

City of San Diego
Community Forest Advisory Board

MEETING MINUTES
August 13, 2008
City Administration Building

- 1) **Convene:** Vicki Estrada, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:50AM.

- 2) **Present:**
Members – Patrick Caughey, Gail Roberts, Jon Becker, Karen Davis, Dan Simpson, Victoria Heithaus, Stephen Lamprides, Mary Johnson, Tershia d’Elgin,
Guests -- Guy Preuss (Skyline/Paradise Hills CPG), Chris del Riego (Ebers St. resident), Bethany Fee (Environs), Anne Fege (San Diego Fire Recovery Network).
City Staff – Drew Potocki, Tony Gangitano, Velmo Watson, Jeff Harkness.

- 3) **Approval of Minutes:** Approved unanimously. Roberts/Becker

- 4) **Chair’s Announcements:**

- 5) **Discussion Item(s):**
 - a. Vicki recently gave the Community Forest Advisory Board power point presentation to the Park & Recreation Department board. The response was very positive with improved communication between City Street Division and Park and Recreation. As an extension of this discussion point, concern was expressed that the City General Plan and Community Plans, where they pertain to urban forestry, were not being reviewed by the CFAB. The chair directed that Tony Gangitano coordinate with Developmental Services to make sure that the tree advisory chair is on the list for review of the General Plan. Additionally the chair will determine how to be on the list for Community Plans review.
 - b. CFAB board member attendance and procedures were discussed. It was the group consensus that if a member could not attend a meeting, no efforts to include them in the meeting, such as placing them on a speaker phone, would be permitted.
 - c. The draft *Urban Forest Project Reporting Protocol* was created to account for green house gas reductions from urban tree planting projects. The draft can be reviewed at <http://www.climateregistry.org/tools/protocols/protocols-in-progress/urban-forest.html>. According to Anne Fege, this is a very complex program. The time to get engaged is now. If San Diego is to get involved with this or any protocol, it must be credible. Drew Potocki added his concern that funds obtained through carbon credits should come back to the Urban Forestry program and not go into an unrelated program. Other board members expressed concern that the math and formulas were vague and thus of limited value. All attendees are encouraged to review the document and forward comments to Vicki.
 - d. It was noted that there is need for a written guide which would specify information that groups or individuals should have if they wish to make a presentation to CFAB. Whether the presentation is to designate a heritage tree or remove trees, a process must be set. For tree removal requests, the presentation should include such information as what is the reason for

tree removal, how does removal benefit the city, what will be put in place of the tree and what is the position of the community planning board.

6) **Action Item(s):**

a. Dr. Chris del Riego, who resides at 2115 Ebers Street, presented his case to designate an avocado tree on his property as a heritage tree. The tree is described as a Reed variety, 63 ½ feet tall and producing 2.3 tons of fruit in the past two years. He stated that the tree is historic in nature because it was believed to have been planted around 1938-42 at a time when avocados were considered exotics and well before the Reed avocado was commercially produced. It possibly is an early developmental sapling. It is located in the back of his property with the canopy extending over his and the adjacent lot. In the past, his neighbor complained about the tree, but all issues have been resolved by having the tree trimmed and by his on going efforts to pick up fruit that falls from the tree. According to Velmo Watson, the neighbor has agreed to all remediation efforts. Additionally, a professional arborist has deemed the tree to be 'safe' in all respects to include the canopy and roots. A motion to approve designation of the tree as a heritage tree passed unanimously. D'Elgin/Johnson. It was noted by Drew Potocki that, as a result of heritage designation, an easement will be placed on the property deed. Documents to that effect would be sent to Dr. del Riego.

b. The draft paper titled *Citizens for Responsible Wildfire Risk Management: Statement of Recommendations* was distributed to attendees. The document was developed by the representatives of many community groups that are concerned about the current San Diego brush management program and its impact on our canyon lands. According to Anne Fege, the canyons have many values. Once a canyon area has been cleaned slick, it will cost \$50K/acre to restore. The choice of thinning canyons versus slicking them should be evaluated. A major consideration is whether thinning a canyon area reduces fire danger as effectively as slicking. Attendees are asked to review the document and send comments to Vicki ASAP. The group will be asked to vote next month on whether the CFAB will support the recommendations. It will be an agenda item for next month.

7) **Reports:**

a. Staff Reports

- Drew Potocki, Street Division Urban Forester: The Professional Tree Care Association Conference will be held 22-23 August. Drew will present one class to the group. Day two will include a bus tour from Del Mar to Balboa Park. <http://www.ptcasandiego.org/media/PTCA2008Flyer.pdf>
- Michael Marika, Park and recreation Dept. Arborist:
- Velmo Watson, Code Compliance Officer:
- Tony Gangitano, Development Services Dept., Senior Planner: The area water crisis was a major topic of discussion at a recent City Water Dept. regional board meeting. The issue was raised about planting native trees as a way to save water. It was noted by Drew that the issue should be drought tolerant trees – not native trees. There is concern that the Water Dept. is developing an ordinance that has the potential to impact what trees can be planted. Drew plans to review the approved street tree list to increase the percentage of drought tolerant trees listed. An additional concern was raised about the size of trees permitted along streets and that the size should relate to the space available. This issue will be on the agenda for next month.

8) **Referrals to Committees:** (none)

9) **Public Comments:**

a. Beth Fee requested that, at a future meeting, the decision by CFAB to recommend against removal of two trees adjacent to the Academy of Our Lady of Peace be reviewed. It was determined that there was precedent for such a review.

10) **Next Meeting:** Second Wednesday of the month, 11:45AM – 1:15PM, CAB12A

11) **Adjourned:** 1:30PM