



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

Monday December 17, 2018 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

Present: Chair Steve Price, Vice Chair Mary Torrusio, Members, Robert Hrubes, Yan Linhart, Mike Srago.
Also present; members of the public Ralph Boniello, Mark Mendell;
Staff Liaison, Stephen Prée.

Absent: Cathy Bleier, also absent Council Liaison Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto.

2. **Committee Member Announcements and changes to the agenda:** Yan Linhart distributed a book "Life on the Edge; A Guide to California's Natural Endangered Natural Resources". He offered meeting attendees a free copy; a discussion followed. Prée suggested that the agenda be modified to include Mike Srago's notes on strategies for attracting volunteers.
3. **Comments from the Public on non-agenda items:** Ralph Boniello described the difficulty of securing a City street tree for multi-family housing tenants due to the current City requirement that the property owner or tree requestor is responsible to water the tree for the 3 year establishment period; he suggested this practice be re-considered and that the City should require multi-family properties to have street trees. Mike Srago said the City could require new street trees when properties are transferred. Chair Price asked how the UFC would get involved to create such policies. Discussion – Hrubes: can the City unilaterally plan trees? Prée: yes, but the issue is securing volunteer or monetary resources to water the tree during establishment. Price: Minnesota's recent ban on new single family housing may be a topic for future discussion..
4. **Report from the City Council Liaison:** Ms. Pardue-Okimoto was not present. Prée reported on recent vehicular accidents that resulted in the loss of at least two trees on San Pablo Ave.; AC Transit requests for tree pruning to accommodate new double decker busses; Poinsett Park vegetation management and replanting.
5. **Action Items-** A motion to adopt, with minor edits, the minutes from the November 19, 2018 meeting was made by Robert Hrubes, 2nd, Mike Srago, unanimous.
6. **Review of Materials to Accompany the City Tree and Shrub Ordinance Revision –** Prée distributed draft copies of a Prohibited Species List for the Public Rights of Way and City Tree

Maintenance Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Recommendation: provide more rationale of the prohibition of certain plants. Discussion: Vice Chair Torrusio: is there a penalty for planting prohibited plants? Chair Price Fire prone plants may need to be included for high risk areas. Robert Hrubes: the UFC needs to know more about the fire zone maps. (Make fire issue and Red Zone a future agenda item). Regarding the SOPs: clarify difference of Tree Program Manager and City Arborist. Robert Hrubes: What City policy assures that someone on staff manages the trees?

7. Tree Committee Activities, Calendar and Work Plan Update-

- January 7, 2019 meeting agenda: After Prée described the proposed agenda, the UFC discussed possible scenarios for a timeline of when and how to recommend adoption of the Ordinance to City Council. Member of the Public Boniello inquired about the process for adopting a Heritage Tree Ordinance and tree replacement/mitigation requirements; goals for an ordinance that would address the heat island effect and canopy cover requirements. Yan Linhart commented that obviously more funding should be provided for the City's urban forest program.
- Arbor Week 2019 – an ad-hoc subcommittee was formed to propose and plan events (Linhart, Price, Torrusio), meet prior to January 23, 2019

8. Old/New Business – none

9. Future agenda items

- Arbor Week activities
- 2019/2021 Work Plan
- Volunteer recruitments + Mike Srago list

Adjournment- 9:10