



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MOTION 20180606 007c

Date: June 6, 2018

Subject: CodeNEXT Addenda Regarding Tree Issues

Motion by: Hank Smith

Seconded by: Peggy Maceo

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission made recommendations regarding CodeNEXT prior to the issuance of the CodeNEXT Addenda and the language from that recommendation is still valid; which says that tree protection requirements in the Code be preserved; and

WHEREAS, upon reviewing the Addenda, the Environmental Commission has concerns with that document as it relates to Urban Forest Protection and Replenishment contained in Article 23-3C; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission does not feel that these additional regulations were properly reviewed and vetted with the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is known as a green city, and for more than 30 years has created protections and regulations to safeguard Austin trees, springs and creeks.

THEREFORE, the Environmental Commission recommends the following:

Replace “23-3C-1010 (A) Purpose” with the following:

The urban forest has social, ecological, cultural, historical, and aesthetic benefits for the citizens of Austin. A 2016 study by the U.S. Forest Service and the Texas A&M Forest Service estimated that there are nearly 34 million trees in the City of Austin, and trees in the city save citizens almost \$19 million a year, and have a standalone, compensatory value of \$16 billion. The study also found that: (1) trees less than five inches in diameter (DBH) account for 61 percent of the canopy cover, (2) trees 8 to 19 inches in diameter (DBH) have greater leaf area relative to abundance, and (3) the larger the tree, the greater the environmental benefits. Consequently, the urban forest is an integral part of the City’s infrastructure, and the City has an interest in planning and protecting the resource, with the goal of increasing the urban forest within the City to maximize the aforementioned benefits;

Modify section 23-3C-1030(A) to add:

“Direct staff to provide updates to the Environmental Commission regarding any changes or delegation of functions to reviewing departments for items under their purview;

Reorder Sections 23-3C-2010 and 23-3C-2030 so that protected trees are first in order, to prioritize protected trees;

Replace section 23-3C-1080 (A) Tree Permit with Section 23-3C-2040 (A) to reinstate the original language regarding preconstruction meetings back into Section "A" as follows;

"Approval of an application to remove a regulated tree is effective immediately unless associated with development plans. If associated with development plans, removal is effective after the development plan approval and required preconstruction meetings have occurred."

All Environmental Commission recommendations from the April 18, 2018 regarding CodeNEXT and tree protections are still valid.

VOTE 10-0

For: B. Smith, Creel, Perales, Thompson, Neely, H. Smith, Guerrero, Gordon, Coyne, Maceo

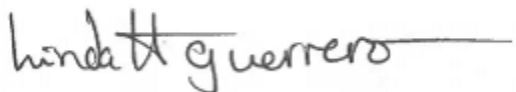
Against: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

Absent: None

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Guerrero". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Linda Guerrero, Environmental Commission Chair