



Public Works Department

# MINUTES

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

**Monday January 11, 2016 7:00 p.m.**  
**El Cerrito City Hall**  
Hillside Conference Room  
10890 San Pablo Avenue

### 1. Roll Call :

**Present:** Chair Cathy Bleier, Vice Chair Ralph Boniello, Michael Charlton Robert Hrubes, Steve Price, City Council Liaison Janet Abelson and Staff Liaison Stephen Prée; Tree Committee applicant Mary Torrusio was also present for a third consecutive meeting.

**Absent:** Members Karen Christian and Yan Linhart.

### 2. Comments from the Public on non agenda items:

Ralph Boniello reported his observations on the condition of the Coast Live Oak trees in the Hillside Natural Area; he predicts severe mortality due presumably to the historic drought.

### 3. Report from the City Council Liaison:

Councilmember Abelson reported on notable actions taken by City Council:

- a.) Comprehensive Smoke Pollution Protection Ordinance adopted October 7, 2015
  - b.) Minimum Wage Ordinance adopted November 17, 2015
- Discussion: enforcement of the smoking ban; tree budget

### 4. Action Items -

Deferred to February

### 5. Report from the City Arborist- Prée reported on: a.) The completion of the Arlington Park hazard tree removal and pruning contract b.) Upcoming tree removal in Canyon Trail Park and in the future Dorothy Rosenberg Memorial Park c.) Recent tree failures at the Community Center (WCCUSD Eucalyptus) and on Richmond Street (City street tree Hawthorn sp.) d.) update summarizing the 2015-16 Tree Budget.

### 6. Tree Committee Activities, Calendar and Work Plan Update

- A. Tree care workshop- Steve Price reported briefly that a workshop date had been set for March 12, 2016 at 10:00 at the Library.
- B. Revisions to the City Tree ordinance: ad-hoc subcommittee member Mike Srago said that he would be unavailable to participate for an extended period of time; Robert Hrubes volunteered to serve on the ad-hoc subcommittee.

- Discussion: Chair Bleier suggested that the critical need for a revised Tree Ordinance is the issue of enforcement. She raised the question of how a revised Ordinance would relate to the City's San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and other City Plan standards and planning permits, i.e. would a revised Ordinance cite the standards that the adopted City Plans require such as percent canopy cover or tree spacing. Prée recommended that the Ordinance refer to the specific City Plans for standards. Interested public raised the question of a Solar energy component to the Ordinance and suggested review and recommendation by the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC). The ad-hoc will meet further to make recommendations that will include how to best solicit public input.

C. California/El Cerrito Arbor Week activities: Prée reported on the California ReLeaf Arbor Week Grant notification that he received for the first time on January 11, 2016. The grant will award up to \$5000 for trees to successful applicants: [http://californiareleaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016\\_Arbor\\_Week\\_Urban\\_Forestry\\_Grant\\_Guidelines\\_and\\_Application.pdf](http://californiareleaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016_Arbor_Week_Urban_Forestry_Grant_Guidelines_and_Application.pdf)

- Discussion: the Committee supported applying for the grant if it is feasible; Chair Bleier and Vice Chair Boniello volunteered to work with Prée to investigate report back. The Tree Care Workshop date may be affected if planting were scheduled on Saturday March 12.

**7. Announcements and future agenda items:** no announcements

Future Agenda Items:

- Arbor Week Planning/ Grant
- Revising the City Tree Ordinance
- Tree Care Workshop
- Work Plan
- Officer elections

**8. Adjournment- 9:07 p.m.**