



Planning and Public Works Committee
November 20th, 2012
Summary and Motions

CM Bill Farmer chaired the meeting and called it to order at 1:02pm. Committee members CM Chuck Ellinger, VM Linda Gorton, CM Steve Kay, CM Chris Ford, CM Tom Blues, and CM Peggy Henson were in attendance. CM Stinnett attended the meeting as a non-voting member.

Chair Farmer called the meeting to order at 1:02pm.

1. October 16th, 2012 Summary

CM Ellinger made a motion to approve the summary. CM Kay seconded the motion. The motion passed without dissent.

2. Review of Street Tree and Street Tree Protection Ordinances

David Leonard came to the podium to present on the street tree ordinances. He said that it is recommended that a city have 40% canopy cover and that Lexington has between 7-20%. He said that healthy forests have environmental, social and economic benefits. Trees are carbon storage units so they have a large impact on air quality. Leonard said that healthy urban forests decrease storm water run off as well.

Leonard cited a report that stated people come to cities that have significant tree cover. They also stay longer and spend more money in those communities. He said that trees increase the value of homes and makes them easier to sell. Three trees properly planted around a home can also decrease energy bills.

Leonard spoke about the challenges that our urban forest faces. He showed photos of trees that had been topped, hit with lawnmowers and infected with root rot and insects. Leonard expressed concern about the placement and the maintenance of street trees. He also mentioned a lack of tree diversity.

Leonard continued his presentation by reporting to the committee members that Lexington is the oldest tree city in the state. He said that Lexington has been a tree city

for 24 years. Leonard said that Lexington does not have the staff in place to enforce our current ordinances.

Leonard reported the recommendations of the tree board to committee members. He suggested reviewing and revising Chapter 17B of the Code of Ordinances and Article 6-10 of Subdivision Regulations, Article 18 and Article 26 of the Zoning Ordinance. Leonard said that they need to optimize planting conditions for street trees with adequate space and suitable soil and promote placing the right trees in the right places.

Leonard said that there should be an emphasis on strong public outreach and education for residential properties. He also suggested creating an authority to compel removal of hazardous trees on private property that are a safety hazard.

For commercial properties, Leonard recommended adequate inspection resources (a landscape examiner) to proactively enforce landscaping requirements and the promotion of the installation of green infrastructure. Leonard also suggested that the city and the business community work to resolve conflicts between street trees and commercial signage.

Leonard said that the process is currently complaint driven. He said that we have lost hundreds of trees that have not been replaced.

CM Stinnett asked Leonard to explain any negatives that accompany tree planting. He asked Leonard about leaves entering the storm sewers and homeowners removing trees. Stinnett said that we are requiring developers to plant street trees and then after 15 years they have to remove them because they were not properly cared for. Stinnett asked Leonard if they have discussed changing the requirement for the placement of street trees.

Leonard said that the Tree Board thinks it would be better to move them inside the sidewalk. There would be less heaving of the sidewalks and less overhang over the sidewalk. Stinnett asked Leonard who inspects the trees when they are planted. Tim Queary said that his office is responsible for that inspection. They work with contractors to place door hangers at each residence.

CM Blues said that the Council and the Administration need to deal with these issues. CM Blues also said that he appreciated Leonard mentioning the economic development impact of trees for communities. CM Blues said that he thinks the issue is a serious challenge for the LFUCG.

CM Kay said that there are two parts to the equation. The policies can be dealt with by the LFUCG but the impact of the health of the trees is another issue. CM Kay said that he would like to know if it is better to work with the trees that are already in existence

or to remove them. Leonard said that the evidence is there to work to save the trees. Leonard said that he would provide that information to Council Members.

CM Farmer said that he would like to keep the issue in committee. He suggested that the Tree Board put in a request during the budget process. CM Farmer also suggested that the Tree Board make recommendations for changes to the Code of Ordinances to the Planning and Public Works Committee.

Karen Angelucci, a member of the Tree Board, said that she sees one solution regarding tree planting. She recommended allowing the tree to be planted five feet inside the sidewalk. The trees will then be away from the utilities.

3. Working with FCPS to Sustain Road Salt Services

Kevin Wentte said that he had a meeting with various entities to discussion preparation. Wentte said that he is concerned about requests made outside of the LFUCG's snow plan. Wentte said that FCPS would be interested in partnering with the LFUCG when salt is purchased each year.

Wentte said that he worked with Pat Tatum regarding calls to LexCall that are actually authorized calls for snow removal.

VM Gorton asked Wentte about the list of authorized requesters. Wentte said that he will be provided that list this year. Sam Williams said that he has worked with John Kiser in the past. He said that the plan that Wentte has worked out will be better for the LFUCG. VM Gorton asked Wentte to elaborate on the snow removal plan that was discussed with FCPS. Wentte said that FCPS does ask the LFUCG to look at additional streets such as Armstrong Mill and Trent Boulevard.

Wentte went on to say that FCPS would be interested in working with the LFUCG to order more salt to lower their costs. CM Farmer said that if the LFUCG is doing something to get the students to school, we need to figure out what that is worth.

CM Stinnett asked about the ranking of roads around schools. Wentte said the rankings can differ. CM Stinnett said that there are roads around schools that they may not get to anyway.

4. Vacuum Leaf Collection

Rob Allen came to the podium to present on vacuum leaf collection. All citizens in the Urban Service Area who receive Urban County Government waste collection services have this service available to them. This is approximately 90,000 residential addresses.

The leaf collection will start Monday, November 26, 2012. It will be completed by the end of the year. The service area is divided into 4 separate zones and a downtown zone.

Allen reminded citizens not to rake their leaves into the street. They can be issued a citation for doing so. Citizens can also use the Lennys, paper yard waste bags, mulch their leaves, compost their leaves, take the leaves directly to Haley Pike Landfill or utilize private collection.

Allen said that the leaf collection information is communicated various ways, including GTV3, the LFUCG website, local media, through Council Members, LexCall and the WasteNot newsletter.

CM Stinnett asked if less people are using the service. Allen said yes. CM Stinnett said that overtime they may not need to offer the leaf collection service all over town.

Allen said that Streets and Roads is the division now in charge of the program. Street sweeping is going to be suspended during leaf collection. However, the downtown and UK areas will continue to have street sweeping through the month of December.

Allen said that there are two managers, three supervisors, twenty full-time employees, two administrative staffers and thirty-five temporary workers. He said that they use eleven leaf vacuums, six dump trucks, five rear-end load garbage trucks, and at least two street sweepers.

Allen said that the primary function of Streets and Roads is snow removal so if there is a snow situation, leaf collection will be delayed.

CM Blues asked how much the LFUCG spends on leaf bags. Allen said that he would have to ask Waste Management. CM Blues said that he thinks it is around \$300,000/year.

CM Henson said that she has concerns about the impact of the leaves on the storm water system. She said that she is not supportive of the program.

VM Gorton asked for clarification on Angelucci's comments. She told committee members that she asked Wentz about the easement extending five feet within the sidewalk. Allen said it is dedicated planning easement where the developer would choose to put the street behind the sidewalk. Allen said that it is a designation, not a true easement. The tree planted there would be regulated like a street tree. Gorton asked if Wentz could still follow-up on her question.

5. Design Excellence Task Force Update

CM Blues presented the committee members an interim report on the progress of the Design Excellence Task Force. He said that sub-committees have worked all summer on specific issues and they also added three members to the Task Force.

CM Blues spoke about the downtown inventory. Brandi Berryman came to the podium to present. She said that her group met nine times over a fourteen week period. Berryman said that they walked through the streets and they inventoried different parcels. She said they then identified sub-districts. She said that their recommendations are available in a lengthy document and they will be used when drafting the design guidelines.

CM Blues said that another sub-committee did a review and analysis of the current Courthouse Area Design guidelines. Jeff Fugate led the sub-committee and they found that the guidelines are working very well for rehab projects. The guidelines are less reliable for large new 'from the ground up' projects.

CM Blues said that they have worked towards the selection of a consultant. He said that they released the RFQ and it is included in the packet. The consultant will advise, assist and collaborate with the Task Force.

CM Blues said that the purpose of the project is to synthesize current community goals and previous downtown efforts and policies; provide a clear guide and predictable framework for both developers and citizens; and serve as a powerful graphic tool for visualizing preferred downtown rehabilitation, infill and redevelopment. CM Blues said that the respondent will exhibit the capacity to provide professional consultation to the LFUCG and LDDA design staff.

The Task Force will serve as the project steering committee. CM Blues said that this decision was based on three key factors:

1. The budget
2. Vast number of previous studies that can be used for reference going forward
3. The expertise of LFUCG, DDA and Task Force membership

CM Blues said the deadline for responses in November 28th, 2012. He is anticipating the receipt of competitive submissions.

CM Farmer said that if a consultant is selected by the December Planning and Public Works Committee meeting, CM Blues is welcome to report it at that time.

6. Items Referred to Committee

VM Gorton made a motion to refer the Amendment of Article 5-1 (a) Right-of-Entry back into the Planning and Public Works Committee. CM Kay seconded the motion. The motion passed without dissent.

VM Gorton made a motion to adjourn. CM Henson seconded the motion. The motion passed without dissent.

Submitted by Jenifer Benningfield, Council Administrative Specialist