



**SF Environment**

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A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

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**City and County of San Francisco  
Department of the Environment  
Urban Forestry Council**

**MEETING MINUTES DRAFT**

**Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 6:00 p.m.  
Remote meeting via web conference**

**Refer to the “Remote Access to Information and Participation” section below for instructions.**

Council Members: Andrew Sullivan (Chair), Nicholas Crawford (Vice Chair, San Francisco Public Works), Dan Flanagan, Jillian Keller, Morgan Vaisset-Fauvel, Igor Lacan, Ildiko Polony, Pamela Nagle, Edgar Xochitl Flores, Mike Sullivan, Blake Troxel (Presidio Trust), Damon Spigelman (San Francisco Public Utilities Commission), Oscar Hernandez-Gomez (San Francisco Planning Department), Chris Fischer (Port of San Francisco) and Matthew Stephens (San Francisco Recreation and Park Department).

**Order of Business**

Public comment will be taken before the Council takes action on any item.

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call.**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Present: Chair Sullivan, Vice Chair Crawford, Member Flanagan, Member Keller, Member Lacan, Member Stephens, Member Fischer, Member Vaisset-Fauvel, Member Troxel, Member Xochitl-Flores, Member Mike Sullivan, Member Spigelman, Member Nagle, and Member Hernandez-Gomez.  
Excused: Member Polony.

**2. Adoption of Minutes of the January 22, 2021 Urban Forestry Council Regular Meeting.** (Explanatory Document: January 22, 2021 Draft Minutes) (Discussion and Action)

There was no public comment.

Upon a motion from Member Sullivan and a second from Member Keller, the minutes were approved unanimously.

(Ayes: Chair Sullivan, Vice Chair Crawford, Member Flanagan, Member Keller, Member Lacan, Member Stephens, Member Fischer, Member Vaisset-Fauvel, Member Troxel, Member Xochitl-Flores, Member Mike Sullivan, Member Spigelman, Member Nagle, and Member Hernandez-Gomez; Noes: None; Excused: Member Polony; Absent: None)

**3. General Public Comment:** Members of the public may address the Council on matters that are within the Council's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda.

There was no public comment.

**4. Discussion of the Urban Forestry Council 2019 Strategic Plan goals and priorities.** Speaker: Andrew Sullivan, Urban Forestry Council Chair. (Explanatory Document: UFC 2019 Strategic Plan) (Discussion and Possible Action)

Chair Sullivan introduced this item and asked if anyone would like to report on progress. He mentioned that the communications group has been meeting.

Member Troxel mentioned that the canopy goals group had not met but that there is new data.

Vice Chair Crawford gave an update on funding sources.

There was no public comment.

**5. Discussion of Urban Forestry Council review of development projects.** Speakers: Oscar Hernandez-Gomez, Planning Department and Nicholas Crawford, San Francisco Public Works (Discussion and Possible Action).

Member Hernandez-Gomez introduced the item and presented on the background of the issues and implementation of the new process.

Vice Chair Crawford spoke more about the revised process.

Member Troxel asked if this process could also be used for trees outside of the public right of way.

Vice Chair Crawford said that they don't have access to trees not in the public right of way, but projects are willing to include more trees in order to gain more support.

Member Hernandez-Gomez mentioned that landmark trees have their own restrictions.

Member Troxel asked if smaller construction projects have the same review process.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that they are captured in this project.

Peter asked if there is an arena where Planning would have a say.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that there are proxies for influencing what happens in open space, but they don't have direct jurisdiction.

Member Troxel asked if there are opportunities to educate property owners.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that there are, and they are building in a way to disseminate materials.

Vice Chair Crawford said that this is an evolving process.

Member Sullivan asked who is currently doing the tree impact reviews.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that FUF and Public Works provide input but that there is room for a more wholistic conversation.

Chair Sullivan said that there is a conversation around deciding on metrics that include a check by the UFC.

Member Sullivan asked if this new approach requires a change to the law.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that it does not require a change.

Peter added that there is language saying the UFC shall review projects.

Member Flanagan said that a large percentage of Street Trees are in backyards and this should be considered. He asked if there is a mechanism to require trees.

Vice Chair Crawford said that the threshold is 500 square feet.

Member Flanagan said that the fee is very cheap and asked if the requirement could be for somewhere other than the sidewalk.

Vice Chair Crawford said that it could be disputed but the fee can be used to plant trees elsewhere.

Member Flanagan asked if the Planning Department has expertise in this area and could push back.

Member Vaisset-Fauvel added that it is usually possible to add trees, but not always the cheapest.

Member Troxel asked if there is a way to alter the fee.

Vice Chair Crawford said that the fee is only meant to cover the cost of planting a tree.

Member Troxel asked if it could be based on DBH.

Vice Chair Crawford said that this would require a code change.

Member Flanagan asked about planting new trees, not replacing them.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that this process will provide better data and will capture all projects that include street trees.

Member Flanagan said that it would be great to have policy recommendations come out of this.

Member Vaisset-Fauvel asked about what if one of the projects is connected to someone on the UFC.

Vice Chair Crawford said that the Planning and Funding Committee could potentially work to develop criteria for the projects.

Member Nagle said that she likes the preimpact statement and asked how soon flagging could begin.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that it started the day before.

Vice Chair Crawford said that this will be key in keeping projects moving forward.

Peter asked Member Hernandez-Gomez about his work to have data-driven criteria.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that he would suggest keeping the criteria loose but have agreed-upon metrics.

Member Keller asked if everyone on the Council would be involved in the review process and if data would be provided.

Chair Sullivan said that major projects coming to the Council will have data presented by the project team, but it depends on the project.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that it depends what the project is being reviewed for.

Chair Sullivan asked if there is a differentiation between public and private projects.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that there are pipeline projects that are both.

Member Stephens asked if it makes sense to require a project to hire a certified arborist before it is submitted.

Member Hernandez-Gomez said that large projects generally have a landscape architecture firm.

Member Stephens said that a certified arborist would be different.

Vice Chair Crawford said that there have been opportunities for the Council to meet with the project team and make suggestions.

Public Comment via Webex:

Josh Klipp said that the lack of consideration for trees is nothing new. He pointed out the lack of requirements for legal removal and this creates incentives for illegally removing trees. He added that there was a process for changes to Article 16 to include bonds for tree protection and there is an opportunity to tie requirements to the climate action strategy. Josh said that because Planning is funded by developer fees, he isn't sure how this would work. He added that there needs to be discussions with planners around what it actually means to do replanting. Josh asked for more pushback on construction methods.

**6. Presentation on the preliminary findings and next phase of the *Quercus agrifolia* (coast live oak) study.** Speakers: Jon Swae, San Francisco Public Works and Peter Brastow, San Francisco Environment (Discussion).

Jon Swae presented on the study of coast live oak trees in the public right of way.

Peter Brastow talked about project logistics and findings.

Member Troxel said that the impervious surface around the tree correlates to crown size. He added that it might be possible to calculate crown size through photos and specialized software.

Peter said that there are some additional characteristics that could be filled in.

Jon said that they have DBH data, but not crown size.

Member Mike Sullivan that he is happy to see this data to back up claims about where the trees succeed.

Peter added that there will be additional work done by interns.

Member Keller asked where interns are being recruited from.

Peter said that he wasn't sure but that they have different levels of experience.

Jon added that one of the interns was part of a program for young professionals who grew up in San Francisco.

Member Vaisset-Fauvel asked if other cities with coastal live oaks had been contacted.

Vice Crawford said that live oaks would be planted on Arbor Day. He asked if seeds are being collected from the trees that are doing well.

Member Vaisset-Fauvel said that this would be good for genetics but said that there are other factors that would affect their success.

Peter said that reaching out to other cities would be a great idea that the project interns could work on.

Vice Chair Crawford said that looking to southern cities would be helpful.

Member Xochitl asked if this data is being collected for other species.

Peter said that there are other opportunities for this.

Chair Sullivan said that this could be used to look at ways to source better varieties or cultivars.

Member Sullivan asked how trees that failed were taken into account.

Jon said that there were examples of this or ones that were misidentified.

Member Lacan that it's very tricky to account for this without knowing the cause.

Member Sullivan asked if this data is being collected.

Member Lacan said that he would be careful in evaluating that data.

Member Vaisset-Fauvel asked if hybrids were included.

Member Lacan said that he didn't know.

Peter said that it was only agrifolia.

Member Lacan said that there are other types of agrifolia.

Peter said that the images could be shared more broadly to get more opinions.

Jon said that the SF Estuary Institute has data on other cities.

Peter said that he was joining a panel they were hosting.

There was no public comment.

## **7. Committee Reports:** (Discussion)

**Planning & Funding Committee.** Igor Lacan, Committee Chair.

**Landmark Tree Ad Hoc Committee.** Mike Sullivan, Committee Chair.

Member Lacan said that the last meeting was cancelled.

Member Sullivan said that the committee had not met because there were no nominations.

Peter added that there was a landmark tree inquiry.

Member Sullivan said the live oak on Sanchez would be a good candidate.

There was no public comment.

## **8. Staff Report.** Peter Brastow, Urban Forestry Coordinator, San Francisco Department of the Environment (Discussion)

Peter gave updates on a tour of Mount Sutro, landmark tree data, and urban forestry funding campaigns. He then asked for members to respond to his email regarding bios for UFC members.

There was no public comment.

## **9. Urban Forestry Council Member Announcements.** (Discussion)

Member Vaisset-Fauvel offered to take members for a tour of Mount Sutro.

Vice Chair Crawford referenced the house that was moved through the City.

Member Nagle said that it was great to see.

There was no public comment.

## **10. New Business/Future Agenda Items.** (Discussion and Possible Action)

Peter discussed possible future agenda items.

Chair Sullivan asked if there was another topic that Jon Swae was involved in.

Peter asked if he meant the street tree nursery.

Chair Sullivan confirmed.

There was no public comment.

## **11. Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

**The next meeting of the Urban Forestry Council is scheduled for Friday, March 26, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. In compliance with the San Francisco Health Officer's Order No. C19-07c, directing all individuals to "shelter in place", Public meetings, panels and other advisory bodies will continue on a remote conferencing basis only. Find out about upcoming deadlines, public hearings, and meetings. Search the SFEnvironment.org website archived minutes and agenda.**

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Option 1: Watch the meeting using a computer or smart device by clicking on the following link:

<https://ccsf.webex.com/ccsf/onstage/g.php?MTID=eb2d5fb412fdf8ff8ef9a205f1160e3be>

- If you are able to and would like to watch via your computer, please follow these instructions: i) Click on the link above; ii) Enter your first name, last name, and email address if desired; iii) Click "Join by Browser" (directly beneath the "Join Now" button);
- If you are able to watch via your smart mobile device: i) Download the Webex Meetings application; ii) Click on the link above; iii) Click "Join"; iv) Enter your name and email; v) Click "Ready to Join".

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Members of the public will have opportunities to participate during public comment. The public is asked to wait for the particular agenda item before making a comment on that item. Comments will be addressed in the order they are received. When the moderator announces that the Committee is taking public comment, members of the public can:

Participate over the phone by pressing \*3 (this step is very important, as it will activate the "Raise Hand" icon in the Participant window).

Depending on the number of people also in line ahead of you, you may have to wait before it is your opportunity to speak. When it is your turn, you will be notified that your line has been unmuted, and it will be your opportunity to speak. Your line will be muted again when your allotted time expires.

In accordance with Governor Gavin Newsom's statewide order for all residents to "Stay at Home" - and the numerous local and state proclamations, orders and supplemental directions - aggressive directives have been issued to slow down and reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Copies of explanatory documents are available, 1) on the Urban Forestry Council webpage <https://sfenvironment.org/about/taskforce/urban-forestry-council>; or (2) upon request to the Commission Affairs Manager, at telephone number 415-355-3709, or via e-mail at [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org).

### Important Information

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NOTE: Persons unable to attend the meeting may submit to the Committee, by the time the proceedings begin, written comments regarding the agenda items above. These comments will be made a part of the official public record and shall be brought to the attention of Committee Members. Any written comments should be sent to: Commission Affairs Manager, Department of the Environment, [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org), by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the hearing. Written public comment received by the Council will be posted as an attachment to the minutes.

The Brown Act forbids the Committee from taking action or discussing any item or issue not appearing on the posted agenda. This rule applies to issues raised in public comment as well. In response to public comment, not on an agenda item, the Committee is limited to:

1. Briefly responding to statements made or questions posed by members of the public, or
2. Request staff to report back on a matter at a subsequent meeting, or
3. Directing staff to place the item or issue on a future agenda (Government Code Section 54954.2(a).)

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The following services are available on request 48 hours prior to the meeting; except for Monday meetings, for which the deadline shall be 4:00 p.m. of the last business day of the preceding week: For American sign language interpreters or the use of a reader during a meeting, a sound enhancement system, and/or alternative formats of the agenda and minutes, please contact the Department of Environment at (415) 355-3709 or [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org) to make arrangements for the accommodation. Late requests will be honored, if possible.

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根據語言服務條例(三藩市行政法典第91章)，中文、西班牙語和/或菲律賓語(泰加洛語)傳譯人員在收到要求後將會提供傳譯服務。翻譯版本的會議記錄可在委員會通過後透過要求而提供。其他語言協助在可能的情況下也將可提供。上述的要求，請於會議前最少48小時致電 415-355-3709或電郵至[katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org)向委員會秘書提出。逾期提出的請求，若可能的話，亦會被考慮接納。

### **Acceso A Idioma**

De acuerdo con la Ordenanza de Acceso a Idiomas "Language Access Ordinance" (Capítulo 91 del Código Administrativo de San Francisco "Chapter 91 of the San Francisco Administrative Code") intérpretes de chino, español y/o filipino (tagalo) estarán disponibles de ser requeridos. Las minutas podrán ser traducidas, de ser requeridas, luego de ser aprobadas por la Comisión. La asistencia en idiomas adicionales se tomará en cuenta siempre que sea posible. Para solicitar asistencia con estos servicios favor comunicarse con el Secretario de la Comisión al 415-355-3709, o [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org) por lo menos 48 horas antes de la reunión. Las solicitudes tardías serán consideradas de ser posible.

### **Access Sa Wika**

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Individuals and entities that influence or attempt to influence local legislative or administrative action may be required by the San Francisco Lobbyist Ordinance [SF Campaign & Governmental Conduct Code §2.100, et. seq] to register and report lobbying activity. For more information about the Lobbyist Ordinance, please contact the Ethics Commission at: 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 220, San Francisco, CA 94102; telephone (415) 252-3100, fax (415) 252-3112; web site at [www.sfgov.org/ethics](http://www.sfgov.org/ethics).

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