



Urban Forestry Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 ❖ 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

NOTICE: This meeting was held pursuant to and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3708.2 and state and local legislation adopted to allow for continued government operation during the COVID-19 declared emergency. All participating members will be present at this meeting through electronic means. All members of the public may view this electronic meeting via the meeting link listed above and in the City's website calendar.

Attendees

UFC members: Amy Crumpton, Stephanie Lamore, Mike Nichols

UFC City Staff Liaison: Charles Prince

City Council Liaison:

UFC Student Representative:

City Staff:

Members of the Public: Jennifer Anderson, Allison Miller

Other guests: One City Center Developers - Pete Crawford, Andrew Painter, Kevin Tankersley

- 1) Call to Order** - the meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Amy Crumpton.
- 2) Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice** - was read by Amy Crumpton.
- 3) Roll Call** - meeting participants identified themselves.
- 4) Approval of the [December Minutes](#)** - the December meeting minutes were approved.
- 5) Public Comments** - there were no public comments.
- 6) Staff Updates and Informational Items:**
 - a) [City Council Calendar Update](#): Charles highlighted two items:

- Founders Row II - A third submission was submitted and he stated it did not address much of what our comments were about, but there has been a lot of internal City staff discussion about special exception projects.
- A Virginia Tech Smart Cities presentation is scheduled for Feb. 22. The Smart City technology program is designed to bring cutting-edge transportation solutions to Falls Church, including support for autonomous vehicles, adaptive lighting, and parking garage utilization indicators. These solutions are designed to reduce pollution and traffic congestion and improve public safety,
- Amy asked Charles if there have been discussions with the City Council on greenspace guidelines. Charles felt that the best approach would be for the City Council to provide specific guidance for the amount of greenspace desired for projects, which the UFC can then apply in our review of new projects. He intends to initiate a broader, collaborative conversation with key City staff which will be followed by a discussion with the City Council.

b) UFC Staff Update. Charles reported that he received an application from a candidate with strong credentials who interviewed for the position, was offered a position, and verbally accepted an offer made today. He identified a second candidate who had applied for a different position, yet has a strong professional background that would benefit the crew leader position and the interview is scheduled for 20 January. A third position remains open.

c) UFC Liaisons to Boards, Committees, Commissions. Amy reviewed the list of liaison and tracking relationships the UFC created last year in its Ongoing Priorities and Responsible Members document and highlighted some edits she made. She asked the UFC members to review the responsibilities they agreed to manage and note any changes required or other areas they are available to assist with.

d) Arbor Day Planning and Tree of the Year Nominations

- Arbor Day Planning - The application has been submitted. Charles has not yet received the official notice from the Arbor Day Foundation of its approval. The state has approved it already. The City's activities typically are the Saturday before the state's Arbor Day (which is April 23, 2022). With COVID concerns ongoing, Charles expects this may be a smaller event, if it is held in-person. He is considering producing another video rather than holding an in-person that may have to be canceled. The final component of Arbor Day planning is be the proclamation. Amy asked when the programming will need to be announced. Charles indicated the beginning of March is the timeframe for communications about the event and its program. Historically, in-person events have included speakers, music, announcement of the tree of the year, a tree planting and, depending on the selection made by the UFC, seedlings of the tree of the year. This event is held in conjunction with the Village Preservation & Improvement Society. Responding to a question regarding the potential for doing a memorial tree planting at this event, Charles noted that while the City's parks are fairly full, an alternative might be to plant a tree on school property. Charles will investigate this option as time permits. The UFC agreed that a smaller group event in-person in addition to livestreaming the event would be a good path forward. Stephanie

suggested inviting some residents who received street trees, to keep them engaged in urban forestry priorities, to attend. The UFC supported this idea.

- Tree of the Year Nominations. Amy provided the list of past Trees of the Year and noted that the UFC needs to finalize the 2022 Tree of the Year selection at the February meeting. Mike Nichols suggested that the UFC consider the American Yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea*) which feature beautiful white flowers that attract honey bees and other pollinators in the Springtime and the leaves turn to a gorgeous yellow color in Autumn. This is a native tree. Amy asked each member of the UFC to think about this suggestion or present other options in advance of the February meeting when a decision on the 2022 Tree of the Year will be made.

e) UFC Standard Maintenance Agreements. Charles indicated the agreements are mostly completed. He wants to take back the management of some streetscapes with special exceptions. Because this project is not mission-critical, it was placed on the back burner. Amy asked for additional detail about what he means by taking streetscapes back. Charles replied that it would include an internal staff discussion about identifying budget funding to spruce up at least the downtown area in order to improve the streetscape. Charles indicated that, at this moment, there is no need for the UFC to be concerned about this and when this discussion advances internally, he will review the details with the UFC.

7) Current Business

a) [One City Center](#) (Feb 23 deadline for comments) Presentation by Developers. Highlights of the presentation relevant to the UFC's scope included:

- Specific requests to the City Council and Planning Commission by the developer include:
 - Special exception for mixed use redevelopment
 - Special exception for an increase in building height from a maximum of 75 feet to a maximum of 115 feet
 - Amendment to the Special Warranty Deed
 - Site plan approval for new development
 - Site plan amendments for George Mason Square improvements
- Streetscape - existing trees that are not dying or diseased will be retained. There will be about 1,400 linear feet of new streetscape upgrades through the site. The Developer will replace brick sidewalks on Broad and Washington to update the look. Opposite of Mr. Brown's park, the Developer will add a mid-block crossing walk, which will be timed so as to not block vehicular traffic. Another crosswalk would be added on Washington Street adjacent to the parking garage entrance.
- Open space calculations - 15.6% of the site is designed as landscaped open space. The amount that will be publicly accessible is 30% of the site. Of that, 30% is green open space. That equates to roughly 9% that would be greenspace open to the public while hardscape is 21% of the site. Of the private open space, the Developer calculated this as 12% of the site. Tree canopy coverage is 11% of

the site. With respect to the park, the last, best proposal was recently sent to the City for review and comments.

- Stormwater management - The Developers outlined the multiple steps they will take to manage stormwater, which includes: evaluating the site and minimizing the amount of impervious surfaces in order to minimize runoff; layering in water quality devices to treat the water coming off of the site (this would include vegetative roof, bioretention and manufactured filtering devices to address the water quality issues such as phosphorus load for the site; addressing the water quantity which will be managed through an underground vault which then controls the rate of runoff to the 1-, 2- and 10-year 24-hour storm events. The developers added that they are implementing a larger vault with a slower release rate.
- Questions and Discussion:
 - Stephanie asked for clarification regarding the landscape open space, if that is all greenspace. Aside from the park, which is separate from the building, of the landscaped open space, how much is greenspace vs. hard surface? The Developer clarified that their use of the term landscaped open space includes only the planted areas; it does not include furniture, pools or other items that often are included in the term landscaped.
 - Mike noted that in the UFC's previous review of the plans, members were concerned about the amount of greenspace that is private and accessible only to tenants (e.g., on various levels of the building including the rooftop) vs. to the public and emphasized that the UFC members would prefer to see developers significantly exceed, not meet minimums with respect to tree canopy and greenspace.
 - Amy inquired about stormwater management. Will the rooftop planters be connected to the stormwater system? The Developers confirmed that they will be. She followed-up asking if the system can be used to water on-site plants, trees, etc. The Developers noted that the system is not a simple catch and release system as the water goes through a cleaning process before release. Amy emphasized that the UFC would like to see the Developer use water on-site, even though that's not a state requirement. The Developer will look into this.
 - Amy inquired if the inclusion of the park and its greenspace is, in part, what is required to meet LEED Gold? The Developer noted that their LEED lead for the project was not on today's call, yet their understanding is that the park, alone, does not get the project across the finish line for achieving LEED Gold. Amy noted that if the park goes to the City, as planned, there potentially could be impacts to the LEED Gold certification.
 - Amy raised the UFC's concern about the significant amount of glass and the potential impact on wildlife (e.g., birds). Specifically, one corner of the building has two glass corners which can create a significant collision risk for birds. LEED and some municipalities are changing standards and

regulations requiring modifications to prevent all glass construction that could impact birds and other wildlife. The Developer appreciated the comment and will look into this.

- Amy asked if this building allow pets, specifically dogs. The Developer confirmed it would allow dogs. They are looking at including a dog wash in the garage and a dog park on the 5th floor of the building. They are aware of risks to landscaping with dogs relieving themselves and have considered options such as gates and raised planters.
- With respect to the park, Amy stressed that alternatives to turf in the park would be desired (e.g., adding more trees instead of turf). Additionally, it would be better to have the trees internal to the park and not just around the edges as there is concern about visibility with cars seeing pedestrians with the location of the street trees. Additionally, a rain garden or other feature could provide better results.
- Stephanie inquired about the green panels in the Woonerf design and, specifically, what are the green panels composed of. The Developer stated they would be artificial vegetation panels to screen the garage.
- Stephanie asked if any of the green spaces the developer is proposing will be artificial turf, or will it all be living grasses, trees, etc. The Developer responded that there is no artificial turf proposed; all will be living plantings.
- Charles asked if there will be a vehicle access point in the revised proposal for the park, specifically for a truck and a chipper. The Developer affirmed there will be vehicle access that meets the dimensions Charles provided. Charles liked and appreciated the solution the Developer provided.
- Amy asked if the 11% of canopy coverage includes the park? The Developer confirmed the 11% calculation is the entire area of the plan, which includes the park. The Developer will provide to the UFC the percentage of canopy coverage if the park is subtracted from the calculations.
- The Developer will follow-up to provide in writing the specific metrics shared in their presentation.
- Amy will prepare the UFC's comments in one document for review and consolidation at the February meeting and invited UFC members to follow-up with any additional thoughts or concerns.

b) [UFC Annual Report Draft](#) - Stephanie offered to assist with the formatting of this report.

Amy recommended including an addendum that summarizes the state of our urban forest (e.g., number of street trees, calculation of structural value). Charles agreed this could be of value. He will ensure Amy has access to Tree Keeper. He added this data could be emphasized in Amy's verbal report to the Council. This report should be finalized in late February or early March and could be tied together as we approach Arbor Day. Amy asked if the Greenspace Analysis charts should be included and Charles agreed they should if the updated charts are finalized in time. Mike asked if there would be merit in

emphasizing that while there has been enhanced communication with Committees and City staff in 2021, there is still work to be done to ensure that the recommendations from the UFC are implemented (e.g., in site plan modifications). Amy asked members to send any further comments or suggestions as soon as possible.

- c) Climate Change and Mitigation Energy Action Plan. Kate Walker is leading this initiative and this project will require a quick turnaround on this as she wants to send it to the City Council by June. Amy indicated we will need to prepare a draft of our thinking on this subject and noted that Kathy Costa captured comments from the last UFC meeting. This is an opportunity to provide solid content that will help the UFC achieve its objectives, as there currently is not a lot of *clear* documentation (e.g., tree management plan) in one place. Amy added that UFC members can work together in teams of two to draft aspects of this and she will start to pull some documentation together so the UFC can provide content for this plan.
- d) Greenspace Analysis Resources - tabled until the February meeting.
- e) Recruiting New UFC Members - Mike asked if there will be an announcement in the Falls Church News Press, or other venue, highlighting the need for new UFC members. Charles and Amy noted that two residents of Falls Church, Jennifer Anderson, Allison Miller, attended this meeting and have expressed interest in joining the UFC to support its work.

8) Future Business

- a) Counting Tree Plantings (My Tree Counts)
- b) Green Infrastructure Plan/Standards
- c) Biophilic Cities
- d) UF Management Plan
- e) UFC Standard Maintenance Agreements
- f) TOTY Revision
- g) UF Code Changes
- h) Outreach / Publicity
- i) Memorial or Commemorative Tree Designation Process
- j) Stormwater Task Force Coordination

9) Adjourn - the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

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