

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group Meeting Minutes 3-5-2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm in the auditorium of Long Branch Nature Center.

In attendance were: Caroline Haynes, Nereide Ellis, David Howell (Park & Rec), Claire O'Dea, Sarah Meservey (E2C2), Phil Klingelhofer (UFC), Vincent Verweij, and Alonso Abugattas (DPR)

Guest: Vincent Verweij, Urban Forest Manager, DPR

No public comment

February 5, 2018 Minutes approved with no objections.

Results of Tree Canopy Study and Associated Issues

Vincent Verweij, Urban Forest Manager (DPR), presented the results of the Tree Canopy Study. It was conducted by Davey Trees to provide baseline data but to also compare to previous studies. Not including DOD properties, National Cemetery, the Pentagon, or National Airport, Arlington County had 41% tree canopy cover. When all lands were included, the result was 38% tree canopy cover. This was a slight improvement of 1% more tree cover than the 2011 results.

While there were decreases in some areas such as Westover and Yorktown, there were increases in others such as Penrose and Aurora Hills. The slight improvement is believed to be due to new plantings and increased growth in others. Some champion trees such as the state champion hemlock also lost limbs or otherwise were damaged, but overall there was slight improvement.

Vincent Verweij also provided a brief update on the recent wind storm that had had occurred, stating that 170 legitimate tree calls were responded to, with the most damage being sustained by evergreen trees.

Staff Updates:

Alonso Abugattas provided the following updates:

- The multijurisdictional Cooperative Weed Management Area being started by a matching grant to Arlington County is going well. It is officially now called the NoVA PRISM (Northern Virginia Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) and has chosen 4 pilot project sites.
- The DC Cooperative Weed Management Area is now expanding its scope and area to deal with all taxa of invasives with Arlington staff sitting on the steering committee. It is now called NCR- PRISM (National Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management).

- The native plant nursery may be expanded an additional 20' with improvements to beds and irrigation. Possible repairs to the green house are also possible and very likely to be done in some manner.
- It has been decided that both the Urban Forest Master Plan and Natural Resources Master Plan updates will both be integrated into a single process, anticipated to begin in January of 2019, after completion of POPS.

Member Reports:

- Sarah Meservey (E2C2) reported that a budget letter focusing on cuts to the AIRE program.
- Caroline Haynes and Phil Klingelhofer (UFC) informed NRJAG that the Tree canopy presentation had been conducted for them and that County Board member John Vihstadt had attended the presentation.
- Caroline Haynes (Parks & Rec) provided some details regarding the City Nature Challenge events and various ways Arlington was participating including a verification event on Monday, April 30 at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.
- Claire O'Dea (E2C2) noted that she will be away for four months, and another member of E2C2 is expected to take her place while she is away.