

City of Milwaukie
Milwaukie Park and Recreation Board (PARB)
MEETING MINUTES
Milwaukie City Hall
October 28, 2014

Members Present: Bob Cooper (Chair), Lisa Gunion-Rinker (Vice Chair), Tony Andersen, Lisa Lashbrook, Ray Harris, and Lynn Sharp

Absent: Mike Miller (City Council liaison)

Staff/Visitors: Steve Butler (City staff liaison), Jeroen Kok (North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District staff liaison); Dion Shepard, Co-Chair, Historic Milwaukie NDA.

Minutes

A motion was made by **Member Anderson** and seconded by **Member Gunion-Rinker** to accept the minutes from the July 29, 2014 and August 26, 2014 meetings; motion passed unanimously.

Update on Four Parks Master Planning Project

Mr. Kok described the schedule of public meetings next week, and said that Lango-Hansen, the project consultant, would be presenting revised draft master plans, based on comments made at the first set of public meetings. The upcoming meetings will be the final public ones for Balfour and Bowman-Brae Parks. Kronberg Park's public meeting is the second of three scheduled meetings, with three options to be presented at it; other issues will be discussed, including those related to access to and from McLoughlin and use of Railroad R.O.W. For Wichita Park's 30% design drawings project, playground equipment options will be presented at the November Linwood NDA meeting.

Continued Discussion about Tree City USA and Similar Programs

A. Presentation by Charles Ray, Urban Forester, Vancouver, WA's Urban Forestry/Public Works Department

Mr. Ray started his presentation by providing some historical background about Vancouver's Urban Forestry Program, which was first enacted in 1963 after the large Columbus Day storm. Acceptance into the Tree City USA program occurred in 1989, with the Urban Forestry Program starting in 1995. A tree Conservation Ordinance was adopted in 1997, which was then revised in 2006 after a Tree Canopy Study and Concept plan was adopted in 2003. The Urban Forestry program was reorganized under Public Works/Surface Water Management, when an Urban Forestry Management Plan (with a neighborhood-oriented tree canopy map) was made part of Vancouver's Comprehensive Plan.

The City of Vancouver calculated that it has a citywide average tree canopy of 18.6 % city average, with a goal of increasing it to 28.1% by 2030 (and eventually 40% in the long-term). When looking at the question of Why Canopy Loss, the answer was individual tree removal by private owners; loss to disease,

storms, etc. To achieve an increase in ROW tree canopy, the City's Urban Forestry program is planting 800-1,000 trees/year, in partnership with Friends of Trees. Vancouver has an Urban Forestry Committee, which is made up of 7 members appointed by City Council; one of whom is a Parks and Recreation Board member. The Urban Forestry Program has three goals:

1. **Maintain and Preserve Existing Trees**
2. **Encourage Stewardship and Education/Public Involvement**
 - NeighborWoods program; tree talk workshops; special events (Arbor Day celebration; and Old Apple Tree Festival); awards programs; volunteer program; witness tree program (memorial tree program)
 - Awards Program
 - Mac Award – recognizes individuals, organizations, and businesses with a positive impact on trees (annual)
 - Silva Bolds Award – honoring citizens who had gone to extraordinary measures (Once every 6-7 years)
3. **Increase Tree Canopy within the City**
 - Emphasis on creating partnerships!
 - Friends of Trees
 - NeighborWoods projects
 - Friends of Trees – 4 neighborhood planting events/years
 - Individual volunteer projects (plantings and events such as proper tree pruning techniques)
 - Contractor plantings during site development

Mr. Ray provided more details about Vancouver's Heritage Tree Program (under goal 2), which are listed below:

- Preserve, recognize and inventory – currently, there are 27 trees or groves officially recognized by the City (done by the Tree Conservation Commission)
- Wait until there are 6-7 trees; public process; done annually (in January)
- Nomination process
 - Tree in good conditions
 - Meets one or more of criteria (distinctive in size, shape, location, age, or cultural value)
 - Property owner must agree with nomination

Member Gunion-Rinker asked about how many commissions there are in Vancouver? There is an Urban Forestry Commission and Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; the others involved in tree preservation are non-City sponsored civic organizations. **Member Lashbrook** expressed surprise at the low number of heritage trees. **Mr. Ray** responded that there are several potential reasons why, such as: the process makes people wait until there are 6-7 trees are ready for consideration; getting property owners permission is often difficult; and not all trees are approved (for example, the Commission may not approve "repeat" tree species). Finally, if there is a dispute among neighbors, then a tree may not be approved. In response to a question, **Mr. Ray** said there are 64 neighborhoods in Vancouver.

Member Gunion-Rinker asked about the role of Friends of Trees, with the response being that they are involved, including help in developing a list of street/ROW tree types, along with a tree list for plantings

on private property. **Member Sharp** asked if the list focuses on native trees only? For new development, the City strives for a mix of both natives and non-natives; it does not specify evergreens vs. deciduous. **Member Sharp** asked if the City has its own nursery? **Mr. Ray** replied that it did in the past, but it was not cost-effective. It is better to issue a list to the tree brokers, and then have them find the trees. **Member Harris** asked if Vancouver's program has any say over what an individual could do with his/her own tree? The answer was: (a) If a SF lot and cannot be subdivided, then no; and (b) If a parcel could be potentially subdivided, however, then it would be covered and a permit would be required. **Member Gunion-Rinker** asked about Vancouver's education program. They hold a 6-week program in the fall, with workshops every Thursday, with representatives from various groups and industries presenting on different topics, and Saturday "in the field" sessions (on such topics as tree identification and proper pruning techniques. **Member Gunion-Rinker** said that such a program in Milwaukie would be a good place to start. **Mr. Ray** mentioned there are also TreeTalk workshops that are open to the public, and added that the OR Forestry Program, Tree City USA, and Friends of Trees are all good resources.

B. Short Presentation by Parker Mullin, Land Use Intern, Johnson Creek Watershed Council (JCWC)

Mr. Mullin said that the JCWC is supportive of cities establishing programs to encourage tree preservation and that they have worked with Friends of Trees. He reviewed the research report that he had written, on behalf of the City of Milwaukie, which compares three cities' tree programs – Portland, Vancouver & Gresham. **Mr. Mullin** stressed the importance of education & advocacy, and gave the example of "Tree Liaisons" in Portland.

The PARB members discussed some different options about next steps, including Canopy "Study," Heritage Tree Program, arborist assistance, outreach and education, Tree City USA (\$2/capita requirement, Arbor Day celebration, Tree Board, and Tree Code). **Member Anderson** said he could get Kristin Ramstad, OR Dept. of Forestry, to provide assistance, when the time is right. He then asked what the canopy percentage is, with the answer being that it is currently unknown. **Member Sharp** estimated the City's canopy at @ 20%. **Member Gunion-Rinker** noted that some significant trees are coming down, with six major trees having been removed just last week. Regarding Tree City USA, **Mr. Ray** recommended that Milwaukie start out with the minimum dollar amount, so that future increases can be used to apply to that Program's "Growth Award." **Member Sharp** asked if in-kind services could be counted. **Mr. Ray** replied yes, and that tree plantings capital project (note: such as for Riverfront Park and/or LRT) could be used as the dollar match for Tree City USA. He also said that use of trees are a LIDS-eligible activity, which is reason why Vancouver's Surface Water Management fees can be used for the City's urban forestry program. **Member Sharp** asked if the City could use the Parks District's money as a match. **Mr. Miller** suggested that the PARB should prepare a program proposal, develop a line item for Tree City USA and work with the Budget Committee to get it funded. **Mr. Butler** asked how easy it was to get cooperation from tree pruning maintenance companies. **Mr. Ray** said it is important to build a relationship with them, which helps them not be cited for a violation.

Member Anderson asked about the PARB's next steps, with **Member Lashbrook** suggesting that the PARB form a subcommittee to discuss options, such as Tree City USA. There was general consensus to do so, and **Member Sharp** that she would coordinate such a meeting.

Ballot Measure

Mr. Kok pointed out that Election Day is one week away; NCPRD has been providing education and that the Park Board candidates have been out, meeting with people.

Park Maintenance Review

Member Gunion-Rinker: Ardenwald Park is the same – picnic tables destroyed; Water Tower Park – the “Octopus tree” has been removed, so she asked why? Jeroen will follow up with District’s Maintenance Supervisor.

Member Lashbrook: Homewood Park: There is a large tree with a widow maker branch, two trees seem to be dead, and there is lots of ivy everywhere. Scott Park: concrete trail still has moss on it, tripping trails, a small widow maker, plus some dead plantings. Dogwood Park: Lots of concerns, because it is in really bad condition; there is a lot of garbage, a broken step; and beer cans and cigarette butts. There are also two dogwood trees that appear to be dead. **Ms. Shepard** reinforced that there are lots of invasive species in Dogwood Park.

Member Sharp: Wichita Park looks fine; North Clackamas Park – on the far west side, there are some noxious weeds blooming near the creek; otherwise, it looked good. She expressed concerns about North Clackamas Park Master Plan and asked if there are plans to replace the picnic shelter and expand the parking lot. **Mr. Kok** said those discussions happened before he started with the District, and that there is no funding to do that type of work.

Chair Cooper: North Clackamas Park: The bark chips are replaced, but it always gets spongy; eventually, it may need to address. Century Park: Generally, looks good, but the wood chips have been kicked away and the tarp under the swings is ripped.

Next Meeting

Scheduled for Tuesday, November 25, with everyone saying they could make it.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by **Member Harris**, seconded by **Member Anderson**; motion passed unanimously.