



Ad-Hoc Committee on Environmental Issues for the BABCNC – Minutes

Friday October 18, 2019 1:30 p.m.

Location: Tree People 12601 Mulholland Drive

1. Call to Order, Roll Call of Ad-Hoc Environmental Committee – Mindy Rothstein Mann, Chair + Jamie Hall, Stephanie Savage, Maureen Smith, Ellen Evans, Wendy Morris, Maureen Levinson & André Stojka
6 Present: Mindy, Robin, André, Ellen, Jamie, Robert – plus 2 guests
4 Absent: Stephanie, Maureen, Wendy, and Maureen
2. Approval of October 11, 2019 Agenda: Moved by Ellen; seconded by André; 6/0/0 passed
3. Approval of March 7, 2019 Minutes (Attachment): Moved by Robin; seconded by Mindy; 6/0/0 passed
4. Public Comments on non-agendized items within the purview of this committee – None
5. Report & Discussion since last Ad-hoc Committee Meeting:
 - André reported that his homeowner's group has banned the use of gas-powered leaf blowers in all of its common areas, and he told us that they have a large greenbelt. He is hoping that homeowners will follow suit in their private gardens.
6. Discuss Previous Agenda Items and any new significant updates: As noted above, under #5.
7. **Discussion of Possible Goals – General Concepts of where we may want to focus**
 - a) **Leaf Blowers** – Mount a campaign to get the city to enforce the existing ordinance.
 - It was suggested that we use the article/language in the BCA newsletter as a starting point and build on it to mount a campaign to ban electric leaf blowers. Members of the committee felt it was better to engage the community and try to change their habits through mailings and/or social media vs. trying to get the city to enforce the current ordinance.
 - b) **Retaining Walls** – Change the definition of retaining walls and close the loop-holes so we can avoid obtrusive and massive walls
 - Jamie explained that the current hillside retaining wall ordinance was adopted in 2006 and came from Don Loze and others in our Neighborhood Council. But there are loopholes that developers take advantage of, e.g. if you attach anything to a retaining wall, like a garden trellis, then it is no longer considered a retaining wall and it is exempt. Jamie is going to write a new motion by November 15th to amend this ordinance.
 - c) **Tree Issues** –
 - Before discussing the specific ways to address the individual tree issues, Mindy began by giving an introduction and explanation that she had spoken with TreePeople and Alison and Andy in Councilman Koretz' office; her purpose was to get updates on what was going on in the city and to gain important perspectives on where we might be most effective in partnering with both government and private environmental groups. Mindy expressed that she believes that change is in the air, but there is still much work to be done, and felt that educating the public on the benefits and importance of trees is crucial.

- Jamie believes that the best way for us to be effective at this time is to help ensure that Councilman Ryu's protected tree motion passes through City Council and doesn't languish and then die. Jamie pointed out that his motion has 3 parts to it, and they address the issues in number 1, 3, and 4 below. Ellen moved to create a call to action to move Ryu's 3 tree motions forward.

1. Mount a **marketing**/educational campaign to make people understand the value of protecting our trees, and to be willing to support funding for urban forestry (use social media, have an event) What do other cities do?
2. Mount a campaign to get the other neighborhood councils and their council members to support tree ordinances and urban forestry – find other critical **partners** throughout the city.

Table this for the time being – focus instead on passing Councilman Ryu's protected tree motion.

3. Change the position/**priority** in the building department so trees and environmental issues are at the beginning of the permitting process, not at the end of the process.
4. Assist in getting the “**Protected Tree Ordinance**” passed through City Council – and perhaps get other “substantial trees” protected as well.
5. See how fire practices and environmental issues in this city can diverge instead of working in opposition. (i.e. hillside clearance and trimming of the trees during nesting season)
6. Improve/change the process as it is channeled through the PLU committee
 - a. Develop an **environmental checklist** for use by applicants and our PLU committee to ensure environmental issues are being considered (i.e. wildlife permeable fencing)
 - b. We need to change the process so all applicants with a request for **Tree Removal** will have to appear before the PLU committee BEFORE they go to the Board of Public Works.

It was decided that Bob and Jamie would speak with Stephanie and ask her if she could make a list of items to be considered by the PLU committee and given to developers.

7. Discussion, Follow-up & Possible Action on Further Environmental Issues to be Raised and Followed at the Board meetings
8. Good of the Order
9. Adjournment

Next Committee Meeting Date TBD

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