of the proposed name "Selina Gray Square." The vote was unanimous.

Cheryl Johnson and Jennifer Collins, DPR Community Recreation Division, provided an overview of the Community Recreation Division (CRD) describing its four primary service areas (Youth Services, 55+ Programs, Therapeutic Recreation and Community Arts), the division's seven core lines of business and the range of classes and programs offered to people of all ages to meet their different interests and needs. Jennifer Collins, who manages the 55+ programming, described the variety of classes and programs they provide for this age group. Ms. Collins presented charts showing the increase of participation in classes, facility memberships, attendance at the Social Café Meal Program and 55+ Center attendance from 2017 - 2019. CRD is planning on increasing the locations of these programs and to expand their offerings on weekends. Ms. Johnson presented DPR's guidelines for "Inclusion of Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day." These guidelines reflect DPR's commitment to creating and promoting inclusion across all public spaces, places, facilities and programs managed by the department.

Jay Hicks, SVP of Artis Senior Living, and Joseph Plumpe, President of Studio 39, landscape architects, presented siting and landscape plans for an Artis Senior Living facility currently undergoing site plan review. The building will be a 6-story, 175-unit general assisted living facility and will include a public space next to their building which they said is currently a de-facto park used by nearby residents. The public space amenities include an arbor at the park entrance, a seating arbor with chess tables, hardscape painted with markings for games, lawn area, walkways, flowering landscaping and cherry trees to tie into the theme of the Cherrydale neighborhood. The commission agreed to write a letter on this project to the board.

Planning Activities Notification

Artis Senior Living: As follow up to my report last month, and per our discussion, attached is a DRAFT letter for UFC consideration to send in support of the Artis Senior Living project.

Ames: The first SPRC for the Ames project in Rosslyn (1820 and 1830 Fort Myer Drive -- the site includes the Arlington Temple United Methodist Church and a gas station) was on Monday, Feb. 24. Terrapin Bright Green (responsible for some of the best resources on biophilic design) is on the team as "Biophilic Consultant". The proposal is for two residential towers that will be divided by the 18th Street Corridor (as called for the in Realize Rosslyn Sector Plan). The project incorporates biophilic design in the wavy shape of the buildings with nested balconies and planters (with an integrated watering system) to ensure that the buildings have layers of greenery. Like most sites in Rosslyn, the parcel is on a steep hill and the privately owned public spaces incorporates the biophilic design elements of prospect and refuge, by creating two tiers of relatively flat and usable space in the 18th Street corridor. There will be more details forthcoming at the next SPRC meeting, scheduled for March 19, where open space will be discussed. The presentation from Monday is available at this link.

Met Park Master Planning: The county and JBG kicked off the joint master planning process for Met Park on Feb. 20. Here is a link to the presentation that focused on the history of this area and the connection to the Potomac River, with an expansive look at the possibilities for this park (including lots of interest in natural areas and trees), led by James Corner Landscape Architects (known for NYC Highline and other innovative urban projects).

Lee Highway (Caroline Haynes)

A community-wide workshop was held Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 to solicit input on the existing conditions report and reach a broader cross-section of community members.

Tree Stewards (Kate Donohue)

Training: Module 3 has begun, with a focus on Pests and Diseases, Right Tree/Right Place, and Care of Mature Trees.

Pruning: Tree Stewards pruned trees at Abingdon Elementary School and Fort Reynolds Park

For more information on many of the above items, and others, please visit the TreeStewards website at:

<https://treestewards.org>

Arlington Tree Action Group (Kit Norland)

No report

Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable (Nora Palmatier)

No report

Tree Canopy Fund (Nora Palmatier)

TCF has been a very successful tree planting program. However, TCF hasn't funded ongoing maintenance needs of mature trees due to the original restriction to only Specimen trees. When members of UFC promoted board approval in 2007 we didn't realize that only some 20 Specimen trees on private property would be eligible! While TCF has funded preventive treatment for the Lyon Park Champion Ash tree, the second and third and fourth largest ash trees are not eligible although their benefits are almost as great as the champion's. Homeowners on limited incomes and nonprofits such as APAH, Doorways, Linden Resources, etc. have asked me to help find funds for arborists care over the years, but there are no funds available. Foundations and philanthropists just don't prioritize tree pruning over human services. I'm glad current UFC members are seeking a pilot program to increase maintenance of trees beyond the few Specimens. There's certainly enough demand for the assistance and the TCF has more than enough funds for the next several years of tree planting.

Here's a brief summary of the successes of the Tree Canopy Fund.

- about 2500 trees have been planted over the years
- 150 trees were requested for spring 2020; 100 were planted in fall 2019
- cost per tree, water bag, and planting is about \$390 with guarantee (depends on species);
- planting sessions have ranged from low of \$40,000 for 100 trees - to high of \$128,000 for 500 (in 2012 so prices were lower)
- the fund has about \$550,000 now -- enough for plantings thru 2024 and increasing maintenance funds, even if no more development
- only 3 requests for education projects have been received and accepted for a total of \$20,000 (TS, MN and Schools)
- only 2 requests for maintenance grants have been received and accepted -- treating Lyon Park Specimen Ashes for \$8,700 total.
- TS did a survey in 2017 and found 82% of all trees planted over the years; 88% of these located were assessed as Good
- TS found trees evenly split between North and South Arlington
- Survey found trees evenly split between Single Family Residences and Apartment/Condo

People often ask how we can get more people to request trees. In my opinion, targeted outreach using TCF funds for professional marketing would assist. Yet the most effective results over the years has come from community volunteers who knock on their neighbors' doors and keep going back, offering specific advice on where to plant a tree, offering to fill out on line application form, and making sure form is submitted. The woman who has gotten apartment buildings in Penrose to accept over 60 trees is now on a first name basis with the apartment managers. Other "sparkplugs" do wonders in Aurora Highlands, Langston Hughes/Highview, Ashton Heights and the Fairlington. If your neighborhood needs trees, knocking on doors with persistence is the best way to get them planted.

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (Phil Klingelhofer)

On February 13, 2020, the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) held its monthly meeting, with one item of interest to the UFC on the agenda:

- **Update on Streetlight Management Plan (SMP)**, Santosh Neupane, Engineering Program Coordinator. This masterplan update will lead to a comprehensive overhaul of outdoor lighting in Arlington with potential benefits to trees and natural resources or detriment, depending on how it is implemented. This implementation should certainly be a part of the updated Natural Resources and Urban Forestry Master Plan NRUFMP (or is it UFNRMP?). The presentation is attached and additional information is attached below.

Streetlights Management Plan

The [Streetlight Management Plan](#) (SMP) project was completed and approved by DES in March 2019. Thank you to the [SMP Advisory Panel](#) members for their input and guidance and the residents who participated in this thorough and engaging project. Together, we worked to design a guide that standardizes our [streetlight program](#) while incorporating innovative and sustainable technology for the future of streetlights in Arlington.

The core principles and standards have been adopted, including:

- Lower color temperature standard for LED lights – 3000 degrees Kelvin for residential streets, 4000 degrees Kelvin for commercial and mixed-use areas
- More choices of county-owned light styles – Carlyle in commercial areas, Cobra in residential areas
- Ownership districting – moving towards County ownership in commercial areas and Dominion Energy ownership in residential areas

Arlington has made several improvements, including:

- Staff worked on procuring new equipment per the new SMP standards that will help us meet defined maintenance service levels.
- Staff participated in negotiations with Dominion to improve and update their streetlight service, including:
 - Significantly reducing the cost of LED lights through VEPGA negotiation

- Offering LED lights and replacing HPS lights through their regular maintenance activities.
- Following the new county standards to provide a more adequate light distribution pattern.
- Committing to make their LED lighting program smart city ready.

Staff has also worked with Dominion to establish a three-month “backlog clearing” project in which Dominion has committed to repair all overdue outages. Staff continuously coordinates with Dominion to sustain a reasonable maintenance service level.

Visit the [Streetlights Management Plan webpage](#) for detailed information.

NC Project Status Report. For a current status report on all approved NC projects, click [here](#).

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (Teresa Leonardo)

Presentation on the Key Bridge Marriott project. They're going for LEED Gold on the new buildings and LEED Silver on existing. Still, lots of questions about places where they could do better especially in terms of energy efficiency. They're currently planning to launch with 2% EV parking spaces, plus putting in conduits that will make it easier to transition additional spaces as needed. Given growth curves for EVs, E2C2 skeptical that 2% would be sufficient and building in flexibility for the future will be critical. Project exceed tree canopy coverage requirements by 2% which is good!

Update from John Morrill on the Dominion power purchase agreement explaining how last month's situation occurred (in which at last minute it was reported that 10-15% of site had trees, after previously being told that it was fallow agricultural land). Most relevant for the UFC, they anticipate having a draft tree removal plan by ~March 25. There will also be tree planting around buffer of site - though they dont yet know with what. Lots of questions and discussion about whether there might be potential for agrovoltaics (learn more about benefits here).

Budget updates Discussed various snippets we had heard in advance of budget release. Biggest point of discussion was that although a rate increase has been proposed for solid waste, this rate doesnt include handling food waste. Food waste would require an additional \$10/yr beyond what is proposed. E2C2 would like to see this added for this year.

Letters

Approved letter recommending that the County Board authorize the staff of the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE) to publish the Sustainability Dashboard they have developed. This will increase the visibility of the County’s sustainability goals and provide transparency and accountability for the County’s progress toward achieving them.

Misc other news

Statewide ban on single use styrofoam is being discussed - though i just googled and the vote was delayed. State legislation that would give localities the ability to impose plastic bag tax also under discussion.

Virginia Department of Forestry (Jim McGlone)

No report

Water and Wastewater Utility Rate Study Community Advisory Group (Nora Palmatier)

No report

Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)

No report

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)

No report

New Business

The following items were discussed:

- Suggested site plans for attention: Ames, LCOR, Artis, Met Park 6/8, Landbay C. Commissioner Hannigan offered to help with some site plans.
- Biophilic update: Celebration in Spring, more work in Fall. Working forward with metrics. Commissioner Leonardo asked for biophilic metrics to be shared.
- The Artis letter drafted by Commissioner Haynes was approved unanimously to be sent to the County Board.