

**Heritage Tree Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2007
Water Treatment Plant
Wilsonville, Oregon**

- Present:** Nancy Appling (Chair), Maynard Drawson, Mike Fontenot, Doug Grafe, Charlotte Lehan, Molly McKnight, Pat Moran, Tim Nitz, Arne Nyberg, Paul Ries, Andy Smogor, Al Tocchini
- Absent:** Excused: Tony Dorsch, Peter McDonald, Fred Nilsen. John Brenne, George Forbes, Christina Lilienthal
- Staff:** Jim Renner
- Guest:** Steve Meshke, Clatsop County Parks

1. Introductions

Nancy thanked Charlotte reserving the meeting room at the Wilsonville Water Treatment Plant and the City of Wilsonville for providing box lunches to the committee. Committee members made self-introductions and welcomed Steve Meshke from Clatsop County Parks.

2. Approval of 10/20/06 meeting minutes

Arne moved that the minutes be accepted; Tim seconded the motion; Paul recommended a correction to the action taken on the Gabriel Park Forest nomination; the minutes were approved as edited.

3. Committee Membership

A. Tourism position vacancy

Jim said that Josh Ingle has resigned from the committee which opens the position for one representative from a tourism related industry, association or agency. Jim received several suggestions from the committee for possible recruits and will work with Nancy on finding a candidate to fill the position.

B. Travel Information Council Members

Jim reported that Council members George Forbes and Christina Lilienthal wish to join the committee along with John Brenne. The committee said they most certainly would welcome their participation whenever they are able to attend.

4. Heritage Tree Nominations

A. Charles Caples House orchard, Columbia City

Nancy called for consideration of the nomination; Arne seconded the nomination. Jim said that he and Fred visited the Caples House on December 28th where they met with Bob Lott, the property caretaker, who submitted the nomination. The Caples House Museum and grounds are owned and operated by the Daughters of the American Revolution and occupy a whole city block. The Caples House was built in 1870 and the orchard planted soon thereafter.

Jim relayed Fred's regret that he could not be present to discuss the nomination, but that he supported it. Jim distributed additional site photos and information about Charles Caples and the Caples family role in founding and developing Columbia City. Jim believes that the nomination clearly meets the criterion for representing a significant and distinguishable entity within Columbia City. The Charles Caples House museum and grounds are the central landmark

of the town and have directional signs from Highway 30. Jim also said that a case could be made that the nomination meets the criteria of being associated with a person or group of historic significance and for being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history. The Caples family were 1844 Oregon Trail pioneers, were the first settlers in this area of Oregon to occupy a site where the Hudson Bay Company intended to build a trading post, and they platted the town of Columbia City on their original donation land claim. Charles Caples was the first doctor in Columbia County, founded the first school with his sister, and operated riverboats with his brother.

The committee commented on the orchard's visibility and accessibility to the public, the historic house being preserved as a museum, and the setting by the river which all create a good attraction and visitor experience. The nomination was then approved on an 11-1 vote.

5. New Business

A. Sitka Spruce at Klootchey Creek

Paul reported that he and Alan Kanaskie from Oregon Department of Forestry, and Jim Renner met with Steve Meshke at the Sitka Spruce on December 21. They inspected the recent windstorm damage that ripped a large section of rotted wood from an old lightening scar out of the trunk 70-90 feet above the ground. The purpose of the visit was to offer some initial advice and options for managing the tree and site. By December 22, the news of the tree was on the front page of the Oregonian and Fred Nilsen was on television news speaking about the tree. On December 29, Paul and Jim submitted formal letters from ODF and the Heritage Tree Program to Clatsop County outlining their observations and options for consideration. Paul and Jim attended a strategy meeting with Clatsop County officials on January 10 and returned on January 12 to join county officials to speak at a media day event. The outcome of these efforts produced a balanced approach to mitigating the hazard potential around the tree by assuring public safety while still allowing the public an ability to see this much loved attraction while allowing nature to take its course. For a three-week period, the Sitka Spruce made headlines throughout Oregon and with news coverage nationwide.

Steve Meshke told the committee what interim steps Clatsop County had taken thus far and discussed the County's ideas for relocating the access road through the site, changing the parking lot area, and adding interpretive signs for the public.

Jim advised that TIC had made changes to its website to provide a Sitka Spruce fund for the public to make donations to help Clatsop County create interpretive materials.

6. Old Business

A. Solicitation packet to OR Historical Society Affiliates

Nancy reported that an information packet consisting of a cover letter, nomination form, newsletter, and brochure was sent on January 2 to 90 historical organizations throughout the state to tell them about the Oregon Heritage Tree program, to encourage nominations, and offer more information. Jim said that the Museum at Warm Springs had responded and was considering the nomination of a cottonwood grove at their site.

B. Guidelines for County Heritage Tree Programs

Nancy described the progress made by the sub-committee of Charlotte, Paul, Arne and Nancy that is nearly finished and features a packet of reference materials to assist counties and cities in forming their own local Significant Tree programs. The materials include a sample nomination form, a listing of ideas and things to be considered, contact information for different tree programs around the state, and a cover letter to explain the materials.

C. Big Tree Nomination and Recertification Process

Nancy met with Cindy Deacon Williams of the National Center for Conservation and Science Policy (NCCSP) in Ashland. Oregon Department of Forestry has transferred management of the Oregon Register of Big Trees to NCCSP. The NCCSP is close to being ready to locate and measure Oregon's national champion big trees for American Forests register, and is looking for help.

7. Updates and Reports

A. Barlow Road Tollgate Maples Dedication Event

Jim announced that the dedication is set for April 4 at 11:00 AM. Gary Larsen, Supervisor of the Mt. Hood National Forest is scheduled to be a primary speaker. Jim is looking for a knowledgeable historian to speak about the history of this site on the Oregon Trail. Jim will work with Molly and Kathleen Walker to coordinate media coverage.

B. Reports from Members

Molly was sad to report that the William Barlow black walnuts have a serious fungus condition and may not be healthy enough to be nominated. She is researching possible trees that date from the pioneer Henderson Lewelling nursery in the Milwaukie area.

Andy inquired about the champion black walnut tree on Sauvie Island and if there are known sources that document its history.

Charlotte was congratulated on being named the Executive Director of Friends of Historic Champoeg in St. Paul.

C. TIC Report

Jim was contacted by the Siuslaw National Forest who said that they wish to hold the dedication event for the Giant Spruce at Cape Perpetua in September or October of this year instead of waiting until 2008. They would like to use the dedication as a kick off event for the 100th anniversary of the forest in 2008.

A nomination was just received for a small grove of oak trees in Silverton that Jim will ask a committee member to inspect it before the summer committee meeting.

Cheryl Gribskov wrote an article about the Hager Pear published in the Salem Monthly.

8. 2007 Meeting Schedule

The next meeting will be held on July 20, 2007 at Warm Springs. This will give the committee an opportunity to see the cottonwood grove at the Warm Springs Museum.

The fall meeting will be held at Yachats in conjunction with the dedication event of the Giant Spruce at Cape Perpetua.