



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

Monday May 11, 2015 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

Present: Vice Chair Cathy Bleier, Sheauching Cheng, Steve Price, Mike Srago
Council Liaison Jan Bridges and Staff Liaison Stephen Prée were also present

Absent: Members Ralph Boniello, Michael Charlton, Karen Christian,

2. Comments from the Public on non agenda items:

City residents Yan Linhart and Robert Hrubec each introduced themselves and provided verbal information regarding their own professional backgrounds that may be relevant to serving on the Tree Committee.

3. Report from the City Council Liaison:

Councilmember Bridges reported on the recent City initiated option for green household energy sources offered through Marin Clean Energy and she noted that El Cerrito leads many cities with its high number of households that have enrolled in the Deep Green 100% sustainable energy option.

She reported on the City's acquisition of the Madera property (that links existing City open space in the Hillside Natural Area) which was made possible with community led fundraising efforts and a donation by the Trust for Public Land.

The Council Liaison discussed a new massage business law that returns control over such businesses back from the State to the City; Council has enacted a moratorium on opening any new massage businesses in El Cerrito.

Ms. Bridges reported with an update to the housing element: residents are asking Council to consider a rent control measure in light of the fact that rents have increase 30-40% over the last few years.

Finally, Ms. Bridges extended an invitation to all Tree Committee members to please join her, City Council and others at the Annual Boards, Commissions and Committee Appreciation Dinner on Friday May 29 at the community center.

4. Action Items -

Motion to adopt the minutes from April 13, 2015: Price, 2nd Srago, passed unanimously.

5. El Cerrito Urban Greening Plan Study Session :

City Community Development Analyst Emily Alter made a presentation to the committee on the Draft Urban Greening Plan. She reminded the committee that she made her first presentation to the Tree Committee regarding the plan in 2013. She reviewed the goals of the plan: environmental sustainability, environmental stewardship, community identity/sense of place, active living/ active transportation, economic vitality, urban livability and she reviewed several sections of the plan via power point slides.

The committee discussed trees that define El Cerrito streets, coordinating plan reviews between the Tree Committee and the Design Review Board for the application of a consistent plant palette, and designs that provide for landscapes that the City can maintain into the future. Cathy Bleier noted that neither the City Urban Forest Management Plan nor the City Landscape Management Plan was noted in the Urban Greening Plan.

Ms. Alter informed the committee the plan must be adopted by Council in August and she will accept comments from the Tree Committee up to July 3, 2015. She said that the plant palette is the most flexible part of the document. The committee recommended that the ad-hoc City Tree List committee review the plant palette, report back at the June T.C. meeting and submit final T.C. comments by the end of June.

Action: Sheauchi Cheng made a motion that the Tree Committee recommend that the Urban Greening Plan include reference to a City tree protection ordinance, 2nd Steve Price, passed unanimously.

- 6. Report from the City Arborist-** Prée reported briefly that the San Pablo Avenue Green Spine project manager has secured a nonprofit contractor, Urban Re Leaf to plant mitigation trees for the project. Prée relayed that the EEMP grant webcast is Tuesday May 12 and the Annual Boards Commissions and Committee Appreciation Dinner is May 29 at the community center. He also reported that in answer to the Committee's inquiry, the City Clerk informed him that there is no age restriction for committee membership.

7. Revised Draft City Tree List

The ad-hoc subcommittee members reported on the addition of tree shape graphic images and the development of an introduction to the draft list, additional species review continues.

8. Calendar of Events and Work Plan Update

This item was deferred to next meeting

9. Adjournment - 9:10 p.m.