



VERMONT URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

Quarterly Council Meeting Wednesday, March 15th, 2023 Teams

Minutes

Attending: Richard Amore, VJ Comai, Chris Company, Cecilia Danks, Bonnie Donahue, Mark Dunteman, Mike Fallis, Kate Forrer, Joanne Garton, Danielle Gift, Ann Hazelrigg, Emile Inoue, Gwen Kozlowski, Bob McCullough, Ginger Nickerson, Tim Parsons, Elise Schadler, Darren Schibler, Tim Smith, Warren Spinner, Lisa Wright

Welcome & Council Business

- Roll call: Each person shared what's new and exciting in their world
- December meeting minutes: reviewed and approved (Emily Inoue made a motion to approve, seconded by Richard Amore.)
- Elise updated Council bylaws, which was around new leadership structure.
 - New leadership cycle is one-year terms.
 - Will rotate alphabetically.
- Meeting Locations and dates
 - June 14th, 2023 – usually a field trip. Possibilities – UVM, town forests to look at black ash. May send out a survey with options for a vote.
 - September 13, 2023: Middlebury College, Tim Parsons will host.
 - December 13th, 2023: Montpelier or Essex – business meeting
- Council Vacancy discussion: one at-large seat
 - Will discuss in June about which partner is the best fit.
- Farewell to Warren, hello to VJ!
 - Warren has enjoyed seeing the progress that has been made. Now that there is more money available to the Council, he is excited to see even more progress. He is excited that VJ has come back to the Council to represent the tree wardens.
 - Council members shared some of their favorite stories about Warren.

Program Updates

- Program funding and scaling up. Elise provided a review of where we are and where we might be going, regarding three primary funding sources:
- Core budget from the US Forest Service is being increased from \$250,000 to **\$300,000**.
- Governor Scott FY22 Budget: \$1 Million for Urban Tree Planting

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Melissa Levy – Chair, Community Roots, LLC • **Chris Company**, Vermont Planning and Development Agencies • **Richard Amore**, Agency of Commerce and Community Development • **Josh Behounek**, Davey Resource Group • **Cecilia Danks**, UVM Rubenstein School of Environmental & Natural Resources • **Bonnie Donahue**, Agency of Transportation • **Mike Fallis**, Limbwalker Tree Service • **Kate Forrer**, Vermont Woodlands Association • **Ann Hazelrigg**, University of Vermont Extension • **Emilie Inoue**, Agency of Agriculture • **William Jewell**, Wm Jewell and Company • **Suzanne Kelley**, Department of Health • **Savannah Ferriera**, Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation • **Robert McCullough**, UVM Dept. of Historic Preservation • **Sara Packer**, Vermont Electric Coop • **Tim Parsons**, Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association • **Darren Schibler**, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission • **Tim Smith**, Rutland City Forester • **Warren Spinner**, VT Tree Wardens • **Scott Wunderle**, VT Chapter-ASLA



VT Urban & Community Forestry Program
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3801

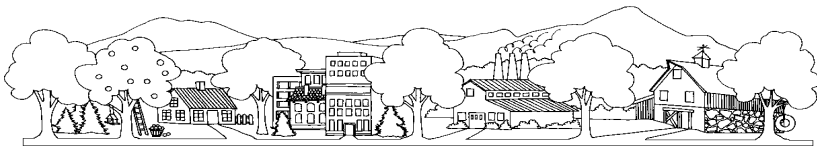
Elise Schadler, Program Manager
802-522-6015
elise.schadler@vermont.gov
vtcommunityforestry.org

VERMONT URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

- Funded through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- \$150,000 for Vermont Community Canopy in FY23 and FY24: limited to Qualified Census Tracts – confirmed
- \$700,000 for Urban Tree Planting Project: block grant program for tree planting in downtowns – pending
- \$150,000 for limited-service tree planting position (Forester II) – pending
- Inflation Reduction Act: \$1.6 Billion to Federal USFS Program – waiting to hear
 - RFP released the last week of December
 - Proposals were due February 15th
 - 5-year project
 - VT UCF's proposal: \$7.1 million, 17 distinct project components
 - Doubling UCF staff
 - Match waived if 100% of project funds go towards Disadvantaged Communities
 - Elise quickly reviewed the 17 distinct project components
- Takeaways To Consider
 - One year from now, potential for:
 - Double staff size
 - Annual program budget quadruples (~\$500k → \$2 mil+)
 - New partnerships
 - New service model (identifying need, not just responding to requests)
 - Existing staff roles shift
- Other Program Updates
 - Resilient Urban Forests for All project, partnering with Windsor and Lyndon.
 - Arbor Day Conference: Scheduled for May 17, 2023, at Vermont Technical College (VTC).
 - Elise asked for a volunteer for an Emcee for the Arbor Day event.
 - Website relaunch
 - UCF grants awarded – EAB Reforestation, Caring for Canopy, and Fruit and Nut tree mini-grants. The winners are posted on our website.
 - Vermont Community Canopy
 - 1,500 trees for the spring. Locations: St. Albans, Bellows Falls, and Burlington
 - VT UCF's continued work on issues of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI)
 - Pride Tree – working with a group in Windsor to dedicate the first “Pride Tree” to celebrate the Pride Community
- Mark Duntemann - Guest Speaker
 - Mark is the Vermont representative to the New England ISA (International Society of Arboriculture).
 - Mark worked internationally as an urban community forester.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Melissa Levy – Chair, Community Roots, LLC ● **Chris Campamy**, Vermont Planning and Development Agencies ● **Richard Amore**, Agency of Commerce and Community Development ● **Josh Behounek**, Davey Resource Group ● **Cecilia Danks**, UVM Rubenstein School of Environmental & Natural Resources ● **Bonnie Donahue**, Agency of Transportation ● **Mike Fallis**, Limbwalker Tree Service ● **Kate Forrer**, Vermont Woodlands Association ● **Ann Hazelrigg**, University of Vermont Extension ● **Emilie Inoue**, Agency of Agriculture ● **William Jewell**, Wm Jewell and Company ● **Suzanne Kelley**, Department of Health ● **Savannah Ferriera**, Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation ● **Robert McCullough**, UVM Dept. of Historic Preservation ● **Sara Packer**, Vermont Electric Coop ● **Tim Parsons**, Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association ● **Darren Schibler**, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission ● **Tim Smith**, Rutland City Forester ● **Warren Spinner**, VT Tree Wardens ● **Scott Wunderle**, VT Chapter-ASLA



VERMONT URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

- He does career counseling around the country. He served on the Council 22 years ago.
 - Mark has been doing outreach to a lot of companies in Vermont.
 - There are a lot of education opportunities to share what the Council does.
 - The New England ISA does a monthly outreach to their membership and a quarterly newsletter.
 - They offer grants for student scholarships to attend the annual conference.
 - Mark has been reaching out to some technical colleges and universities to offer career counseling in Arborist careers.
 - The deadline for submission for the next newsletter is March 20th. There is a need for urban forestry technical.
 - Discussion about outreach to local colleges/universities
 - There is a student rate of \$20.00 for the conference.
- “Disadvantaged Communities” Discussion
 - UCF’s Approach
 - Communities identified through the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool
 - Communities identified through the Vermont Department of Health’s Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)
 - Communities that include Vermont Urban Landscape zones with less than 40% urban tree canopy cover as calculated from 2016 land cover data.
- What nuances can we learn about the communities that are included in our “disadvantaged communities” list?
 - Communities with less access to forested/natural areas
 - Smaller communities that don’t qualify for some of these funding opportunities because of median incomes. RPC’s can assist with this.
 - Making sure that there are trained staff and/or volunteers in place to care for these plantings once they are in place.
 - How do we define community forests? Broad definition - Trees where people live, work, and play.
 - We should be as transparent as possible, listing out our criteria for making determinations.
 - A lot of the national tools are not fine enough or granular enough.
 - The primary tool used by the US Forest Service is CJUST. If you need to drill down further there is another tool being developed.
 - Chris offered to reach out to regional planning groups.
 - Emily pointed out that disadvantaged communities can often go hand in hand with educational disadvantages. When it comes to applying for these grants, learning about them, access to all of that, and the ability to put forth strong applications can be challenging.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Melissa Levy – Chair, Community Roots, LLC ● **Chris Campamy**, Vermont Planning and Development Agencies ● **Richard Amore**, Agency of Commerce and Community Development ● **Josh Behounek**, Davey Resource Group ● **Cecilia Danks**, UVM Rubenstein School of Environmental & Natural Resources ● **Bonnie Donahue**, Agency of Transportation ● **Mike Fallis**, Limbwalker Tree Service ● **Kate Forrer**, Vermont Woodlands Association ● **Ann Hazelrigg**, University of Vermont Extension ● **Emilie Inoue**, Agency of Agriculture ● **William Jewell**, Wm Jewell and Company ● **Suzanne Kelley**, Department of Health ● **Savannah Ferriera**, Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation ● **Robert McCullough**, UVM Dept. of Historic Preservation ● **Sara Packer**, Vermont Electric Coop ● **Tim Parsons**, Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association ● **Darren Schibler**, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission ● **Tim Smith**, Rutland City Forester ● **Warren Spinner**, VT Tree Wardens ● **Scott Wunderle**, VT Chapter-ASLA



VERMONT URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

- Darren added that it's important to include what does this mean to be a "disadvantaged community", what would this program do to help, and what input can those people have on our process and our funding? This needs to be part of the conversation as early as possible.

Breakout Groups

- **Group 1: Will tree availability be the bottleneck?** Assuming we receive IRA funding, there will be a lot more funding available for a lot more tree planting of large shade trees. How can we best engage with the nursery industry to give them a heads up?
 - Tree availability
 - Often ups and downs in nursery inventory
 - Talked about letting nurseries know ahead of time
 - Establishing a state tree nursery, perhaps at VTC
 - Train people to grow trees, select species
 - Riparian tree planting
 - Planting bare root trees
- **Group 2: Working with new partners:** Regardless of IRA funding status, we are switching our service model to be more proactively reaching out to municipalities/partners opposed to only serving those with the capacity to ask for assistance. Seeking ideas, organizations or networks into which we should be looped, and thoughts on how to best engage with new and diverse partner groups.
 - Stress at the municipal level - programs and applications need to be simple
 - Project ideation
 - Recreational partners such as Trout Unlimited, Back Country Hunters, and Ducks Unlimited as potential new partners to assist with projects
- **Group 3: Urban Forest Visioning Webinar:** Assuming we receive IRA funding, we will hold (reschedule) a 1-hour evening webinar to provide information and gather feedback about this unprecedented opportunity. What questions should we ask or what feedback should we gather from our stakeholders to make sure we're meeting their needs within the bounds of the projects we have proposed?
 - Having a session at the Arbor Day Conference
 - A webinar
 - A survey
 - Importance of being as broad as possible so we can get as many people as possible giving input

Meeting Adjourned

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Melissa Levy – Chair, Community Roots, LLC ● Chris Campamy, Vermont Planning and Development Agencies ● Richard Amore, Agency of Commerce and Community Development ● Josh Behounek, Davey Resource Group ● Cecilia Danks, UVM Rubenstein School of Environmental & Natural Resources ● Bonnie Donahue, Agency of Transportation ● Mike Fallis, Limbwalker Tree Service ● Kate Forrer, Vermont Woodlands Association ● Ann Hazelrigg, University of Vermont Extension ● Emilie Inoue, Agency of Agriculture ● William Jewell, Wm Jewell and Company ● Suzanne Kelley, Department of Health ● Savannah Ferriera, Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation ● Robert McCullough, UVM Dept. of Historic Preservation ● Sara Packer, Vermont Electric Coop ● Tim Parsons, Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association ● Darren Schibler, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission ● Tim Smith, Rutland City Forester ● Warren Spinner, VT Tree Wardens ● Scott Wunderle, VT Chapter-ASLA