



Staff Liaison
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MINUTES **REGULAR MEETING OF THE** **Urban Forest Committee**

Monday February 8, 2021, 7:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

<https://elcerrito.webex.com/elcerrito/onstage/g.php?MTID=ec4bb4543a95f04bf84d896b828218468>

Event ID: 187 909 7447

Event Password: JoinECUFC

Join by Phone: 1-408-418-9388

Access code: 187 909 7447

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING: Chair Torrusio called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Mary Torrusio, Vice Chair Robert Hrubes, Members Cathy Bleier, Yan Linhart, Robin Mitchell.

Also present: Mayor Pro Tem Gabriel Quinto, Staff Liaison Stephen Prée, members of the public: Liz Bitner, Jim Delgodas, Sue and Paul Duncan, Jennifer Kaczor, Phil Kelly, Sohelia, David Weinstein, Stew Winchester.

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: There were none.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS / CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA
There were none.

4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS-

Mayor Pro Tem Quinto welcomed Robin Mitchell to her UFC reappointment and congratulated Jen Kaczor on her appointment to the El Cerrito Park and Recreation Commission. He also announced that City Council had amended the duration of terms for the UFC from two 4-year terms to three 4-year terms.

Mr. Quinto reported that "El Cerrito businesses are hurting" and that the City budget is in deficit. Discussion: Vice Chair Hrubes asked how this would affect the urban forestry program; Mr. Quinto said that the City values its Tree City USA status and the contributions of the City Arborist and the UFC but grants funding for programing should be investigated.

5. PRESENTATION: EBRPD & El Cerrito- Managing challenges of the Wildland Urban Interface, Jerry Kent, Retired EBRPD Assistant General Manager and local historian provided an overview of historic regional land use, the development of the East Bay Regional Parks, and vegetation and wildfire management. Mr. Kent used slides and narration to illustrate fire hazards and Eucalyptus management techniques. He described his efforts to spread this information with the objective of

establishing a joint powers authority (JPA) to minimize regional fire hazards. Discussion: Cathy Bleier asked for examples of successful fuel reduction projects. Mr. Kent cited Point Pinole, Sibley Park, Skyline Blvd at Grizzley Peak, and Claremont Canyon signpost 29. Vice Chair Hrubes asked what action the City of El Cerrito could do first to address these challenges. Mr. Kent replied that immediate big tree management in Eucalyptus groves is advised (see Alvarado Park, Tilden Lone Oak). Environmental Impact Reports should be scaled to a regional level, hence the benefits of forming a JPA.

6. ACTION ITEMS-

- Consider a motion to adopt minutes from the January 11, 2021 meeting. Motion, Mitchell; 2nd, Linhart. Approved unanimously.
- Consider a motion to recommend to Council the reappointment of Cathy Bleier to the UFC. Motion, Hrubes; 2nd, Linhart. Approved unanimously.

7. URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR AND WORK PLAN UPDATE:

- A. Arbor Week 2021 March 7-14. The Committee discussed various possibilities for remote events and determined to appoint an ad-hoc subcommittee to pursue an “Ask the Arborist” event (as suggested by the Arbor Day Foundation). Chair Turrusio and Ms. Mitchell volunteered to work with the staff liaison on planning. Public Comment: Liz Bitner of Richmond Trees asked the UFC if there was interest in future collaboration. Discussion: Vice Chair Hrubes suggested holding a joint meeting with the Richmond Tree Advisory Committee.
- B. Tree City USA sign locations- Vice Chair Hrubes and Mr. Linhart agreed to investigate potential locations and make recommendations at the next UFC meeting.
- C. Unauthorized pruning or planting communication – deferred.

8. NEXT MONTH’S CITY COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE ASSIGNMENTS

- EQC meeting – February 9: Mitchell
- PRC meeting –February 24: Turrusio

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Arbor Week March 7-14
- Forest Sustainability Council- presentation Vice Chair Hrubes
- Work Plan
- UFC Recruitment
- Friends of the El Cerrito Urban Forest

10. ADJOURNMENT- Chair Turrusio adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

Mary Torrusio, Chair or Robert Hrubes, Vice Chair

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular Urban Forest Committee meeting of February 8, 2021 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison