



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

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February 24, 2020

Mr. Earl Eutsler  
Associate Director, Urban Forestry Division  
District Department of Transportation  
55 M Street SE, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20003  
[earl.eutsler@dc.gov](mailto:earl.eutsler@dc.gov)

### **RE: Aligning the District Department of Transportation Urban Forestry Division's Policies and Resources Regarding Ginkgo Trees**

Dear Mr. Eutsler,

On February 3, 2020 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by seven commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (7-0-0) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

ANC 2E has observed that the city's application of resources to Ginkgo trees is confusing. The Urban Forestry Division (UFD) of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) currently does the following:

#### Specific to Ginkgo trees only (versus other trees):

- Spray female Ginkgos to reduce the fruiting given such fruiting has been reported as a safety hazard. The ANC notes that this safety hazard is so significant that UFD independently decided to create a female Ginkgo replacement policy that allows homeowners living in front of female Ginkgos to petition to replace female Ginkgos. The spraying requires significant coordination with residents and city services.
- Maintain and manage a female Ginkgo replacement policy. Under this policy, UFD staff visit the trees, spend time with homeowners who petition for Ginkgo replacement, and spend time with ANCs as UFD decided that ANCs should be involved in Ginkgo tree replacement decisions.
- Remove and replace female Ginkgos, some of which UFD purchased as certified male Ginkgos.

#### COMMISSIONERS:

Kishan Putta, District 1    Joe Gibbons, District 2    Rick Murphy, District 3  
Anna Landre, District 4    Lisa Palmer, District 5    Gwendolyn Lohse, District 6  
Elizabeth Miller, District 7    Matias Burdman, District 8

- Purchase and plant certified male Ginkgos. At times these males are planted in locations where female Ginkgos were removed; males Ginkgos can, over time, reveal themselves as female.

Not unique to Ginkgos:

- Trim Ginkgos as needed

There are multiple residential streets in Georgetown that are lined with Ginkgos. As a result, Georgetown has become very familiar with UFD's Ginkgo replacement policy. Some homeowners have sought to use the UFD replacement policy, while other residents have significant concerns about the policy, whether they live in front of a Ginkgo or not.

ANC 2E greatly respects and appreciates the work done by UFD to maintain Georgetown's beautiful tree canopy. The value of having a tree canopy in an urban area continues to grow. ANC 2E, however, has observed that UFD activities related to Ginkgos can be contradictory and thus applied resources in this area are not well aligned. UFD has a petition process that allows female Ginkgos to be replaced due to safety and/or quality of life challenges, yet UFD then allows the removed female Ginkgo to be replaced with a male Ginkgo that can, over time, be revealed to be a female Ginkgo. Moreover, UFD has delegated Ginkgo decisions to ANCs, who neither have urban forestry expertise nor access to budgets to support their decision making.

ANC 2E asks UFD to:

- Provide its long-term vision for the role of Ginkgo trees in Georgetown streetscapes. ANC 2E would welcome UFD to present its vision at an ANC meeting.
- Make changes to its Ginkgo policies so that Ginkgo removal and replacement actions are not following one another.

Commissioners Gwendolyn Lohse ([2E06@anc.dc.gov](mailto:2E06@anc.dc.gov)) and Rick Murphy ([2E03@anc.dc.gov](mailto:2E03@anc.dc.gov)) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Rick Murphy  
Chair, ANC 2E