

Task Force on Urban Tree Planting Best Practices

Minutes

Monday April 28, 2025, - 11:00am-2:00pm

Via Zoom Platform & In Person

[Recording of Meeting can be obtained by sending request to Joe Rainey JRainey@coj.net]

Commissioners:

Nina Sickler, Director of Public Works
Susan Fraser, Chair (Council Appointee; 2022-0063-A)
William Burke, Tree Commission Member

Non-Member attendees:

Jeff Lucovsky, PDDS
Jonathan Johnston, Parks
Guy Parola, DIA
Nancy Powell, Scenic Jax
Lisa Grubba, Greenscape
Joe Anderson JEA
Paul Davis, Planning
Valerie Feinberg, Fuse Fellow, UFMP
Tracy Arpen, Greenscape

Advisors:

Justin Gearhart - City Arborist
Carla Lopera - Office of General Counsel

Staff: Joe Rainey - Executive Assistant Mowing and Landscape

1. Call to Order

Conducted by Chair

2. Roll Call and Verification of Quorum

Conducted by Chair

Commissioners present:

Susan Fraser - Chair
Nina Sickler - Director of Public Works
William Burke - Tree Commission Member

Quorum present (3, in person): Yes

3. Call for Public Speakers (online & card): Chris Kelcourse of Sunshine Compost: Offering resources of local companies for soil resources. Provided documentation of their products specs and a comparison to the city's current vendors product. **Burke:** relays qualifications and of soil mix would be a conversation for later. **Kelcourse:** She recommends STA certification of US compost council for vendors.

Action Items:

4. Submittal of speaker cards

5a. Issue: The minutes from February 20, 2025, APPROVED

Motion: Approve, as presented.

Moved by: William Burke

Second: Nina Sickler

Vote: February 20, 2025 minutes approved, unanimous.

5b. Issue: The minutes from March 20, 2025, APPROVED

Motion: Approve, as presented.

Moved by: Nina Sickler

Second: Susan Fraser

Vote: March 20, 2025 minutes approved, unanimous.

6. Policy Positions Supported

- i. Plant for longevity and ultimate size
- ii. Natural Solutions First, Constraints' Mitigation Second
- iii. Preserve soil structure or mitigate for constraints.

7. Overview of Approach- 2025 Updates to Mitigation by Degree of Urbanization

- i. Update of James Urban approach (1992) from James Urban (2025)
- ii. Modifications to the Urban Planting Specifications (matrix) to reflect 2025 Update.
- iii. Modifications to Filing an Application for Planting in an Urban Environment to reflect 2025 Update.
 - a. Planting Soil Specifications - discussion
 - b. Soil Profile Rebuilding as an alternative to Soil Replacement - discussion

c. Vertical Clearance Standards - discussion

iv. Cost Estimates for compliance with 2025 Update in a
Compacted Planting

Environment

v. Sketch sections/ plan views to reflect 2025 Update

Discussion: Fraser: "Goal of today's meeting is to distill this down into resolving the questions that are open so that at the May meeting we can vote on standards to recommend (to) the Tree Commission." Discussed soil compaction/quality/testing, tree selection, cost, infrastructure, maintenance and location issues (see supplemental document diagrams); how to mitigate them and better define solutions.

Dialog regarding overlapping standards between stakeholders (City, DIA, Developers, etc.) and added resources needed to apply methodology (Soil testing, engineers, further staffing, etc.) and how to fund them.

7. Amendments to the Approved Tree Planting List

a. Updates to reflect Canopy /Spread and Suitability as
Street Trees

ADJOURNMENT

END OF MEETING 1:00PM

APPROVED