District of Columbia Urban Forestry Advisory Council meeting minutes—DRAFT

Call to order: 3:30PM, April 12, 2018

Council Members (* if in attendance):

*Jeff Seltzer, DOEE	Perry Wheelock, NPS	*Nathan McElroy, Pepco
*Earl Eutsler, DDOT	Robin Snyder, GSA	Dennis Chestnut, comm. rep.
*Brent Sisco, DPR	*Maureen Holman, DC Water	Irv Sheffey, comm. rep.
Zach Dobelbower, DGS	*Mark Buscaino, Casey Trees	*Delores Bushong, comm. rep.

Invited guests: *Sally Parker, DCPS

Others present or on phone:

*Steve Saari, Brent Sisco, Luke Cole, Alex Liguori

Quorum:

Approval of December 13, 2017 minutes

Resolution: approval of UFAC Meeting Minutes for December 13, 2017. Upon a motion moved by Luke Cole, and seconded by Mark Buscaino, but unanimous vote of all members present, the Committee approved the UFAC Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2017.

Status of the 2018 tree planting plans

Casey Trees: 331 on both Large Parcel + Schoolyard/Parkland

-Goal: 1500 trees per year (multiyear) grant. Street trees getting filled up but more large parcel/parks/schools etc. are ripe for planting. Funded through tree fund.

WPP: 42 on Schoolyard/Parkland-Grant set to expire at the end of May. Very successful thanks to Sally and Brent. Coordinating with ANCs, Park managers, School administrators.

DDOT: 7,300 trees in the ground with just over 1k left to go. Low mortality. Last FY 7% mortality out of 8200 trees. Exchanged information with CT, everyones plants are doing pretty well. Significant percentage of dead trees due to human mistreatment. Last several years-under 10% mortality. Primarily monitored by DDOT and watered by DDOT staff.

- If a citizen sees a tree in trouble, they can call 311 to report it.
- What happens when a tree PEPCO plants is in trouble? Sometimes selectively trimming the tree is the safest way to ensure wires are not harmed by/harm the tree. Important to plant appropriate trees underneath powerlines.
    - DDOT works closely with PEPCO to replace unruly trees with smaller trees to occupy the space. 311 is the process for reporting street trees.
    - Casey Trees has gotten a lot more responses for their program with PEPCO.

PEPCO: Nathan reported that their program to have an insert with their letters that advertises their tree program with Casey Trees to plant trees on private property has been making inroads. Challenging to get

trees planted on private property. Tree SAIFI (tree caused outages) have significantly decreased while canopy has been expanding.

- Standards for replacement utility poles have changed-poles are getting higher. Which marks a challenge but also an opportunity for trees to grow.
- Since 2012-tree canopy and power reliability have increased at the same time.
- In alleys, PEPCO doesn't have many wires, mostly communications of DDOT Streetlights. Also a 311 request where the street team can resolve any disruptions because of trees.

DGS: No numbers to report

UFD:

NPS: No numbers to report

GSA:

DCPS: No numbers to report

DDOT Sawmill at Casey Trees Farm – Earl Eutsler, DDOT/UFD

A couple years ago city bought a sawmill and has been looking for a home for the sawmill. A place where they could process the waste stream for recycling purposes. Thought finding space would be easy but has been very difficult. Found something even better-Partnered with Casey Trees to do it on their farm. Also creates an opportunity for environmental education. Sally has reached out to all types of groups in the city who have wanted to either use the wood or visit the sawmill. Good response from schools all over the city. Teachers have lots of good ideas for using the wood. Construction/arts/etc.

Made first delivery of logs from the sawmill to CaseyTrees farm. Logs came from HillEast site (formerly DC General). Being able to repurpose trees that are being taken down from a development is a really exciting opportunity for everyone involved.

Mark- One thing they've focused on is a prototype bench that the city could be interested in. Takes two slabs of wood and able to use various types of trees. Hoping to install in city parks. Benches are simple and require little cutting. Might need more reliable source of revenue to see the project through.

- Dennis: working as an instructor at school of design, getting students involved in potentially designing benches, etc. Would like to follow up on the bench idea for an outdoor classroom.
- Steve S: bench is a triple bottom line program. Saving money, reusing resources and potential for job training/job creation.
    - Earl: Not every tree is a good candidate for being milled. The program can absolutely be a foundation for a larger effort. Might be a good idea to bring in DPW in the future. Got a large amt of money for zero waste composting facility (8m). Aim for achieving zero green waste and training residents for jobs/creating more jobs. Phelps vocational high school could be interested in a partnership for wood working and adding to the benefits of the program.
    - Nathan: Forest service trying to define what urban harvest is-are they aware of the program? Does the product meet their definition of urban sustainability?
- Already supplying tree-oriented environmental education.
- Delores: There must be a good way for kids to start using this material to make money/get training in a skill-> ultimate program could involve marketplace for student produced furniture.

2015 Tree Summit 3-year Recap and Status-Earl

Might be a good time to revisit topics/outcomes. Pre-Summit there were no heritage trees. Special tree law was amended to lower the size threshold for what type of tree would become special and added the protected heritage tree status. Predicted that amount of applications requested would be increased. A little more than 800 applications each year. Shot up to 1000 and in 2017 there were around 1400. Means that larger percentage of trees in the city are regulated. Tree fund revenues are up- funding large parcel grant funding and other programs around the city.

Summit also resulted in convening of this group which has been productive.

Heritage trees-forcasted revenue from 1.3m to down to 1m. Heritage tree enjoys complete protection if over a certain size. Major problem for developers who want to take the big trees down. Legislation introduced last year to allow 1 person to get around the law. Initial challenge of implementing. In Edgewood and Brookland, which is rapidly undergoing redevelopment, heritage trees are blocking many development interests. Developers filed plans to remove all the trees. DDOT had to do a lot of work to determine which trees could be saved/removed. Working with DCRA on inserting a review of building/grating/razing permits so we can make developers aware of conflicts with their construction plans. Very challenging because agencies that issue permits already have a very slow process and don't want to be slowed down any more. Developers willing to work around trees if they are aware of the need to plan ahead. Less cooperative when their plans are already drawn up and they need to modify them for a tree. DCRA wants to set up their applicants for success. On regulatory level-public space is the last permit you apply for, and then developers find themselves in conflict with DDOT's tree policies. Everyone using a different system. To everyone's credit people are interested in getting to a better outcome.

Luke-Bulk of calls form residents are from when after ground has been broken/construction has started and they encounter a tree problem. Would save a lot of time/money/stress if everyone was aware of tree problems before construction has started.

NEW TOPICS for consideration in upcoming UFAC meetings

Steve Saari- Tree and slope overlays in the district which are very limited and a zoning issue-saying how development can occur in areas where tree canopy can be affected. Can be effective in areas in which it occurs but can be very limited. As a tool, might be broken, not used enough. How can this approach be improved? Is it valuable?

- Several layers of hoops to jump through, designation for tree and slope overlay must come from community. People might be concerned about property use/values.
- Zoning overlay-Forest hills/university terrace= the original, + one in Normanstone, with no tree restrictions.
- Zoning code-preserving park like characteristics of neighborhoods. Voluntary zoning that communities can impose on themselves. Chris Shaheen knows a lot about the zoning code-could be an interesting person to talk to at the next meeting.
- Brent will follow-up with Chris S to get more information about the zoning codes and potential for more tree and slope overlays.
- Could present opportunity to do some diffused planting

Mark Buscaino- Casey Trees thinking about long term- how much impervious surfaces there are in DC. Over time, the city is becoming more impervious. Does it make sense to talk about an impervious surface cap? Similar to setting the tree canopy goal. Already in-roads with the sustainability plan. Imp. Surface cap has a different impact legislatively—coordinating group should begin to talk about it.

- Water quality work heavily revolves around imp. Surfaces. Stormwater Regs/Green area ratio are all contributing to decreasing amount of imp surfaces. Cap might not be too far out of reach.
- Can we start looking at impervious surfaces from a Macro level? What is the city's taste for impervious surface?
- DOEE already tracking impervious surfaces with GIS. A lot of the data is already there. Trying to make gains by having policies discourage new properties from having imp surfaces.
- Casey Trees thinking of including impervious surface count in Tree Report Card.
- Sustainable DC 2.0 might also be a good outlet for including imp surface count/cap
- MS4 permit also includes language regarding imp surfaces.
- Goal setting an important part of making progress.

Dolores Bushong- How can city parking lots/imp surfaces be improved? Might be expensive but city has direct control over the areas. Do we know the percentage of district parking lots that have imp surfaces vs permeable?

Dennis Chestnut- RiverSmart program has funding for similar projects. Steve

Jeff Seltzer-Any new city lots/structures are built under the new regs. Lots of incentive for district to retrofit, just need to find the funding/stakeholders motivation for undertaking this type of work. Probably very low amount of lots with permeable pavement-but there are opportunities for other GI with imp surfaces like bioswales etc. where water drains to GI. Hard to quantify because impervious surfaces are categorized in different ways and there are so many of them.

Steve Saari-We retrofit 5 schools per year, over time that builds up. At some level we have impacted around 1/3 of the schools voluntarily. When you add everything up, around 75% of schools have reduced their runoff in some way. Can build impervious areas in ways where trees can mitigate the effect of imp surfaces.

Sally Parker- In school parking lots, stormwater is managed in many different ways and presents a challenge because of the many uses the lots/spaces are used for.

Mark: Casey Trees has been doing ground level surveys since 2001-now Earl and UFA are going to start doing those surveys.

Meeting was adjourned at: 5:00 PM