



JOINT PARKS/PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, March 17, 2016
City of Sammamish Council Chambers

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Planning

Larry Crandall
Shanna Collins
Nancy Anderson
Frank Blau
Philip Cherian

Parks

Hank Klein
Cheryl Wagner
Sid Gupta
Katherine Low
Stephanie Hibner
Nancy Way
Sheila Sappington

ABSENT: Eric Brooks, Brian Garvey, Glenn Bower, Doug Eglington

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Blau called the Sammamish Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS DISCUSSED: Approved 5:0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 02/18/2016: Approved 5:0

PUBLIC COMMENT: (3 Mins)

Jan Bird, 3310 221st Ave SE, Sammamish, WA 98075

STAFF PRESENT

Jeff Thomas, Director, Community Development Director
Jessi Bon, Parks & Recreation Director
David Pyle, Deputy Director, Community Development
Mike Sugg, Management Analyst
Kathy Curry, Wetland Biologist
Debbie Beadle, Community Development

DIRECTORS REPORT/WORK PROGRAM CALENDAR

Jeff Thomas, Community Development Deputy Director opened the meeting firstly by updating the Commission with a Director's report as follows: -

- Tree Regulations on website
- Enforcement – Follow through Chris Hankins

Work Program Calendar

There is no change to the current version of the Planning Commission Work Program Calendar. The next meeting will take place on 04/07/2016 discussing a Work Session on Impact Fee Deferrals Code Amendments, followed with the Storm water Updates on Comp Plan Update, KCSWDM Update, LID Code Amendments. The packet material for the 04/07/2016 meeting will consist of an updated calendar.

NEW BUSINESS

URBAN FORESTY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Kathy Curry, Mike Sugg, Jeff Thomas and Jessi Bon presented the following presentation as follows: -

THE SAMMAMISH FOREST STORY....

Our community character, our natural history.....

- The wet, mild climate in the Pacific Northwest set the stage for trees to become a significant component of the natural landscape in Sammamish with some trees getting very big and some getting very old.
- Prior to the late 1800's, huge stands of old-growth fir and cedar trees, some nearly a thousand years old, reportedly covered almost the entire Plateau.
- Logging in the late 1800's and early 1900's removed much of this primeval forest.
- Land management for timber and subsequent land development practices over the last 100 years has resulted in a less diverse, monotypic forest that is more susceptible to disease.

SAMMAMISH GROWS AS A COMMUNITY AMONG THE TREES...

- Sammamish incorporated in August 1999
- Growth continued...
- Development vs. preservation is an ongoing concern.
- The work to protect and manage our forested nature is also a long story, as long as the City's existence, and this story will continue as we journey forward in developing an Urban Forest Management Plan...



CITY OF SAMMAMISH COMMITMENT TO OUR FORESTS

The commitment to tree preservation and stewardship are found throughout the City's planning documents...

- City's first Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2003 and then updated in 2006
- 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- 2015 Comprehensive Plan update

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: TREE GOALS AND POLICIES

Environment & Conservation Element

- *Goal EC.10: Maintain and improve the City's forested character*
- *Policy EC.10.1: Preserve and enhance the City's urban forest. Use trees and other vegetation, both native and non-native, as appropriate, in all restoration*
- *Policy EC.10.2: Preserve trees on all public properties and facilities to the maximum extent possible*

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: TREE GOALS AND POLICIES

- *Policy EC.10.3: Maintain and enhance a street tree maintenance program. Use trees and other vegetation, both native and non-native, as appropriate, in all restoration.*
- *Policy EC.10.4: Encourage community residents and property owners to preserve the green and wooded character of existing neighborhoods.*
- *Policy EC.10.5: Within the City, allow off-site options for replanting and restoration where not feasible on-site in order to meet tree retention requirements, achieve tree canopy coverage and storm water capture*
- *Policy EC.10.6: Develop and enforce effective regulatory penalties and practices for unauthorized removal or damage of trees*
- *Policy EC.10.7: Prioritize restoration and enhancement of environmentally critical areas and buffers, with the aim of enhancing ecosystem function*
- *Policy EC.10.8: Consider incentivizing retention of trees on existing lots, prioritizing clusters and/or a continuous canopy with trees on adjacent lots when feasible*
- *Policy EC.10.9: Promote regulatory tools that take into consideration the case-by-case context-sensitive nature of tree retention and canopy coverage*
- *Policy EC.10.10: Create and support a robust and comprehensive Urban Forestry Management Plan starting in 2016*
- *Policy EC.10.11: Develop incentives to prioritize the retention of high value trees, including heritage and/or landmark trees*
- *Many more tree policies in the Environment & Conservation element...*

PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

VISION:

- Maintain safe places to play and recreate.
- Develop a parks and recreation system that meets diverse community needs.
- Provide recreational opportunities that promote healthy lifestyles and a sense of community.
- Serve as a steward of the environment to preserve and protect our natural resources.

MISSION:

- Community well-being through diverse recreational opportunities and environmental stewardship.

CORE VALUES:

- Stewardship
- Integrity
- Sustainability
- Teamwork

- Inclusiveness

Parks Goal #5:

- Maintain Sammamish parks and recreation facilities to ensure longevity of assets, a positive aesthetic and sensory experience, preservation of habitat and natural systems, and safety for park patrons.

Objective P.5.1:

- Preserve existing forested parks and open space areas by implementing management practices to ensure the long-term health of the urban forest. Monitor tree health, forest structure, and the occurrence of invasive species in parks and open space areas throughout the city. Plant trees in parks and open space areas to improve the overall tree canopy.

IMPLEMENTATION OF TREE STEWARDSHIP POLICIES & COMMITMENTS

- Tree retention regulations adopted March 2005
- Tree regulations updated October 2015
- Updated tree regulations are consistent with adopted Comprehensive Plan policies
- Continue on-call Certified Arborist
- 1,042 native trees planted in parks during 2015 and 2,000+ in 2016
- Member of King Conservation District Urban Forest Health Management Working Group

TREE REGULATIONS - 2015

- As an outcome of the recently updated Comprehensive Plan, new tree regulations were created for increased tree retention and replanting.
- Three tree size categories are regulated:

Significant Tree	A non-invasive tree in healthy condition that is: Coniferous 8” or larger; or Deciduous 12” or larger
Heritage Tree	22” or larger
Landmark Tree	32” or larger

TREE REGULATIONS - 2015

- Established tree removal limits by lot size for R-1, R-4 and R-6 zoned lots:

Lot Size	Percent of significant trees allowed to be removed per 10 years	Number of significant trees allowed to be removed per year	Cumulative number of significant trees allowed to be removed per rolling 10 year period
< 1/4 ac	50	2	6
1/4 ac - 1/2 ac	40	4	12
1/2 ac - 1 ac	30	6	18
1ac - 2 ac	20	8	24

> 2 ac	10	10	30
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- Created separate removal limits for R-8, R-12, R-18, O, NB and CB zoned lots: No more than 4 significant trees/year, and 8 trees/5 years
- Established retention requirements for development proposals that vary based upon where the proposal is located or how it is zoned:

Area	Retention Requirement
EHAs & Areas within EHNSWB draining to no-disturbance area	50%
Pine/Beaver Lake drainage sub-basins	50%
R-1	50%
R-4, R-6	35%
R-8, R-12, R-18	25%
O, NB, CB	No Minimum. Replanting doubled if less than 25%.

TREE REGULATIONS - 2015

- Landmark tree preservation is incentivized
 - 200% credit w/continuous canopy
 - 150% credit w/screening/landscaping
- Heritage tree preservation is incentivized
 - 175% credit w/continuous canopy
 - 125% credit w/screening/landscaping
- Onsite recreation space (ORS) incentive
 - 45% retention w/continuous canopy = 50% ORS reduction
 - 40% retention w/continuous canopy = 25% ORS reduction

ANY SIGNIFICANT TREE REMOVED MUST BE REPLACED

- Landmark tree removed = 3 replacement trees
- Heritage tree removed = 2 replacement trees
- Significant tree removed = 1 replacement tree

Monetary penalty established for illegal tree removal or damage

- \$1,500 per inch of tree diameter removed or damaged in violation of Title 21A
- Remediation also required for unlawful removal or damage

Next Steps:

URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING

WHAT IS AN URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN?

- It is a management plan - not a regulatory document
- Establishes community vision & goals for the city's forest
- Inventories existing forest characteristics
- Identifies challenges and opportunities
- Evaluates existing forest management practices

- Recommends direction & actions for establishing, protecting, maintaining & sustaining a healthy urban forest
- May focus on trees on public lands, or can also include a community stewardship component for trees on private lands

POSSIBLE GOALS

- Document urban forest asset
- Explore establishing canopy coverage goals
- Evaluate forest health goals
- Contemplate habitat connectivity goals
- Develop & promote community stewardship goals
- Consider sustainable city forest management & maintenance goals
- Explore land acquisition & preservation goals
- Establish an urban forest program

INVENTORY

Baseline snapshot of the City's urban forest. Possible metrics include:

- Percentage canopy cover citywide
- Percentage evergreen vs. deciduous cover and number
- Tree size, condition and age
- Species diversity
- Number and percentage of trees located on public land (parks, ROW etc.) compared with private land
- Street tree inventory
- Invasive species, disease, hazards
- Others

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

CHALLENGES:

- Disease & invasive species
- Habitat fragmentation
- Surrounding land use change
- Declining canopy cover
- Reduced species diversity
- Climate change
- Resources for sustainable forest management

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Establishing a vision, goals and a plan will guide focused success moving forward
- Education and outreach
- Partnerships
- Resource management planning

IMPLEMENTATION & MANAGEMENT

- Baseline inventory of public trees
- Integrate City's canopy cover into GIS
- Long-term planting program
- Public outreach and education on tree regulations and stewardship
- Tree planting & maintenance guidelines
- ROW Street Tree List
- Resource management program and practices to support successful implementation

KEY PARTNERS

- City Parks, Public Works & Community Development Departments
- Parks & Planning Commissions
- City Council
- Neighborhoods
- Schools
- WSU Cooperative Extension Forestry
- UW Forestry
- King County Conservation District
- Forterra
- Washington Native Plant Society
- Others

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Citywide online survey
- Open houses
- Tree Talks – Forest Walks led by staff, Commissioners, Councilmembers and community members
- Farmers Market Information & Engagement
- Additional outreach as necessary
- Suggestions?

PATH FORWARD

- Council Introduction: Summer 2016
- Develop & Refine Project Scope: TBD
- Consultant RFQ: TBD
- Planning & Parks Commissions: TBD

URBAN FOREST VISION

- Natural heritage & community character
- Wildlife habitat & ecosystem connectivity
- Stormwater mediation, water & nutrient cycling
- Economic values & real estate values
- Shade
- Recreation
- Carbon sequestration & climate change mitigation
- Beauty
- Education

HOPES AND DREAMS, FEARS & CONCERNS COMMISSION INPUT WITH STAFF.

Staff took individual statements from each Commissioner directly and made a record of what their vision for the Urban Forest would look like. These statements include their hopes & dreams, their fears and concerns as follows: -

Fears & Concerns

- Quality & Quantity of Water
- Will City be able to Support/implement plan?
- Plan sits on shelf
- Plan not communicated
- Overreaching/lack of focus
- Outcomes – Need to be Fair & Balanced
- Can't enforce Plan
- Development continues and no change in preservation strategy

Hopes & Dreams

- Clear Assumptions about climate change
- Blanca water use & tress
- Increase canopy over today
- Assist with Stomrwater Management
- Planning for priority for trees
- See trees as public asset – other plans consider this.
- Education pieces needed – value of trees, collaborative effort with builders
- Goal in line with Issaquah (47-51) Goal of 51%
- Preserve Diverse PNW Species, increase diversity
- Concrete action items
- UFMP is communicated – say “wow” when enter City – The Urban Forest Speaks
- Get a lot of good input – Look @ delayed items and include moderation
- Gather data. Prioritize date to gather - which are most important - high quality data
- Historical element – longtime residents.
- Urban ecosystems connectivity plan to be included.
- Consideration of reforestation – incentives for Homeowner increase number of trees
- Address where & what to replant
- Education about tree value evergreens and deciduous
- Are there preliminary actions that wer can tak to address park tress/stormwater?
- Land acquisition strategy
- Sammamish model City due to greenery
- Get people exited to plant reees volunteers
- Very strong element regarding forest on private property - dedicated staff members to work with Home owners and staff in City
- Consider “tree bank” for extra small trees.
- Communication strategy – branding
- Tree Stewards

- Consider Tree City Designation
- Incorporate trees into Town Center & communicate this
- Work with school districts to talk to kids who will talk to parents – they will inherit
- Incentives for tree planning to large land owners.
- Active Tree Activities – Zip line Engage Youth
- Comprehensive species list, ratio of what to plant in Parks for health of forest, location – specific
- Look at habitat value of trees and understory
- Address street trees – types, address possibility of conifers
- Visualization
- “Right plant – Right Place”
- Disease management plan – prioritize
- Continuing education resources
- Nature resource center in Park

Success in 30 years

- Mitigate change for the good took action, made the trees better
- Vibrant, health forest in spite of climate change. Every citizen be able to interact with forest.
- The example – Sammamish
- Sense of the wild forest protected places to experience nature
- City has some of the best forested areas
- Protect nature
- Sense of Community & Pride in the forest
- Experience the woods
- Soaring Eagle being to the City of Sammamish
- What is version 5 yrs etc.
- Put staff into it.

Public Comment – Agenda (7 Minutes)

David Hoffman, on behalf of the Master Building Association
 Mary Wicktor, 408 228th Avenue NE, Sammamish, WA

Motion to Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm

Chair: Frank Blau & Hank Klein

PC Coordinator: Debbie Beadle

(Video Audio record 03/17/2016)

Roberts Rules of Order applies: [RONR (10TH ed.), p. 451, 1. 25-28]