



Public Works Department

# MINUTES

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

**Monday February 9, 2015 7:00 p.m.**  
**El Cerrito City Hall**  
Hillside Conference Room  
10890 San Pablo Avenue

**1. Roll Call :**

**Present:** Vice Chair Cathy Bleier, Members Ralph Boniello, Sheauching Cheng, Karen Christian, Mike Srago

Staff Liaison Stephen Prée was also present

**Absent:** Chair Janet Hittle, members Michael Charlton, Steve Price

**2. Comments from the Public on non agenda items:**

Allison Hurwitz expressed her safety concern for the Iron Bark Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus sideroxylon*) trees on Richmond St. south of Stockton Ave. She cited two examples of this tree species failing near her home 1.) a limb failure in December 2014 that closed Richmond street while it was removed 2) a larger limb failure during a storm in 2012 that fell onto the corner of a neighboring house. She said that she and her neighbors would be willing to contribute money for the removal of these trees. Prée responded that one of the trees- while not exhibiting increased signs of hazard potential- is marked for removal by the City in the current tree contract. He commented that the Tree Committee has received removal requests for this tree species previously from others and that the City will consider removal and replacement once requested removal and replacement protocols are developed..

**3. Report from the City Council Liaison:**

Councilmember Bridges was not in attendance

**4. Action Items:**

The Committee adopted the minutes from the January 12, 2015 meeting with an amendment by Srago that all ad-hoc subcommittee members be listed when those subcommittees are cited in the minutes. Motion by Boniello, second Srago, passed unanimously with Christian abstaining due to her absence in January

**5. Tree Health Care -**

Prée gave a presentation and Power Point on Tree Roots

**6. Revised Draft City Tree List :**

The draft list was distributed; Boniello updated the committee on the progress made to date by the ad-hoc subcommittee members (Boniello, Hittle, and Price). Boniello reminded members to submit species for consideration on the list. Christian commented that there were only two species on the list that would be suitable for a 1.5' pavement opening as is on her street.

**7. Report from the City Arborist**

Prée presented information and answered questions regarding recent City tree pruning and

removal activities and gave an update on tree related work that is planned for the San Pablo Avenue Green Spine Project including the removal of four mature Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) trees. Bleier asked if a public hearing would be held regarding the project, Prée replied that the project area includes multiple cities along San Pablo Avenue and that there is no public hearing scheduled for the project. Boniello said that this project removes a problematic species and provides an opportunity to replace the trees with improved tree species- he noted that there are two trees being replaced for each one removed. Cheng asked why the north side of Moeser was not considered for the project site as it would have more value as a planting location. Prée responded that for the purpose of the Raingarden the drainage area is not as large and that the Public Right of Way is much narrower at that location and would reduce the size of the project. Bleier recommended that the project plans include mitigation planting on the north side of Moeser or elsewhere.

**Action:** Srago made a motion requesting the City Arborist to direct the project manager to mitigate the project tree removal by planting new trees north of Moeser or elsewhere nearby as part of the SPA Green Spine Project. Second: Christian; Passed unanimously.

#### **8. El Cerrito Arbor Week March 7-14, 2015**

Bleier reported on the progress that the El Cerrito Garden Club and the ad-hoc subcommittee had made in planning events with no committed participants to date; she volunteered to draft a letter to Prospect Sierra School inviting them to participate.

#### **9. Committee Recruitment**

The committee discussed possible recruitment strategies for enlisting new members:

- Flyers
- Events tabling

#### **10. Work Plan Update**

The Committee reviewed the 2015/16 Work Plan and progress made toward reaching goals. Progress is being made on revisions to the City Approved Tree List; more work is required in other areas with a priority on the City Tree Ordinance. Srago suggested that the Work Plan goal of hosting Public Education events would be a good opportunity for new tree committee member recruitment.

#### **11. Announcements and Future Agenda Items:**

- Recruitment
- Tree List
- Arbor Week Update
- Approved City Tree List ad-hoc subcommittee update
- Work Plan

#### **12. Adjournment**