

**PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
URBAN HEAT ISLAND/TREE AND SHADE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
September 29, 2020**

**Phoenix City Hall
Online Utilizing WebEx**

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Allen, Dwayne, Vice Chair via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Campbell, Marc via phone	Mark Hartman, Office of Sustainability (OOS)
Chandler, Hazel via phone	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Esposito, Aimee via phone	
Halperin, Tiffany via phone	
Hondula, David via phone	
Rodriguez, Nicole via phone	
Spartan-Platt, Vanessa via phone	
Syke Torres, Ginger, Chair, in person	
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Berisha, Vjollca	Andie Abkarian
Bettis, Anna	Luke Edens
Dalla Costa, Wanda	Brianna Williams
Doebbeling, Bronwyn	Connor Worley
Forte, Nika	Drew Bryck
Galindo-Elvira, Carlos	Jan Doughty
Hager, CJ	Jesse Westad
	Jessica Bueno
	Jim McPherson
	Kevin Pirehpour
	Lee Woods-White
	Ryan Boyd
	Rodney Boden
	Stacey Champion
	Tabitha Meyers

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 2:07 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

2. Review and approval of July 11, 2019 Minutes

ACTION:

Vice Chair Dwayne Allen made a motion to approve the July 11, 2019 minutes. Subcommittee member Nicole Rodriguez seconded the motion, and it carried 9:0.

3. Subcommittee Member Welcome and Introductions

Chair Ginger Torres welcomed members to the subcommittee and emphasized the focus of the subcommittee on tangible actions surrounding urban heat island along with trees and shade that will go to the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission for approval and then recommendations to City Council. The committee then discussed the best time to meet in the future. Traditionally, the subcommittee had met after EQSC meetings every month on the second Thursday of that month. Vice Chair Allen suggested moving the meeting to a different day of the week as having two meetings in a row would “make for a long day.” Vice Chair Allen suggested moving the day to two days before EQSC. Chair Torres asked if the members preferred morning or late afternoon meetings, with a few members indicating that late afternoon is preferable. Subcommittee member Nicole Rodriguez indicated that to serve the community and public better that meetings should be held in the late afternoon time frame, with Subcommittee member Aimee Esposito agreeing. Other members mentioned that depending on the day and time, they may have other obligations, such as other committee meetings. Chair Torres moved the member introductions to a future date.

4. Previous Work of Tree and Shade Subcommittee, including Recommendations and Status of Recommendations

Vice Chair Allen recounted the previous efforts and resulting recommendations of the Tree and Shade Subcommittee. Vice Chair Allen spoke about the 2010 Tree and Shade Master Plan that laid the groundwork for way forward to achieve an “ambitious” goal. An incident occurring in Fall 2017 where trees were removed from downtown led the public perception that the plan was not being followed. The Tree and Shade Subcommittee was formed to create a set of recommendations that were critical for the city to take action. The subcommittee also wanted protections for the existing tree stock throughout the city. Those recommendations were then submitted to EQSC and were approved and submitted to council. Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Hartman provided an update to the subcommittee and indicated that the recommendations would be going to council this fall. Subcommittee member David Hondula asked if they would be deliberated by council. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman said one of the recommendations, in the form of a Planning and Development text amendment, should be going to the council this fall. Subcommittee member Rodriguez in on the Encanto Village Planning Committee and stated that the text amendment was not a part of the agenda for October. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman offered to obtain the timeline for Chair Torres. Subcommittee member Esposito shared concerns about how the recommendations were presented in the City Council Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee where the central conversation was around a tree donation portal. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman spoke about the role of staff in facilitating that conversations and interactions between the EQSC subcommittee and Council.

5. Summary of City Urban Heat Program

This item was taken up after item 6: Phoenix Urban Heat Island. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman used a PowerPoint Presentation to show the city’s current urban heat

programs. The presentation described the urban heat island effect where urban areas experience higher temperatures than surrounding rural areas and how it affects public health and economic viability. Different programs, like the Heat Relief Network and weatherization programs were discussed, along with efforts to make Phoenix a “HeatReady” city, a term he hopes to make analogous with StormReady. This includes creating shaded corridors in the more vulnerable communities. Subcommittee member Tiffany Halperin asked about the neighborhoods and shaded walking paths. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman indicated that the neighborhoods that would be a focus would be in south and west Phoenix, but that they do not align with the Villages. He proposed asking ASU to use the walkshed tool to map. A website with a map of Tree Equity Score was referenced:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ad74848d9aa348088e03fe7b4cdd2f6a&extent=-12597021.6613%2C3901394.4594%2C-12330256.4325%2C4031643.1556%2C102100>.

He then described the requirement for development around the light rail to be 75% shaded as required by the Walkable Urban Code. Chair Torres asked if the climate action plan being developed would incorporate resilience into the body of the plan. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman responded that the plan would be focusing on Arizona climate, including air quality and especially heat. Subcommittee member Esposito then asked if this subcommittee should be split into one being tree-focused and the other focused on urban heat island issues. Chair Torres reiterated the mandate for the Urban Heat Island and Tree and Shade Subcommittee includes both the urban heat island and trees. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman then spoke about the planting of trees and the carbon offset program, where funds are obtained to plant even more trees. Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked about tree inventories and was told by Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman that the last inventory was done in 2014. Subcommittee member Halperin commented about accountability being a factor and that there are no funds allocated for enforcement, so there will not be accountability. A discussion ensued between Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman and subcommittee members concerning the upcoming Planning and Development text amendment with Vice Chair Allen requesting an update from the Planning and Development Department.

6. Phoenix Urban Heat Island

Arizona State University Associate Professor David Hondula used a PowerPoint Presentation to talk about Urban Heat in Phoenix. The presentation described the difference in temperature experienced when in the sun vs. shade and in urban areas vs. vegetated areas within the city. The biggest difference in experienced temperatures is at night, when urban areas do not decrease in temperature as much as rural areas. Sufficient urban heat mitigation efforts could counteract the increases in temperature due to climate change. He spoke about Nature’s Cooling Systems Project that targeted different neighborhoods according to criteria like heat, usage, history and opportunity, health and vulnerability, and community. He also indicated an important facet of the project was speaking to individuals and determining their needs. He recounted a story about how residents of a neighborhood spoke about the lack of shade at a bus stop. When members of the project looked at the maps, they could not find a bus stop at the location indicated by the residents. It was then determined that the bus stop they were talking about was not a public transit bus stop, but a school bus stop. He also spoke about Maricopa Association of Governments’ Shade and Thermal Comfort requirements as part of the Active Transportation Plan that targets 20-minute walking routes. Excellent shade coverage is set at 60%, with minimum acceptable coverage set at 20%. Vice Chair Allen observed that the data presented was for the May to September time periods and that residents experience warmer temperatures throughout the year now. That it may be important to look beyond that period. Associate Professor Hondula responded that other seasons are studied, and

shoulder seasons are economically important in Phoenix due to the influx of people. Subcommittee member Esposito noted the thermal standard and Associate Professor Hondula indicated there are over 200 thermal indices being used in research.

7. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

Future possible agenda items include:

New member introductions

Open Meeting Law

Tree and Shade Recommendation Planning and Development Text Amendment

Update

Urban Forestry Roundtable

8. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Matthew Potzler, Environmental Quality Specialist

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