

## **Sustainability Report for 5-6-'19 Greater Valley Glen Council Board Meeting**

Report by Joanne D'Antonio, Sustainability Representative, GVGC

### **Budget and Finance Committee – Consideration: Mayor's proposed budget 5-2-'19 9:00 City Hall**

**Adel Hagekhalil Dir. BSS:** Request funding for tree inventory and urban forestry management plan

**Greg Spotts BSS Sustainability:** Add \$1 million to \$1.8 million for unimproved medians for maintenance;

discuss project app to notify public after streetsweeper has passed to increase available parking

**Councilmember Koretz:** Adjust tree trimming to remove less canopy to mitigate heat island effect; advocate saving trees instead of replacement in sidewalk repair; request UFD work with DWP to stop tree hacking; time tree trimming to avoid nesting season.

**Greg Spotts:** Can't stop year-round work but inspects for nests.

### **Tree Summit LA 4-26-'19 Hosted by Streets LA 9:30-3:30 Grace E. Simons Lodge Elysian Park**

(Invitational gathering of Tree-connected individuals)

Adel Hagekhalil of newly branded Streets LA (formerly Bureau of Street Services) initiated this event as "a call to action to work together to put the urban forest back together." Board of Public Works Vice President Cecilia Cabello advocated for equity and BSS Chief Sustainability Officer Greg Spotts reported 55 people added to care for City's trees and advocated using the Dudek Report as a road map.

At a breakout session on street trees Portland Chief Forester Jenn Cairo described her city's tree hotline with immediate response. Street trees are only removed there when dead, dying or dangerous. Fees for healthy tree removal are assessed by the diameter of the tree. Tree planting is followed by robust watering schedule utilizing trucks with below ground watering wands. Property owners are responsible for sidewalk repair and are required to meander or ramp rather than remove trees. Portland has education classes, including proper tree pruning, and involves the community as tree stewards. All tree 12" diameter are protected even on private property.

Board of Public Works President Kevin James introduced Mayor Garcetti who spoke of restoring Urban Forestry budget to pre-recession levels, planting 90,000 trees, and conducting a tree inventory. The Mayor moderated the guest advisory panel:

Matt Wells, Public Landscape Manager, City of Santa Monica

Carla Short, Superintendent, Bureau of Urban Forestry, City and County of San Francisco

Stan Oka, Urban Forestry Administrator, City and County of Honolulu

Kevin Hocker, Urban Forester, City of Sacramento

Jenn Cairo, City Forester & Urban Forestry Division Manager, City of Portland

**Sacramento:** tree giveaways include locating appropriate site for tree. If two tree species look alike and one is protected, both are protected. Identifies as City of Trees. Trees are a "phantom power plant"

**San Francisco:** widen sidewalk into street to give trees space. "Enraged" public to raise awareness; Nov '16 passed dedicated funding stream for trees

**Santa Monica:** planning for warming – diversity of species and age of trees in a given area. Plant double number removed. Young tree survival is 80%, which is higher than most cities.

**Portland:** use media to get public support

**Honolulu:** City Council and Mayor involved in allocating resources to maintain trees; removal is felony

What to do to move forward –

Hagekhalil: work together with stakeholders

Participants: need tree inventory and Urban Forest Management Plan; invoke penalties as deterrents (ACE); higher price for tree removals

Wells: LA should break into management districts

Tim Tyson, Chief Forester, LA Urban Forestry Division: try pilot program of Neighborhood Council area as a maintenance district; decide tree value and go beyond our current protected trees; culture has to change since 90% of urban forest is on private property; leaves on the ground are mulch, not litter; know tree risk.

### **Community Forest Advisory Committee 4-4-'19 1:00 p.m. City Hall BPW conference room**

There was no quorum and Chair advised two attendees from Neighborhood Councils to draft their nomination letters to be appointed as CFAC Reps or Alternates.

Dennis Gleason, Policy Director for Councilmember Buscaino presented 19-0302, a motion to request a report to allow for a parcel tax, based on the open space on a property, to be used for parks facilities. Joanne D'Antonio questioned why the large accumulation of Quimby funds could not be used for this purpose, and the reply was that the requested report would indicate if these could be used.

David Miranda of Urban Forestry Division (UFD) indicated equipment was being rented for UFD crews. So far this year Citywide: 16,549 trees trimmed, 878 dead trees removed, and 520 stumps removed. A CFAC member questioned pruning that was not to ISA standards on N. Broadway and Ave. 20.

Adel Hagekhalil, Director of Bureau of Street Services indicated tree planting for shade has to be done by corridors, not in single locations, to allow better efficiency for watering. There will be an invitation-only Tree Summit on April 26. (Joanne D'Antonio is invited).

Steve Dunlap from Rec and Parks (RAP) said park trees are trimmed to discourage rats and homeless people. One April 27 there will be an Earth Day event to plant 100 trees in NoHo Park. They are removing 400-500 dead trees from Elysian Park, primarily caused by the shothole borer. RAP got a \$1.5 million grant to complete their tree inventory using Davey Tree to conduct the work. RAP's budget is \$2,600,000/yr (less than Public Works but with the same amount of trees and land).

Jennifer Pope of Mayor's office reported that the opening for new City Forester position has been extended into May. The position is exempt from Civil Service and will have staff support.

Steven Box of DONE reported problems in getting tree removal notifications from UFD. The timing of these notices is under review because 3 days is insufficient response time for Neighborhood Councils.

The issue of stake removal on newer trees that no longer need staking was brought up. UFD indicated that it is okay for the public to remove these, or they can call 311 or UFD to make a request.

### **Tree Canopy Report Event at Tree People 4-12-'19 10:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m.**

**(a wide representation of the tree-focused community was present, including UFD and CFAC)**

Presentations were made based on the tree canopy data Tree People, partnered with the LMU Center for Urban Resilience, collected, utilizing spatial analysis developed by the University of Vermont. Our canopy is 25% but there is unequal distribution depending on the part of the region, e.g. canopy in Vernon is 1% and in Duarte 84%. Data needs to be communicated to policy makers. It was suggested that fines be placed on developers for removing trees utilizing the appraised value of the tree. Mike Galvin, a presenter from Save a Tree Consulting Group in Baltimore, indicated that in other cities "in lieu" fees have had perverse outcomes. Better tree preservation policies are recommended to prevent removal of large or heritage trees (Washington D.C. and other cities do this.) Ecosystem services need to be calculated and utilized in any mitigation efforts. Andy Lipkis, founder of Tree People, said we need to become "pre-responders" to save our tree canopy.