



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

Monday July 11, 2016 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

Present: Vice Chair Steve Price, Members Cathy Bleier, Yan Linhart, Mary Torrusio, Mike Srago. City Council Liaison Janet Abelson and Staff Liaison Stephen Prée were also present.

Absent: Chair Ralph Boniello, Members Michael Charlton, Karen Christian, Robert Hrubes,

2. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items: There were no public comments.

3. Report from the City Council Liaison: Janet Abelson thanked everyone who came to the World One Fourth of July festival and reported that the festival is organized and led by Corey Mason, an El Cerrito High School teacher who also manages the local radio station, KECG 88.1. Mr. Mason also is instrumental in facilitating the High School internship program with the City of El Cerrito which readies students for work. Ms. Abelson reported that the agenda of the July 19 City Council meeting would include the review of several redevelopment projects. A discussion followed regarding the Tree Committee's input into the City's development guidelines such as the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and the Urban Greening Plan.

4. Action Items:

Motion to adopt the minutes from the June 13, 2016 meeting: Srago; second: Linhart approved unanimously.

5. Update on recent Tree Committee Outreach Activities:

Mary Torrusio reported on her experience staffing the Tree Committee table from 10:00 to 2:00 at the World One Festival on July 4th : there was a steady stream of people, many of whom signed-up for information regarding the Tree Committee including Boy Scout Troop 104. The most popular outreach items were the beneficial insects and drought information sheets; several members of the public had questions about Eucalyptus trees. Steve Price also staffed the table and said he wished the Tree Committee outreach had been more organized. A discussion followed regarding ways to organize Committee outreach including sending agenda packets to interested parties, cooperation with other City Boards, Committees and Commissions and the potential advantages of a website dedicated to El Cerrito Tree issues. Cathy Bleier recommended that further discussion on the topic of potential outreach be moved to Agenda Item 7: Work Plan Update.

6. Report from the City Arborist: Prée updated the Committee on his recent urban forestry related activities including a.) Responding to a property owner's concern regarding a 110 feet tall Eucalyptus globulus which is on private property and likely sprouted as a volunteer. b.) Recent limb failures on City Chinese Elm trees c.) City tree pruning requests d.) Sending a response that was informed by the tree committee to the Arlington Park tennis group that wanted to move some of the trees that were planted as part of the 2016 CA ReLeaf Arborweek Grant. The Grant funds were recently received by the City. e.) Dave Torrusio has offered to assist with Tree Committee related website refinements including the tree list.

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

- A. Prée distributed a copy of what he thought to be Ralph Boniello's edits reflecting the prior committee meeting discussion; Cathy Bleier confirmed that this was not the most up to date version. Ms. Bleier will adopt the changes and distribute the update revisions. There was a discussion regarding collaboration with other City Boards, Committees and Commissions and the development of informal liaison activities with other committees. Yan Linhart volunteered to review other committee agendas and make a recommendation to the Tree Committee. Mike Srago recommended that the Tree Committee reiterate its vision and objectives to other committees.
- B. Tree Ordinance Update- Prée distributed Ms. Bleier's comments to the outline, discussion followed: Ms. Bleier said she is inclined for the Ordinance NOT to address private tree issues; Tree Committee must be clear on what objective is desired in this regard. Prée said that a redevelopment project could potentially reduce the size and number of existing or replacement trees required on a particular project if the Ordinance did not address this. There may also be public safety issues with private trees that should be addressed. More discussion of private trees is needed. Ms. Bleier said that the Tree Committee needs to lay out the private tree issues for City staff to give the Committee guidance on, all committee members should read and comment on the Ordinance outline.

8. Announcements and future agenda items: no announcements were made.

Future Agenda Items:

- 2016-18 Work Plan- Yan Linhart will report back on his research of other Boards' Committees and Commissions.
- Revisions to the Tree Ordinance

9. Adjournment- 9:00