

Sustainability Report for 10-7-'19 Greater Valley Glen Council Board Meeting

Report by Joanne D'Antonio, Sustainability Representative, GVGC

Posted on GVGC website under City Reports: <https://www.greatervalleyglencouncil.org/special-reports/>

Community Forest Advisory Committee 10-3-'19 1:00 p.m. City Hall BPW Conference Room – quorum

Rachel Malarich, City Forest Officer: Making rounds, meeting with Council offices, working on species selection for future planting, promoting planting of coast live oak trees.

Steve Duprey, David Miranda, UFD: Urban Forestry has better funding now, hiring more staff, doing tree watering and planting. Discussion of offer to replace second “blitz day” (pothole repair) with tree care day in which each NC gives list of smaller tree care items like tree stake removals.

Patrick Whelan, Planning Dept Discussion of problem enforcing protected tree ordinance. Amendment to add two trees to it forwarded to Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee.

Michelle Trujillo, CAO Did tree preservation cost benefit analysis and determined it is more cost effective NOT to remove a tree when repairing sidewalk – all alternatives more cost effective. Formal report to be issued.

CFAC voted to give list of priorities to City Forest Advisor.

CFAC voted to write a letter (to be made public after it is sent) to BPW regarding preservation issue stemming from proposed woodland removal on Laurelcrest in CD2.

CFAC to send letter to BOE reiterating that healthy trees should not be removed until long overdue EIR for sidewalk repair program is complete. Rebate period has been reopened.

CFAC question why BOE requires larger driveways than other cities, resulting in tree removals.

Congress of Neighborhoods City Hall 9- 28-'19

Workshop: Bringing LA's Green New Deal To Our Neighborhood Councils: Sustainability/Resiliency
Panelist Joanne D'Antonio, Chair and Founder of the Trees Committee of the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance, explained procedure for objecting to a proposed tree removal.

Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance Trees Committee 9-11-'19 noon teleconference

9 members attended.

Jane Demian (Eagle Rock) brought up problem getting needed maintenance for a special new tree planted in her area. There was no watering etc. planned for after two years.

Isabelle Duviervier (Venice) brought up issue that trees are not getting replanted when parkway size is deemed insufficient.

Diane Zogran (Studio City) brought up that in Sherman Oaks eleven 70-foot liquidambar trees were recently removed for sidewalk repair; then BOE decreased the parkway size and enlarged driveway approach, thereby limiting size of replacement trees. When parkways are less than 36” in diameter no new tree is planted on site.

It was reported BPW President Kevin James wants to decrease time allowed before tree removal is approved to 2 weeks. NCs are asking for a larger window – 30-60 days to allow Board weigh in.

Jef Carpenter reported that he was able to get UFD to deny a ficus tree removal request on La Brea.

Jane Demian reported that she was able to get UFD to deny a tree removal request in Eagle Rock.

Discussion of very severely pruned liquidambar trees on Nagle that likely will not survive – some neighbors very upset and others not so much. International Society of Arboriculture says maximum should be 10-12%, but UFD went a lot farther with this pruning, requested by some residents concerned about dead limbs, and was featured on CBS local news. It was reported that Councilmember Koretz asked for seasonal pruning to prevent compromising trees pruned in hot weather, but Greg Spotts at Streets LA said that the City is too large to only prune seasonally.

Trees on Magnolia were heavily skirted at the wrong time of year and flowers removed, though trees were not “butchered”. Trees Committee members feel a better approach would be to only remove dead limbs during hot weather. Trees always present some level of risk but the ecosystem benefits can outweigh the risk.

Ileana Wachtel reported that neighborhood councils don't always have adequate level of understanding of a tree situation – she is working with the Brentwood NC which needs help with understanding why the coral trees on San Vicente should be preserved despite UFD's interest in removing them.

Diane Zogran reported on the BPW tree removal hearing for one of the last the coast live oak/walnut woodlands at 11472 Laurelcrest. The neighborhood is organized against its removal for a McMansion. The property owner is attempting to bypass CEQA and deeming the hillside as By Right and then using the Protected Tree Ordinance, despite the fact that there is no room to viably replant the removed trees at 4:1. Furthermore the consulting arborist misidentified the coast live oak trees. There is risk to neighbors' trees.

Trees Committee members feel Dudek Report issues are not being addressed. City Council appears unable to get Mayor to get behind tree preservation.