



# City of Lake Oswego Natural Resources Advisory Board Minutes

April 18, 2007

**APPROVED**

## I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Co-chair Craig Diamond called the Natural Resources Advisory Board meeting of Wednesday, April 18, 2007 to order at 6:37 p.m. in the West End Building (SAFECO), 4010 Kruse Way, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Members present besides Co-chair Diamond were Co-chair William Gaar, Sarah Asby, Morgan Holen, Nancy Gronowski, Douglas Rich and Stephanie Wagner. Guests were Carolyn Jones and Barbara Zeller.

Staff Liaison was Jonna Papaefthimiou, Associate Planner. Other staff present were Deb Weschelblatt, AmeriCorps Volunteer; and Lisa Hamerlynck, Natural Resources Coordinator.

## II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Co-chair Diamond announced that Nancy Gronowski and Morgan Holen had been reappointed to serve on the Natural Resources Advisory Board (NRAB) and that Kate Mogentale had been appointed the Youth Representative. Ms. Holen related that she had discovered that although LOS 55.06.030 gave the NRAB authority to approve Heritage Tree applications, the Board's charge statement in Chapter 12 did not mention that. She suggested the Board consider recommending a Code change to correct that.

## III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of November 15, 2006 were approved by unanimous consent.

The Minutes of December 20, 2006 were approved by unanimous consent of those members eligible to vote on them.

The Minutes of February 6, 2007 were approved by unanimous consent with corrected spelling of presenters' names and a corrected attribution of a statement.

The Minutes of February 21, 2007 were approved by unanimous consent after two statements in the draft were clarified.

The Minutes of March 21, 2007 were approved by unanimous consent after they were clarified to identify a speaker.

\*Councilor Groznik joined the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

#### IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

**Barbara Zeller, Chair of the Lake Grove Neighborhood Association**, thanked the NRAB members for participating in the dedication of the grove of Heritage Trees at the Old Fire House. She reported the Association was soliciting advice on how to survey, evaluate and maintain the health of neighborhood trees. She announced the Association planned to sponsor a “Tree Town Hall” in October 2007, and their research had put them in contact with a number of experts, who provided them with written information. She distributed some of that information. She asked any NRAB members who wished to offer help and advice to contact her. She clarified that her neighborhood was entirely within the City limits. She then left the meeting.

#### V. REGULAR BUSINESS

##### **Springbrook Park Forestry Plan**

Ms. Hamerlynck recalled that Friends of Springbrook Park had been in the process of drafting the Springbrook Park Forestry Plan before she joined the Parks Department. They had asked for and received funds from the City Council to hire a professorial forester to look at the park and used his suggestions to draft a plan that they had previously presented to the NRAB for comment. They formed a subcommittee to do further work on the plan. Ms. Hamerlynck suggested the Board examine the current version of the draft plan (in which she had incorporated the subcommittee’s suggestions) and comment on it. She noted the Friends group did not want to broadcast chemicals, and they had not taken a position regarding spot spraying of blackberry sprouts, but they seemed to accept spraying of cut holly trees in order to kill new sprouts.

Ms. Hamerlynck said the Friends group worried that the many maple trees in the park would all die at the same time. Although the forester had assured them that maples lived as long as 120 years, an important concept in the plan was to speed up the natural progression of the forest by using a chemical on maple trees that would kill them slowly to create openings in the tree canopy that allowed sunlight that would help promote growth of new trees and create a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees. They also wanted a planting plan that was better than the random, poorly distributed planting that had been done in the past and that would “mimic” nature. Ms. Hamerlynck observed that the plan could serve as an interesting experiment on a small scale to see if a forest could be turned more quickly into a mixed forest than if it were left to nature. Ms. Wagner advised it was not necessary to kill trees to open up the canopy for new trees because she recalled many existing breaks in the canopy where trees like Western Red Cedar could be planted and thrive. She said she often walked through the park and she recalled there were also a fair number of Douglas fir trees growing there. She suggested planting in the existing “breaks” to enhance the natural process. She acknowledged that it might take 10 to 20 years, and she said she understood the Friends group wanted it to happen faster.

Ms. Wagner stressed the need to first fashion a vision and approach to maintaining and reforesting all the City’s natural areas in a sustainable fashion before the Board approved a specific plan. Ms. Holen agreed it was a matter of planting the right species

in the right locations and it was not necessary to kill other trees. All Board members agreed that invasive species should be addressed as soon as possible in order to ensure the survival of trees. They asked who would take responsibility for the plan and its implementation. Ms. Hamerlynck anticipated that the plan would become a City plan, but the Friends group would have to find funding for it and work with City staff when they applied chemicals. She suggested the NRAB offer their comments. Co-chair Gaar indicated he desired to see the forest turn more quickly if the end result would be the same as the longer-term approach. Ms. Gronowski advised that there was nothing “natural” about any of the City’s natural areas any more and she could agree to try the faster approach in a small area, as a demonstration project, to see how it worked. Ms. Wagner said there were existing “breaks” where conifer trees would do well, as long as ivy was not allowed to grow over the trees. She noted that maintaining a certain amount of shade discouraged blackberry growth. She said there was no need to kill the maple trees.

Ms. Holen suggested the plan should highlight planting the right species in the right place. She noted that hemlock trees thrived in the shade. Ms. Hamerlynck then summarized that the Board members had mixed feelings about taking an aggressive approach, and they generally favored planting conifers in the breaks currently available for them, and they considered the plan’s more aggressive approach an experiment and wanted to see how well it worked in a few controlled spots. She noted they all prioritized controlling non-native species and monitoring the results of the approach. Ms. Wagner stressed that a “sustainable” approach was to trust nature again and not participate in active manipulation. Ms. Hamerlynck anticipated she would return later to update the NRAB about the natural areas program and priorities she had just presented to Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) that day. She anticipated the Board would help fashion policies such as how to deal with beavers and herbicides and help with the vision statement. She noted that to continue to do nothing to maintain the City’s 450 acres of natural areas would result in further degradation of those areas.

### **Natural Areas Budget**

Ms. Wagner related that the Parks and Recreation Director had explained to her the currently proposed budget only funded one natural areas maintenance position, and that was not enough to make a significant difference. Board members worried the City was neglecting natural areas, and they would degrade. They discussed whether it was too late to lobby for a bigger natural areas maintenance budget. Councilor Groznik encouraged the Board to prepare and present a budget to staff and the community to gain their support and then present it to the Citizens Budget Committee at their May meeting.

\*Lisa Hamerlynck joined the meeting. Board members agreed there was not much time to prepare a budget presentation and they had to act quickly. They agreed that Co-chair Gaar was to work with other board members between now and the May Citizens Budget Committee meeting and informally discuss the issue with City Councilors, PRAB members, neighborhood associations and others to bolster support. They wondered what amount to ask for. Ms. Hamerlynck advised that Iron Mountain Natural Area should be a high priority for maintenance because invasive plants were threatening the

trees in that corridor. However, she stressed that area needed to be master planned first in order to appropriately manage the variety of impacts, which also included horse, dog and pedestrian traffic, endangered plants and wildlife, risk of wild fires, signage issues and mine shafts. She estimated a “bare bones” budget would be \$80,000 in Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds to plan it and \$40,000 for maintenance that would pay for a contract labor crew to initially address invasives before volunteers started working on it on a regular basis. She suggested they ask for \$120,000 for master planning and implementation. She advised that the City had gone significantly over budget to address emergencies, such as hazard trees that fell over trails, and that she was currently consulting with a wild fire expert. Staff advised that a Metro bond measure would provide funds for both Metro and the City to purchase even more open space, but the City would likely have to maintain that, too. When asked, they clarified that funds budgeted for neighborhood planning were not available for natural area maintenance.

Councilor Groznik clarified that assessment revenue could not be used, either. Board members reasoned that if natural areas were properly managed, there would not be as many hazard trees to address, and it would reduce the risk of wild fire, thereby reducing City costs. Ms. Hamerlynck reported the City had once tried unsuccessfully to use goats to manage blackberries. She suggested \$150,000 would fund a master planning effort and implementation in the Iron Mountain Natural Area. Co-chair Gaar suggested the NRAB advocate that the City earmark that amount for a master plan and maintenance because he believed that would benefit the City by helping improve City assets. He suggested the NRAB ask the City to prioritize master planning and proactively manage open spaces. He offered to lead an effort by Board members to strategize their approach, build their presentation, and contact City Councilors and others in the community who might support it when the Board presented it to the Citizens Budget Committee.

**Mr. Rich moved to lobby the City Council and the Citizens Budget Committee to earmark \$150,000 for the Iron Mountain Natural Area. \$100,000 of that was to be budgeted for the master planning process (which was to have high priority) and \$50,000 to address critical maintenance issues in that area and other areas.**

Discussion followed. Ms. Hamerlynck advised that a water control issue in one City park was one example of a critical maintenance issue. Co-chair Gaar anticipated Board members would gather other examples (and what they had cost the City) to present. Co-chair Diamond observed general agreement that Co-chair Gaar was to spearhead the effort with help from Ms. Wagner and other board members to fashion the strategy and presentation. Mr. Rich noted the presentation could show what the City had actually spent on emergencies that could be saved in the future by preventative work. **Ms. Wagner seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous agreement.**

### **Community Forestry**

Ms. Weschelblatt announced the Community Forestry Open House was scheduled for April 25, 2007. She asked for volunteers to help man several conversational stations at the event and several Board members volunteered. Ms. Holen reported she had attended the first meeting of the related working group the previous week and they were

working on a vision statement and goals that would be part of the draft plan. She said they planned to use input from the Open House to fashion the draft plan. She circulated a copy of a pamphlet discussing urban and community forestry that Ms. Weschelblatt had created and she distributed flyers to the members and asked them to promote the open house.

Ms. Weschelblatt confirmed that the working group had considered two different brands of tree surveying software, but because it was so expensive they decided to focus their efforts on the draft plan instead. She recalled that when she spoke with Ms. Zeller about the Lake Grove Neighborhood Association forming a subcommittee to help with the City tree inventory, the chair had not seemed very enthusiastic about collaborating with the City. Ms. Holen said she would help Ms. Zeller as much as she could as an individual. She wondered if the neighborhood representatives wanted to raise awareness and generate more neighborhood support before they suggested that the Association work with the City. Mr. Rich suggested the Neighborhood Association might look for graduate students and grant money to help them. Ms. Weschelblatt commended Ms. Holen on her Heritage Tree presentation at the Old Fire House.

\*Ms. Weschelblatt left the meeting.

#### **Memorandum to West End Building (WEB) Advisory Board**

Ms. Gronowski had drafted a memorandum to send to the WEB Advisory Board. Board members edited the draft of NRAB suggestions and added language to ask them to design the landscape in a way that would minimize the need for fertilizer, use native plants, and balance higher up-front costs with the economic benefits of achieving Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. With no objection to Mr. Rich's motion to accept and forward the memorandum, NRAB members generally agreed to make the changes and forward the memorandum to WEB.

\*Ms. Hamerlynck left the meeting.

#### **Code Change**

There was general agreement that Ms. Holen would draft revised Code language that would reconcile LOC 55.06.030, which gave the NRAB the sole authority to decide Heritage Trees, with their Mission Statement in LOC 12.51.045. Members planned to discuss the draft at their next meeting.

### **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Rich agreed to email members the dates of an open house (May 22/23), workshop (May 30/31), and City Council review (June 12) of **Lake Interceptor plans**. Board members planned to prepare NRAB input at the June meeting at their next meeting. Councilor Groznik confirmed that the final draft of the **Water Conservation Plan** had been presented to the City Council. Board members decided to ask the Engineering Department to present it to the board as well. The Board members agreed to accept the **Final Meeting Schedule for 2007** that staff had prepared.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business Co-chair Diamond adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonna Papaefthimiou /s/  
Jonna Papaefthimiou  
Natural Resources Planner