

Tree Commission minutes
April 20, 2010

Present: Jim Larson, Christine Penney, Ethan Perry, Judy Gibbs, Kelly Fleissner, Margi Preus, Brian Allen

Absent: Rick Gitar

Guest: Councilor Jeff Anderson; Doug Stevens

meeting called to order 7:10

Sky Harbor

- Jim Larson gave an update to the commission and Jeff Anderson of Sky Harbor issues. He reviewed the 3 alternatives under consideration in the Sky Harbor scoping document
- Alt: 1: Do nothing. This is not really considered an alternative as it would shut down the airport.
- Alt 12: Alt. 13 Both of these alternatives have untenable numbers of trees cut in the transitional zone, if they have to cut trees in the transitional zone
- concerns:
- poor soil can't support stressed trees. topping and cutting edge trees will stress trees
- "edge effect" in which trees on the edge are cut, puts the rest of the forest at risk
- functioning as a white pine forest now, w/ a variety of aged trees
- taller trees can't tolerate being topped; can't take more than 30% of crown w/o killing trees

Tree Ordinance

- Ethan reported that Kelly and Ethan met with City Attorney, Bob Aseleson
- tree inspector: needs more thought, since it was written w/o complete understanding of authority of city forester; Mr. Aseleson will work on this
- construction activities affecting trees on public property (Sec. 35-29): wording sloppy, needs to apply to 3 situations
- planting and damaging vegetation (Sec. 35-28). Q: is having a written agreement a burden on Kelly? A: yes.
discussion centered on making this process easier: having a form letter; having info on-line about planting boulevard trees
- Registration of tree care firms (Sec. 35-XX) discussion about avoiding fly-by-night tree services; also EAB will need to be regulated by some regulations/registration of tree care firms. Potential of being licensed by the city (\$90.00?). Ethan wonders whether we should wait to add this when we know more about EAB and what kinds of things will be required. Jeff A. recommended that we include it.
- Heritage Trees (Sec. 30.2) There was concern that a neighbor could designate someone else's tree a heritage tree, but that has been corrected.

- Cutting trees for views (Sec. 35-29.1) If people are cutting trees for views, they would have to contribute to the tree fund to replace the trees they've had cut. Cost might be prohibitive? 7 significant trees/\$2500
- Kelly talked about the fact that some places in the city (Skyline parkway is an example) people request trees to be cut to improve their views
- Ethan brought a tree replacement requirement document from UDC, and we discussed the need to follow the same requirements. The issue boiled down to, do we want to charge people for cutting aspen, since it'll grow back on its own? Since permission is not generally given to people to cut special trees (pine, oak, etc.) Answer: no.

Skyline Parkway Vegetation and Viewshed Management Plan

- Doug Stevens, guest
- Question: some of the western overlooks: how far back would it be necessary to clear in order to restore the views? Jim Larson said there were some places that were more feasible than others. Part of the plan should be laying out specific places where clearing could be done, and giving thought to what should be planted in there, so that it doesn't just grow right back again.
- something that should be addressed in this document is treating invasives; re-establishing these overlooks with low growing native species, as much as possible.
- discussion about clarifying priorities
- Doug wanted advice about what plants to list as replacement vegetation. Kelly has a list/partial list that he will email to Doug

UDC/

- Ethan brought up the fact that the UDC does not include the option of developers contributing monetarily to the tree fund, rather than replanting.
- also the option of people clearing for views on their own if they use hand tools?

EAB plan – Judy and Kelly reported on their work on the EAB plan

- try to get a plan ready by May 17 (Arbor Day)
- Christine and Margi will read and edit between May 11-17
- Ethan asked what happens when EAB is here and is found on private property, what happens? Property owners will be informed that the trees have to be removed.
- Ethan also brought up Kimberly Sannes' idea of property owners being assessed for boulevard trees (an opt in situation)
- emeraldashborer.org – best website

March minutes approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50