



Sacramento Tree Ordinance Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Summary

Tuesday, Jan. 28, 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services
3333 3rd Ave., Sacramento, Calif.

Meeting Attendees

Project team members in attendance included:

- Joe Benassini, City of Sacramento
- Deanna Hickman, City of Sacramento
- Jamie Gomes, EPS
- Amy Lapin, EPS
- Jim Clark, HortScience
- Gene Endicott, Endicott Communications



Approximately 25 stakeholder organization representatives and/or community members attended the meeting.

Meeting Goal

Solicit feedback on major issues to be resolved in updated and consolidated tree ordinance.

Gene Endicott provided an overview of the meeting agenda and facilitated Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and project team self-introductions.

Review of SAC Meeting #1 and SAC Field Tour

Mr. Endicott briefly reviewed results from SAC meeting #1 held on Oct. 30, which was focused on identifying key community values related to the development of an updated tree ordinance, and the SAC field tour held on Dec. 12.

Priority Issues Overview

Joe Benassini and Jim Clark provided an overview of priority issues to be addressed in an updated ordinance, which were organized into three categories:

1. Tree planting, maintenance and removal responsibility along City streets
2. Tree removal process
3. Tree preservation and removal associated with development projects

Tree planting, maintenance and removal responsibility along City streets

After a review of City maintenance responsibilities for trees located between curbs and sidewalks, in City maintenance easements and in City rights of way, the SAC discussed and provided feedback on the advantages and disadvantages of the following scenarios:

- City continues to manage trees between the curb and sidewalk.
- City continues to manage trees within the street right-of-way but located behind the sidewalk on private property.
- Removing the designation of “Maintenance Easement Tree” from the ordinance?



There was general agreement that the City should continue maintain trees located between the curb and sidewalk but that issues related to responsibilities between the City and property owners associated with sidewalk repairs need clarification.

The SAC generally agreed that more data is needed on the number of trees in each maintenance category: between curb and sidewalk, maintenance easement and right of way.

There also was a suggestion to consider removing the potentially confusing property designations and replacing with an agreed-upon number of feet from the curb in which the City would be responsible for tree maintenance.

Tree Removal Process

After a review of current processes and issues related to removal of City-maintained trees and trees located on private property, the SAC discussed the following key questions:

1. Should Sacramento post a notice of intent to remove trees growing along city streets?
2. Should there be an appeal process for trees that the City intends to remove?
3. Should there be a fee for posting such an appeal?
4. Should Sacramento continue to require a permit for the removal of “Heritage Trees” growing on private property?

There was general agreement with the SAC that the City needs a clearer overall canopy goal to help guide potential changes to this section of an updated ordinance. Some stakeholders also indicated that there should be a process associated with removal of front-yard trees even if they are not being maintained by the City.

In addition, it was suggested that the Sacramento County heritage tree ordinance be reviewed to help inform City decision making on tree-removal processes. Joe Benassini indicated that the City currently does not have an inventory on heritage trees.

Tree preservation and removal associated with development projects

After a review of current processes and issues related to development-related tree preservation and removal, the SAC discussed the following key questions:

1. Should a tree removal permit for a development project be considered by the Planning Commission as part of the project application?
2. Should a tree report/tree preservation plan be required as part of a development project submittal?
3. Should development projects of the City of Sacramento follow the same rules for tree protection as a private development would?

4. Should tree removal on a development project be

mitigated? SAC feedback included the following comments:

- The City should establish tree-related core values that will, in turn, determine how to deal with the many technical issues under consideration.
- The community needs to be engaged in development project reviews as they related to trees.
- Setting a specific City canopy goal will help alleviate issues with removal applications and clarify mitigation requirements.
- Need to ensure that downtown is not cleared of trees with new development; should mitigate in place as much as possible.
- There needs to be consistency between ordinance language, policies and work practices.



There also was general agreement that tree permit appeals related to public-sector projects not requiring entitlements should be considered by the Planning Commission, rather than the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Wrap Up/Next Steps

Amy Lapin reviewed the project team’s approach to development of the Tree Ordinance Report that will be shaped by the SAC, and reported that upcoming SAC meetings are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, March 6, 300 Richards Blvd., Sacramento

Thursday, April 17, Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, Sacramento

Ms. Lapin also reported that the proposed updated ordinance would be reviewed and acted upon as appropriate by the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, City Council Law and Legislation Committee, and City Council. The process is planned to conclude by June 30, 2014. The meeting then adjourned at 5 p.m.