



Public Works Department

# MINUTES

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

**Monday May 8, 2017 7:00 p.m.**  
**El Cerrito City Hall**  
Hillside Conference Room  
10890 San Pablo Avenue

### 1. Roll Call :

**Present:** Chair Ralph Boniello, Vice Chair Steve Price; Members, Cathy Bleier, Robert Hrubes, Yan Linhart.

Also present: Staff Liaison Stephen Prée.

**Absent:** Mike Srago, Mary Torrusio. Also absent: City Council Liaison Paul Fadelli

### 2. Committee Member Announcements:

- Chair Boniello announced that he would be leading a tree walk in the Hillside Natural Area at 2:30, on May 21 that will meet at the Regency Court entrance to the park; this event is part of the 4th annual Hillside Festival.

### 3. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items: There were none.

### 4. Consider a motion to adopt the Minutes from the March 13, 2017 meeting.

Vice Chair Price made the motion; 2<sup>nd</sup> Yan Linhart; adopted unanimously.

### 5. Report from the City Arborist:

Stephen Prée reported on his recent work on the City's application for a California Natural Resources Agency Urban Greening Grant; a joint application with the Association of Bay Area Governments and the San Francisco Bay Estuary Partnership. The Grant project is called the East Bay Corridors Green Street Connections Project and merges elements of the City of Richmond's Barrett Ave/Key Blvd Complete Streets project with greening opportunities at the Conlon Avenue/ Key Boulevard intersection described in El Cerrito's Urban Greening Plan; it integrates green infrastructure elements into the street design and would include planting several trees in the Public Right of Way.

Prée also reported on his recent work to complete the City's Green Infrastructure Plan Framework, which City Council will consider approving at their May 16, 2017 meeting.

Vice Chair Price then initiated a committee discussion on the integral role of trees and the urban forest in providing for clean water and the removal of pollutants from stormwater before it enters San Francisco Bay and other bodies of water. Further discussion ensued regarding street tree vacancies and the accuracy of the street tree inventory. Prée informed the committee of the separate tree inventory and tree work databases and said the two inventories would be merged again with the next Davey Treekeeper inventory contract renewal.

**6. Tree Committee Activities, Calendar and Work Plan Update :**

- A. El Cerrito Earth Day event- Yan Linhart reported of a disappointingly low number of people that stopped at the Tree Committee outreach table staffed by him and Mary Torrusio. He suggested that the Committee keep an inventory of Education/Outreach materials and the Committee discussed making more of these materials available on the City's website.
- B. Education & Outreach- Cathy Bleier started the discussion on the review of the Outreach Needs and Options document that she and the ad-hoc subcommittee created and distributed; questions and suggestions were made regarding posting more tree and urban forestry related information on the City website. The Committee agreed that posting of the Approved City Tree List is a top priority. Bleier requested clarification on what could or could not be on the City website. Linhart, Bleier, Price and Torrusio volunteered to form an ad-hoc committee on website content. A recommendation was made to include, on the website, a new City tree request form. Chair Boniello suggested posting information in various newsletters including Green Happenings, Recreation Guides, and City News and Views. The Committee recognized the need to develop content for such postings.
- C. Scoping Tree Planting Opportunities- Chair Boniello made a presentation on potential City tree planting sites with the purpose of prioritization and creating a list prior to future grant applications. Boniello noted some discrepancy between the tree inventory and actual tree vacancies. He noted an opportunity to improve the tree lined streets connecting with El Cerrito High School and El Cerrito Plaza. The discussion included recognition of the limitations by the State on awarding grants to areas with low scores on the Disadvantaged Communities calculator (Enviro-Screen 2.0). Boniello recommended mapping tree planting opportunities based on census tracts.

**7. Old/New Business – none**

**8. Future agenda items:**

- Posting Tree List
- Centennial Activities
- Education & Outreach
- Ordinance Update

**Adjournment- 9:07**

**El Cerrito Tree Committee Outreach Needs and Options:  
Recommendations from ad hoc subcommittee (Bleier, Linhart, Torrusio, 1-28-17)**

These can be taken on by individuals or ad hoc subcommittees.

- 1) Increase access to urban forestry and tree care materials on city website
  - Review existing educational materials (eg tree and urban forest benefits, tree health, tree care, pollinators and pesticide use, OTHER?)
  - Compile or develop, if needed, materials on above topics, user-friendly summaries of City policies and regulations, and FAQ's
  - Post Master Tree List
    - Condense columns on bird and insect benefits
    - Searchable database: explore options for outside server; if feasible, develop searchable database
    - Consider posting several non-searchable spreadsheets, sorted by most important tree traits (eg size, water needs, other?)
  - Work with City Arborist and IT folks, as needed, on what/how to post
- 2) Develop presentations for use by Committee members to students/teachers, general public, businesses
  - Assess and cultivate info demands and audiences, including questions received by City Arborist and suggestions from other EC committees/commissions
  - Develop basic PPT template that can be used and adapted for specific audiences
  - Take PPT to EQ, Parks and Recreation, and Planning committees (see #4)
- 3) Tree care assistance workshops (workshops are more hands-on and will likely require input by Stephen and maybe outside professionals)
  - Pruning
- 4) Liaison and work with other committees (eg EQC, Parks and Recreation, Planning) on issues and activities of common interest
  - Project suggestions for Green Teams
  - Identify UF or tree related information/presentation needs and opportunities
- 5) Review tree inventory
  - Distribute Davey Tree inventory summary report to committee
  - Provide live presentation to Committee on how to use on-line inventory
- 6) Clarify and justify priorities for tree planting. Options include:
  - Describe priorities, based on previous informal assessment and discussions of needs and criteria
  - Develop ad hoc committee to analyze inventory data and recommend priorities
  - Get community input on priorities through meetings or use of website
- 7) Develop list of interested residents for tree planting or other UF opportunities
  - Identify people through activity #6 (if community input is involved)
  - Provide on-line forms (eg at <http://www.el-cerrito.org/index.aspx?nid=464>) for people wanting trees on their street to identify tree preference, shovel-readiness, commitment to watering and tree care, OTHER?
  - Include or develop form for community UF activities, eg other tree plantings, brush removal, etc.
- 8) Outreach activities and table for Earth Day, Arbor Day and July 4<sup>th</sup> with pre-printed interest forms
- 9) Revisit outreach progress, needs and objectives annually