



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
Urban Forestry Council
Planning and Funding Committee**

MEETING MINUTES APPROVED

**Tuesday, September 01, 2020, 4:00 p.m.
Remote meeting via web conference**

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

Committee Members: Members Igor Lacan (Chair), Nicholas Crawford, Dan Flanagan, Andrew Sullivan and Blake Troxel.

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 4:02 p.m.

Present: Chair Igor Lacan, Nicholas Crawford, Dan Flanagan, Andrew Sullivan, and Blake Troxel.

2. Approval of Minutes of the March 4, 2020 Urban Forestry Council Planning and Funding Committee Meeting. (Explanatory Document: March 4, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes) (Discussion and Action)

There was no public comment.

Upon a motion by Member Flanagan, and a second by Chair Lacan, the minutes were approved without objection. (Ayes: Chair Igor Lacan, Nicholas Crawford, Dan Flanagan, Andrew Sullivan, and Blake Troxel; Noes: None; Excused: None.)

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

There was no public comment.

4. Presentation on the Presidio Historic Forest. Speaker Blake Troxel, Presidio Trust (Discussion)

Blake Troxel, Presidio Trust, introduced his presentation by giving the background and goals of the historic forest understory diversification project.

Ildiko Polony had a question about leaf litter and asked if there is evidence of this having an impact on species on the floor.

Member Troxel mentioned that they are unsure, but that leaf litter does not build up as much due to moisture.

Member Crawford shared his excitement for the work featured in this presentation.

Member Troxel shared that he would like to document change over the next couple years.

Member Crawford asked how the decision was made on which trees and how many to take down.

Member Troxel shared their thinking and how to envision the ideal spacing.

Member Flanagan asked if there was any chance of the ivy coming back.

Member Troxel mentioned that there were herbicides used as well as spot removal by hand.

Member Flanagan asked what the cost was for these two acres.

Member Troxel shared that this project was done by all internal staff so the cost could be calculated. Most of the cost would have been in time spent and plants from the Conservancy's native plant nursery.

Member Flanagan shared his excitement and added that this should be shared at a full Council meeting.

Peter Brastow asked why one of the largest trees was removed.

Member Troxel mentioned that it was most likely due to concerns around structure.

Peter Brastow asked about the before and after photos that were taken.

Member Troxel confirmed that the photos were taken for modeling.

Chair Lacan asked if the team considered leaving any stumps.

Member Troxel added that some snags were left but added that he was not sure if eucalyptus is the best type of habitat tree.

There was a public comment from Susan with the California Native Plant Society. She mentioned how much she enjoyed the story of the Presidio removing invasive eucalyptus and she encourages San Francisco and the state of California to remove invasive species and replace them with native plants. She asked what it would take to remove all the eucalyptus and ivy from this plot.

5. Presentation on the 2020 Climate Action Strategy. Speaker, Silvia Pac-Yurrita, Climate Analyst, Department of Environment (Discussion and Possible Action)

Silvia Pac-Yurrita gave a brief introduction and a short background of what has previously been discussed with the Urban Forestry Council. She expressed interest in getting feedback from the group before the Climate Action Plan moves into the public outreach phase.

Peter Brastow added that this version is not much different than what was shown at the full Council meeting and asked if it would be helpful to give an overview of the different strategies.

Chair Lacan said that it would be useful to have an overview and suggested giving more detailed feedback later. He asked if the plan is framed around abatement, mitigation, and adaptation.

Silvia mentioned that everything related to climate adaptation falls under the Office of Capital Planning and the Office of Resilience. The Department of Environment looks at mitigation and the plan will be evaluating resilience. She clarified that the Healthy Ecosystems strategy of the plan has to do with mitigation.

Chair Lacan mentioned that he thinks it should be made clear that urban forestry cuts across all three aspects including abatement, mitigation, and adaptation.

Silvia agreed that trees are cross-cutting and this needs to be taken into consideration. Silvia added that she would work with Peter to find a way to share the more detailed plan with the Committee members. She then started to go through the different strategies related to Healthy Ecosystems.

Member Crawford mentioned that planting 30,000 trees is a goal coming from the Urban Forest Plan and is an unfunded mandate. The percentage of the trees which are replacement trees has yet to be determined and there will need to be discussion around the 2,000 coast live oaks goal.

Peter added that this addresses the streets and the rest of the public realm.

Member Flanagan asked what paper streets are.

Member Crawford clarified that paper streets exist on paper but are not actually paved.

Member Flanagan asked if it would be possible to ground truth the tree planting numbers that are mentioned in these goals.

Member Crawford mentioned that the capacity of empty and potential basins brings us close to 30,000 trees as a goal.

Member Flanagan asked if this includes replacement trees or if that would be 4,000-5,000 trees in addition to the 30,000.

Member Crawford mentioned the hope that the number of trees needing to be replaced goes down over time with improved maintenance.

Silvia asked if the 30,000-tree goal should be designated as new trees.

Member Crawford added that it would be better to keep it vague so that the trees do not need to be tracked separately.

Peter asked if the plan could say "30,000 new and replacement street trees."

Member Crawford mentioned that there are draft numbers that could factor into this planting goal.

Silvia mentioned that this document could be shared with Member Crawford's Department.

Member Troxel asked if there is any mention of canopy cover in this document and asked if it makes sense to include canopy cover as a goal.

Silvia added that the strategy does mention canopy cover and proceeded to introduce the next section of the plan addressing the City's urban forestry plans.

Member Troxel asked who would be responsible for the tree canopy data collection systemization.

Silvia added that they are working to determine who would be responsible for each component of the plan.

Peter added that systemizing data collection of tree canopies has been a priority of the Council.

Member Flanagan added that the Council is an advisory body and it is up to the City Departments to complete this work. He added that there should be one department that is responsible for all of the City's trees.

Silvia asked what the challenges have been.

Member Flanagan mentioned that there could have been an opportunity to have the Department of Public Works manage all the trees.

Silvia asked what other opportunities could help move this forward.

Member Flanagan asked what other members of the Committee think about this.

Member Troxel added that better decisions could be made about trees if it were up to one department.

Member Flanagan referenced a study done by Member Troxel on the Presidio's historic eucalyptus stands. He added that city departments should be taking notice and looking at how to apply it.

Ildiko Polony asked if this would cover all public open space in San Francisco.

Member Flanagan confirmed that it would.

Ildiko suggested expanding it to all urban ecosystems, beaches, and wetlands, and that this policy should have an ecosystem approach.

Silvia asked what the intermediate steps are for recommending that one department manage all trees.

Member Flanagan mentioned that there should not need to be an intermediate step because the UFC has served that role.

Silvia asked if there is a way the UFC could share these recommendations in a report or letter.

Member Flanagan clarified that the Council could put this on a future agenda and write a letter in support of these actions in the Climate Action Plan.

Silvia added that it would be helpful to have the UFC support SF Environment on this and tasked Peter with including this on an upcoming agenda.

Member Troxel mentioned that they just received LiDAR data that covers the Presidio and this data will continue to be collected and analyzed in the future. This could be a way to benefit from data already being collected.

Silvia asked what other data collection should be added.

Member Troxel said that LiDAR would be the most comprehensive and should be put on the priority list.

Member Flanagan mentioned that this data is foundational.

Silvia asked if the collaboration with Santa Clara County is open.

Member Troxel said that he found out about the data after it had been collected. The Parks Conservancy worked with Santa Clara County, but San Francisco did not know this was being done.

Peter asked if the goal should be a canopy goal or a stocking goal.

Member Troxel mentioned that it will take more analysis and time to answer this question.

Chair Lacan said that it should be stocking of street trees with stocking defined as where there is space for a tree and a tree should be there. This only covers street trees and doesn't apply in other settings.

Silvia said that this point can be flagged for further follow up. She then introduced the next part of the plan which addressed funding for nature-based carbon sequestration mechanisms.

Member Flanagan asked to clarify if this addresses city or outside funding.

Peter clarified that this is long term city public funding.

Silvia asked who the lead for this would be.

Member Flanagan said it would be Friends of the Urban Forest and the Urban Forestry Council.

Peter reiterated that we need to create a vision and then find funding for the vision.

Member Troxel asked who is responsible for storm water management and how the Public Utilities Commission funds this work.

Member Flanagan confirmed that it is done through fees and bond funding.

Member Troxel mentioned that other cities have tree programs that are funded by storm water management fees and incentives for homeowners with impermeable surfaces. He added that talking about trees as infrastructure is very important and it should be added to the plan.

Ildiko Polony mentioned that nature-based solutions point to green infrastructure.

Silvia ended her presentation by mentioning that a Word document will be circulated to the Committee for feedback.

Ildiko asked about how this relates to biodiversity and ecosystems throughout the city and where this might be mentioned in the plan.

Silvia mentioned that there is another section in the plan called Ecosystem Management that is being developed with the Biodiversity Interagency. She added that the entire plan will be shared so that everyone can see how everything connects.

Chair Lacan asked if any other members of the committee would like to make a comment.

Ildiko asked to clarify how the strategy around species selection would inform the 30,000 tree planting goals.

Silvia mentioned that she would welcome feedback on how this section of the strategy has been structured.

Ildiko asked if there is an overarching statement for the Healthy Ecosystems section.

Silvia said that she would send that to the group as well.

Chair Lacan thanked Silvia for her presentation and added that they will follow up with additional comments.

Public comment received from Susan with the California Native Plant Society. She expressed that there should be an urban ecosystem or biodiversity task force and that we need to have an overall ecosystem approach to planting rather than just focusing on carbon sequestration. Native plants used as nature-based climate solutions help biodiversity as well as human health. She mentioned that the city and the state have a biodiversity resolution and that she supports that the plan has 100% native plants.

Public comment received from Bob Hall. He stated that trees can be an unreliable source for carbon storage and that trees as a means for carbon storage are just one option. He added that natural carbon sequestration needs regenerative landscape management practices such as native trees, shrubs, flowers, and grasses and limiting pesticide/synthetic fertilizer use at golf courses. He added that bunch grasses and shrubs can resprout, and that marshland and coastal blue carbon could be the best options for carbon storage. He mentioned that the choice of trees will also affect the biodiversity crisis which is made worse by the climate crisis.

Public comment received from Morgan Vaisset-Fauvel with UCSF. He stated that soil and carbon sequestration will be difficult to accomplish with concrete around the trees. He added that the 2,000 oak trees would be planted on wider areas and that he will push to mix the trees with other oaks that

are more resilient to the changing climate. He stated that LiDAR is the way to go and that sending someone to count trees by foot would be more expensive in the long run.

6. New Business/Future Agenda Items. (Discussion and Possible Action)

Peter mentioned that at the next Committee meeting in October, Oscar Hernandez-Gomez from the UFC and Mike Webster from the Planning Department will present on the Development Pipeline. Morgan Vaisset-Fauvel will do a presentation on UCSF and his work there. The Annual Report will also be covered. The idea was also brought up of discussing one Department to manage trees.

Chair Lacan added that this idea could be brought to the Planning and Funding Committee and whether the same outcome could be achieved with a different mechanism. It would be better to have someone present, but we could look at what other models have been used elsewhere to see how other cities have done this.

Peter suggested having someone from Singapore present on this topic.

Chair Lacan also mentioned Greenprint in Sacramento as a possible presenter.

There was no public comment.

7. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

The next Planning and Funding Committee meeting is on October 6th at 4:00 p.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:

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- 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);

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Participate over the phone (see above) 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.

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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, 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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Ayon sa Language Access Ordinance (Chapter 91 ng San Francisco Administrative Code), maaaring mag-request ng mga tagapagsalin sa wikang Tsino, Espanyol, at/o Filipino (Tagalog). Kapag hiniling, ang mga

kaganapan ng miting ay maaring isalin sa ibang wika matapos ito ay aprobahan ng komisyon. Maari din magkaroon ng tulong sa ibang wika. Sa mga ganitong uri ng kahilingan, mangyaring tumawag sa Clerk ng Commission sa 415-355-3700, o katie.chansler@sfgov.org sa hindi bababa sa 48 oras bago mag miting. Kung maari, ang mga late na hiling ay posibleng pagbibigyan.

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