*DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ENCINITAS URBAN FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING*

*March 28, 2024, 5:30 P.M., 505 SOUTH VULCAN AVENUE*

**CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS**

Committee Chair Mark Jenne called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

Present: Committee members Mark Jenne, Linda Schnieder, Brian Bishop (tardy), Richard Brocchini, Stephanie Piccirelli

Absent: Brad Lefkowits, Matt Palumbo

Also Present: Katrina Burritt, Dudek; Melissa Lane, City of Encinitas; Matt Widelski, City of Encinitas; Lisa Adams, City of Encinitas; Francesca Carr, City of Encinitas; Chris Magdosku, City of Encinitas; Brad Roth, Resident; Mark Wisniewski, Resident

There being a quorum present, the meeting was in order.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS / NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Bernard Minister is a homeowner on 1202 Melba Road. He has an application in nominating some trees on his property as heritage trees. He brought in a video of some owls that live in one of the trees but just wanted to share some of the wildlife that enjoy and benefit from these trees.

Another resident noticed some trees are being taken down on Leucadia asked a question on what is being done regarding nest checks. Katrina Burritt can speak on behalf of what Dudek does regarding normal pruning activities and nest checks are done as prior to work. Regarding any Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects Matt Wildeski states that before a project starts and if trees are being removed they bring it to UFAC and have a the city arborist takes a look at the trees. Also prior to a contractor coming onsite there is always a biologist onsite that performs surveys and does nest checks if the tree is being removed. Noise surveys are also performed to make sure there aren’t nesting birds in the vicinity. However can only speak on city trees/projects.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

Two items have been removed from the agenda, request to plant a tree permit and heritage tree celebration subcommittee.

**AGENDA**

1. REVIEW AND APPROVE DRAFT MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 25, 2024

SPEAKERS: Committee reviewed the meeting minutes from January 25, 2024. Mark Jenne also wanted to make note that the special meeting minutes from February 28, 2024 will make it on next months agenda.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** Committee member Mark Jenne moved to approve the meeting minutes from January 25, 2024, and Stephanie Piccirelli seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: 4; Nays: 0; Absent: 0, Abstain: 0

2. 101 COAST HWY CIP- SEGMENT C

SPEAKERS: Lisa Adams is the city project manager for the streetscape project. The project is in Leucadia and goes from Jupiter to La Costa. The project will include putting in new large storm drains, new curb gutters, new sidewalks, wide bike lanes with buffers on each side, and some additional parking. The project will also include 145 new trees. Originally 22 trees were going to be removed for the project improvements but found 5 new trees that need to be removed, the trees with conflict with the curb line or conflict fire department safety standards. The trees that are being removed will be replaced. One resident asked if any native trees will be planted to replace the trees that are being removed. Matt Widelski stated that the trees were selected by a landscape architect through the city’s Parks department and used the list of city approved trees. The median that is being put in needs to be narrowed in order to make room for emergency vehicles, cars, and bike lines with the buffers and additional parking that is being put in. The sizes of the trees that are being put in vary, either a 24inch or 36inch box. Lisa Adams left some streetscape cards for anyone to take an scan and find out more information about the project or reach out to her or Matt directly.

COMMENT: None.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** No action needed, just informational for the committee to be aware of.

3. LITTLE OAKS ORDINANCE DRAFT PROPOSAL

SPEAKERS: Brad Roth and Mark Wisniewski presented a presentation on Encinitas Scrub Oaks. Both Brad and Mark went around town to take photos of oaks that are around Encinitas. Showed some Quercus dumosa that are located at Park Place HOA. These trees are shrubby and don’t get real big. Not sure if the HOA is aware of the value and rarity of these trees. A protection ordinance would be nice to help protect them. The second set of Quercus Dumosa are located on the Manchester Preserve which are protected. The third set is located on Encinitas Blvd east of Willowspring, this set has a different species of oaks Quercus x acutidens and Quercus berberidifolia. You can see these just off of Encinitas Blvd when right by willosprings. There is a tree there that is 22.8 ft tall. These trees have a variety of leaf shapes. The next set of trees is located off of the corner of Via Del Cerrito & Encinitas Blvd and there is a tree there that is approximately 29.9 ft tall. Species that are in this area are Quercus x acutidens and Quercus berberidifolia. The set of trees are located on El Camino Real South of Home Depot. Many of the oaks were taken out when Home Depot was built. The species that are in this location are Quercus x acutidens and Quercus berberidifolia. One thing to consider is that the City is looking to establish a native plant ordinance and this might be a great thing to fold into the ordinance as opposed to having a stand alone ordinance. Especially since budgeting is being developed, having an educational component, and having a demonstration garden. The native plant ordinance is being worked on at the council level and council member Joy Lyndes has been heading it. The committee would like to invite a member from the native plant ordinance group come and present the native plant policy to UFAC.

COMMENT: Brad Roth in support of agenda item 3. Mark Wisniewski is neutral towards agenda item 3.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** Invite a representative from the native subcommittee to the next meeting so they can speak on the native plant policy.

4. PALM WEEVIL UPDATE

SPEAKERS: Mark Jenne explained that there was a letter that was sent on behalf of UFAC to offer council its recommended action regarding the palm weevil issue within the city. The letter went to council last night, Brian Bishop explained that council accepted UFAC’s recommended action. There is only one heritage tree that is being protected at this point, however they may consider protecting a tree if it’s a heritage tree. However, if the city notices there are a lot of trees that are becoming heritage status just to get protected then the protection might get shut down. The heritage tree process might possibly be used as protection.

COMMENT: None.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** None.

5. ARBOR DAY 2024 UPDATE

SPEAKERS: Melissa Lane gave the group an update on Arbor day. Banners and posters are being put up right now, the dedication plaque has been ordered, rentals for canopies, tables, and chairs have been ordered, and food has been ordered. Last week the planning group got together to go through the Arbor Day Shed and check the supplies so we can see what we have and what we still might need for the event. The next planning meeting is scheduled for Monday April 1st. The week of April 8th there is a final onsite meeting so everyone who is involved understands the event layout and where things need to go. Arbor Day is Saturday April 13th. Katrina Burritt provided a planting map of the park, it will be printed out and have it on display at the Cardiff Library and bring it for the Arbor Day event. There are 8 species that are not native species and the rest are native species. Parks wanted to select species that would do well at the park. There are 14 new tree sites that have been added to the park. The rest of the spots were either vacant sites. Linda Schneider had a question in regards to the city’s street tree program, would like to advertise it at Arbor Day. Resident Carol Parker stated that around 2022 Chris Kallstrand and John Ugrob worked on the planting permit, but when the city website got updated the information got lost. Linda wants to have a sign up list at Arbor Day so people can sign up if they are interested in having a tree planted in their neighborhood. Once the website gets updated with the street tree program it might be a good idea to have link a list of suggested trees to be planted, the current list has palms on it. Maybe get the street tree list updated and link it to the website. Linda will put together a simplified interest list and bring to Arbor Day. Can also take what’s on the street tree program door hanger and make a poster to bring to Arbor Day. Also council wants to do more education regarding the South American Palm Weevil, Katrina Burritt thought at the UFAC Booth we can have a South American Palm Weevil Poster showing residents what it is.

COMMENT:

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** None.

6. PARKING LOT SHADING REQUIREMENT

SPEAKERS: Francesca Carr is a representative attending on behalf of the City’s Planning Department and wanted to come give the committee a perspective on the city’s municipal code on the requirement regarding parking lot shading. There is not a lot of restrictive requirements when it comes to existing developments. Planners are focused on new developments, when a new parking lot is being put in, its required to be landscaped (at least one 15 gallon tree for every 5 parking spaces and spaced throughout to provide the maximum amount of shade). However, after a project is built and a tree dies, the planning department is not involved. Resident Mark Wisniewski suggested that the planting areas be widened to allow for larger trees to be planted. The city’s current ordinance does not have a shading requirement. If a new development was coming in and planted no trees but had solar panels that would not be permitted. The planning commission can recommend that staff recommend an ordinance change if its noticed that a current ordinance needs improvement or is ineffective. The UFAC can recommend to the Planning Department that this ordinance needs to be revisited.

COMMENT: None.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:** Mark Jenne to research parking lot shade requirements and bring some ideas to the next meeting.

7. HERITAGE TREE APPLICATIONS

SPEAKERS: Bernard Minister is the homeowner at 1202 Melba Road and submitted a heritage tree application for four trees that are on his property. He gave an overview and the history of the trees for the committee to have some knowledge. The committee then began the application process. Reminded the committee what a heritage tree/grove is and what the qualifications are. The committee reviewed the four trees and their characteristics. UFAC voted to have the trees be approved as being added to the current heritage grove on the condition that the age of the trees are corrected. The current heritage grove is on Melba Rd and is very close in proximity so it would make sense to add these trees to the current heritage grove. Brian Staner is the neighbor and wanted to let the committee know he has put together a formal plan to protect these trees on his housing development. There is a retaining wall that is close to one of the trees and one of the roots may need to be cut. If so, it will be done responsibly with an arborist on site. If the trees are approved as heritage trees Brian is asking that they be approved on the condition that the already reviewed tree protection plan is acceptable for these heritage trees. The committee asked Mark Wisniewski on this opinion on if he would anticipate any damage to the tree from the project, and he doesn’t anticipate any major damage since the trees is far enough away from the proposed project.

Mark Jenne voted to extend the UFAC meeting since the meeting is going past 7:30pm, Linda Schneider seconded. The committee moved to extend the meeting until 8:00pm.

The UFAC decided that Brian’s construction plans are not likely to have a significant impact on the health of the trees. The committee moved to approve trees as a heritage grove if the applicants submit an amendment changing the age of the trees since the it was not accurately reflected on the original application.

COMMENT: Brian Staner in opposition to recommended action for agenda item 7.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**: UFAC voted to have the trees be approved as being added to the current heritage grove on the condition that the age of the trees are corrected in an amendment submitted by the applicant. 5 Ayes; 0 Nays unanimous vote

8. DOWNTOWN FICUS TREE LV2/LV3 REPORT

SPEAKERS: Katrina Burritt explained that a level 2 risk assessment as well as a level 3 sonic tomography assessment was performed on a ficus tree located in downtown. Significant decay was found, the results and the location is listed in the report. Dudek’s recommendation is to remove the tree and will be replaced with a tree that is approved on the planting list. After the meeting the removal permit will be submitted and the work request will be submitted.

COMMENT: None.

COMMITTEE ACTION: No action needed, the information is for the committee’s awareness.

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS- NEXT MEETING APRIL 25, 2024

* Review and approve February 29 meeting minutes
* Native Plant Policy Guest Speaker
* Parking Lot Shading Requirement
* Request to Plant a Tree Permit
* Arbor Day 2024 Update

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:01 P.M.