



Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee

May 24, 2016
Summary and Motions

Chair Farmer called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Committee Members Stinnett, Kay, Moloney, J. Brown, Gibbs, Evans, F. Brown, Mossotti, and Hensley were present. Council Members Akers, Bledsoe, and Lamb attended as non-voting members.

I. Approval of Committee Summary

A motion was made by Stinnett to approve the April 19, 2016 Environmental Quality and Public Works Committee Summary, seconded by F. Brown. The motion passed without dissent.

II. Pavement Management Plan

F. Brown provided an update regarding the progress of the subcommittee, and reported that the next subcommittee meeting will be held on June 2, 2016. He stated that the subcommittee will report out during the June 21, 2016 Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee meeting, and would like the item to report out to Council on June 28, 2016 using the proposed schedule included in Farmer's May 19, 2016 memo to Committee members.

F. Brown stated that Mossotti and Hensley are also on the subcommittee, which began meeting in January 2016.

In response to a question from Farmer, F. Brown stated that policies and procedures related to pavement management will be proposed for Council consideration. The subcommittee is developing a five-year plan that allows for changes, and has assumed a \$12.8 million budget for the next Fiscal Year and \$12 million for each of the following four years.

Moloney stated that paving often begins in October, which fails to take advantage of the favorable weather during the spring and summer months. F. Brown stated that the Plan will propose a fall paving and spring paving schedule to address this issue.

III. Urban Forestry Management Plan

Gibbs introduced the item and the project team. Susan Plueger, Director, Division of Environmental Services provided a progress update for the Urban Forestry Management Plan ("Plan"). She provided a history of tree protection efforts in Lexington, and stated that the City's urban tree canopy accounted for less than four percent of the area within the Urban Growth Boundary in the 1960s.

She stated that the Plan's mission is to achieve a sustainable urban forest in Lexington-Fayette County; the urban forest is defined as all publicly and privately owned trees within the urban growth boundary. The Plan proposes years 2016 through 2020 as foundation years to: collect data; build resource management capacity; develop and implement legislation related to tree protection; and begin public education and engagement efforts. The subsequent 20 year Plan horizon will emphasize: preservation and expansion of the urban tree canopy; evaluation and continual improvement of ordinance compliance; monitoring and treatment of trees for pests and diseases; continued public engagement; and removal of hazards and invasive species around public trees.

Plueger stated that planting 22,500 trees annually for the next 20 years would increase Lexington's tree canopy to 40 percent of the area within the urban growth boundary. She stated that the completed Plan goals will be included in the 2018 update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Gibbs spoke in favor of Plueger's efforts, and stated that she is working with Engineering on the development and implementation of tree protection language for site plans. He stated that the Tree Canopy Committee's report out would emphasize planting on private property.

Mossotti asked when specific information would be available regarding appropriate planting areas. Plueger responded that a map is already available which shows planting areas by Council District. In response to a follow up question from Mossotti, Plueger stated that appropriate tree species are chosen based on soil testing, salt resistance if the plantings occur near rights-of-way, and a number of other factors. Mossotti asked for information regarding community partners in this effort, and Plueger stated that Homeowners Associations, the Lexington Tree Foundation, garden clubs, and many other partners are involved in this effort.

Evans stated that some homeowners view trees as a nuisance due to maintenance requirements. Plueger responded that we must emphasize planting the "right tree in the right place" to avoid maintenance issues. Evans discussed safety considerations, such as vertical clearance requirements, particularly as they relate to streetlights.

Akers discussed the efforts of Reforest the Bluegrass, and asked that their work be considered as a component of expanding the urban tree canopy.

Kay stated that measures have been implemented to ensure that the right trees are being planted in appropriate areas, and the condition of the city's trees has improved accordingly. He spoke in favor of continued expansion of the urban tree canopy.

Hensley asked for consideration of city tree farms on larger privately owned residential lots that may be appropriate for that use.

Gibbs provided an update regarding the Tree Canopy Committee, and stated that the creation of a nonprofit may be the result of the Committee's work.

Farmer spoke in favor of the detailed, extended implementation timetable, and complemented Plueger on her efforts.

A motion was made by Hensley to adjourn, seconded by Kay. The motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 p.m.

C.B. 6/2/2016