



City of Oregon City

625 Center Street
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-657-0891

Meeting Minutes - Final

Natural Resources Committee

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers

1. Call to Order

Chair Neeley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Present: 7 - Dorothy Dahlsrud, Trent Warness, Bill Clark, Nancy Broshot, Jerry Herrmann, Matt Kuhl and Doug Neeley

Staffers: 1 - Kelly Reid

2. Agenda Analysis

The agenda was adopted as presented.

3. Presentation

Susie Peterson, Columbia Land Trust, and Nikki West, Audobon Society of Portland, gave a presentation on the Backyard Habitat Certification Program. They gave a background on the Columbia Land Trust and the Audobon Society. They then discussed why backyards mattered, raising the bar on landscaping, mission of the backyard program, program history, overview of the program, certification levels, and certification criteria including removal of invasives, planting of natives, managing stormwater, supporting wildlife, pesticide reduction, and partnerships with landscape professionals. They discussed the accomplishments of the program and total program impact. They would like to expand the program into the Oregon City area starting in spring of 2018. They explained what the NRC could do to help.

Chair Neeley suggested they make this presentation to the City's neighborhood associations and/or the Citizen Involvement Committee as well as the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

Committee Member Herrmann discussed the rehabilitation work at the Environmental Learning Center. He had some good demonstration sites for this program as well.

Committee Member Dahlsrud thought this program could promote the heritage tree program and preserving tall trees in the City.

There was discussion regarding a list of nurseries who sold native plants and plants without pesticides as well as feral cat issues.

4. Public Comments

Rick Winterhalter, Oregon City resident, discussed needed changes to the street tree ordinance. He thought there were inequities for how the ordinance was applied and he wanted to see the trees thrive. In many new developments street trees were not being

planted on every property. Those that did have a tree were responsible to take care of them. It was expensive for property owners to maintain street trees and they did not have the proper training to take care of them. He thought money could be set aside for homeowner care of trees. His two street trees needed to be removed or extensively pruned, but it was costly to do so.

Paul Edgar, Oregon City resident, discussed the digging at the tow of a landslide on Gonong and 4th Avenue and how it might loosen a large rock at the top of the hill and damage houses on the way down. The digging was to improve a driveway, but it was the City's property as it was unimproved right-of-way. He had talked to the City Attorney about who would be responsible if the rock did fall, and he said the City had the people sign a waiver so the City would not be held at fault. However, this could be a safety hazard and it was on City property. He suggested the code be reviewed regarding this issue.

Chair Neeley suggested Mr. Edgar take this to the Canemah Neighborhood Association.

5. Old Business

Ms. Reid discussed options to one of the barriers to heritage tree designation, requiring an arborist report. These included the Parks Department paying for one report per year for trees on park property, seeking grant funding, assistance from Clackamas Community College once the arborist program was established, and revising the code to remove the requirement. Staff did not recommend removing the requirement because there needed to be an objective professional assessment so the property owner could make an informed decision about the designation and know the future maintenance costs.

Chair Neeley suggested looking into a Metro Enhancement Grant and discussing it with Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette.

Committee Member Dahlsrud recommended using the college students for designating heritage trees at Mt. View Cemetery or the oak grove on the College grounds. There were some sites that already had trees protected through land use and had arborist reports and all they had to do was contact the property owners. There were also City street trees and groves that could be designated as well.

6. New Business

Ms. Reid passed out the NRC work plan and asked if there were any comments.

Chair Neeley suggested the NRC review the work plan and discuss it at the next meeting.

7. Communications

Committee Member Dahlsrud reported on the Oregon City Parks Foundation clean up and mulching on the Promenade. Oregon City Brewery would be hosting a fundraiser for the Foundation on Tuesday. The City of Portland was starting an Urban Tree program and she would bring that information to the NRC.

Committee Member Herrmann discussed a letter of support he had drafted that would be from the NRC regarding designating Water Board Park as a significant natural and

geologic area. There was consensus to submit the letter.

Committee Member Herrmann reported on the Oregon City Business Alliance's creation of a task force to review and advance ideas for economic development in areas along Oregon City waterfronts and riverscapes. He asked if someone from the NRC would like to serve on the task force. The first meeting would be on November 1.

Chair Neeley said stream signage would be installed soon. The Greater Oregon City Watershed Council had made signs for 12 locations. The Public Works department would be providing the posts and installation.

Ms. Reid gave an update on the Canemah Trail. An interim trail alignment and a permanent trail alignment had been identified. It would go before the City Commission in December.

8. Future Agenda Items

Committee Member Herrmann wanted to invite Rick Winterhalter to give an update on recycling and resource conservation strategies.

Chair Neeley suggested holding a work session with the head of the college arborist program.

Committee Member Kuhl suggested an update on the Newell Creek Canyon project.

9. Adjournment

Chair Neeley adjourned the meeting at 8:52 PM.