



**Spokane Park Board
Development & Volunteer / Citizen Advisory
Committee**
12:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 7, 2026
In-person and WebEx virtual meeting
Fianna Dickson – Marketing & Communications

Committee members:

DVCAC:

- X Elizabeth Goldsmith – Chair / Comstock Neighborhood Council
- X Laura Ackerman / ~~Jeff Lambert (Alternate)~~ – Friends of the Bluff
- X Cole Taylor – Friends of Riverfront Park (12:02-12:46)
Paul Lindholdt – Friends of Palisades (*absent/excused*)
- X Kathryn Kolquist – Friends of Manito Park
Sandy Wicht – Community Assembly (*absent/excused*)

DVC:

- X Jennifer Ogden – Chair / Park Board
- X Bob Anderson – Park Board
- X Gerry Sperling – Park Board
- X Lindsey Shaw – Park Board (12:06)
- X Lee Williams – Park Board
- X Elizabeth Goldsmith – DVCAC representative

Park staff

Fianna Dickson
Sarah Deatrich
Amber Ramirez
Angel Spell

Guests

Paul Kropp – Community Assembly

Minutes

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by DVC Committee chair Jennifer Ogden. See list above for attendance.

2. Public comment:

Elizabeth Goldsmith offered Jennifer Ogden a lovely orchid and thanked her for her time on the Park Board and the DVC. Elizabeth expressed much appreciation for Jennifer's professionalism, availability, and support.

3. DVCAC action items:

A. None

4. DVCAC discussion items:

A. DVCAC interests and goals for 2026 – Elizabeth Goldsmith

Elizabeth asked two questions of the committee:

- 1) What can this committee do to add value to the “Friends of” community, this committee, the Park Board as a whole, and to the community? She noted that there are somewhere between 80 and 100 parks in Spokane, and less than 10 “Friends of” groups and questions why that is.
- 2) What is the purpose of this meeting? Elizabeth feels that one reason is to share information within the committee itself. Another is outreach to attract members of the public or potential “Friends” groups or volunteers.

Laura Ackerman suggested inviting people to the committee meetings to encourage involvement, whether through volunteering, adopt-a-park, or creating a “Friends of” group. Elizabeth suggested contacting those neighborhood councils listed on the Parks levy project list. Fianna Dickson added that there will be staff outreach to those neighborhoods as well. Lindsey Shaw said perhaps committee members could visit those parks on the project list and share information with patrons. Lee Williams informed the group that as a previous chair of the DVCAC, she sent emails to all neighborhoods in order to begin conversations and encourage engagement. Elizabeth mentioned that the Community Assembly has a forum in which they can address all neighborhoods as one group. She is hoping Nick Hamad will attend a meeting and present about the levy projects and staff outreach, etc.

Jennifer Ogden explained that the original conception of the group was to be a conduit for information from citizens to Park Board and vice versa. She also stated that the group needs to be careful to manage citizens' expectations for project timelines.

Elizabeth also would like the group to think about future goals.

B. Potential future agenda items – Elizabeth Goldsmith

- 1) Nick Hamad – Park Levy/Together Spokane update

5. DVCAC standing reports:

A. DVCAC member news – Elizabeth Goldsmith

Friends of Riverfront Park – Cole Taylor

Cole reported that there will be a meeting next month to discuss FoRFP membership.

Lee Williams reported that the partnership between Community Minded Enterprises and the Browne's Addition neighborhood to fund a Play and Learn for children ages infant through school age, have submitted a Parks Foundation grant proposal.

Friends of the Bluff – Laura Ackerman

Laura reported that Nick Jeffries from Spokane Fire Department will be at the Women's Club on January 13th at 6:00 p.m. to speak about forest fire fuel reduction. Laura also invited Elizabeth to be on her radio show to talk about Parks.

Friends of Manito Park – Kathryn Kolquist

No report. There will be a Board meeting on Monday the 12th.

Comstock Neighborhood – Elizabeth Goldsmith

Elizabeth reported that the up-and-coming Friends of Comstock group is making progress. They have received a draft MOU with Parks and are going to be working on drafting bylaws. Lee will send her group's bylaws to Elizabeth as an example. Lindsey Shaw asked Elizabeth to journal her process of starting a Friends group to help others with the process.

Fianna stated that Spokane Parks has a very robust social media presence, and Parks is happy to promote neighborhood activities. She also reminded the group of their closed Facebook group for information sharing, the committee's missions & objectives sheet, and the toolkit which guides one through the process of starting a Friends group. Additionally, Fianna reminded the group that the Together Spokane website is for Park Levy improvement updates.

6. **DVC action items**

A. None

7. **DVC discussion items**

A. SpoCanopy/Tree Equity Spokane – Amber Ramirez

Amber presented an update on SpoCanopy and Tree Equity Spokane. She provided [maps](#) of the project boundary, a tree canopy percentage map, and a heat index map which shows how heat lines up with lack of trees in an area.

In September 2023, Urban Forestry (UF) was awarded \$6 million to improve canopies across much of Spokane by removing dead trees, planting trees and performing high needs maintenance pruning on trees in public right-of-way.

The goal of the planting portion of Tree Equity Spokane was to plant 500 trees each year to reach a 30% tree canopy. Roughly 480 trees have been planted over three planting seasons. Progress is slightly slower than anticipated due to a funding pause in 2025, as well as difficulty gathering sign-ups and interest in free trees.

Four different class 2 trees are offered for planting in 5' planting strips, as well as one smaller class 2 tree for planting underneath utility lines. Also, one class 3 tree option is offered for planting in strips 8' wide or wider. The Spokane Conservation District is purchasing, storing, and providing the trees. The trees are all deciduous, which are more fire-wise than conifers in that they are pruned to a certain height at planting which prevents

'ladder fuels'. Also, the trees planted in the right-of-way are spaced at 20' to prevent fire jumping from crown to crown.

Questions arose about planting in certain areas, and Angel Spell explained the considerations specific to the grant which are: 1) The areas within the boundaries need to be considered low-income or high need for canopy, and 2) specific to street trees.

The Lands Council (TLC) provides education and outreach for planting and gathers sign-ups for free trees at community events and through their volunteer and stewardship work. One volunteer planting will be done each season. A total of 15 trees were planted over the last three seasons in Nevada Heights, Emerson-Garfield, and Logan neighborhoods with assistance from TLC. TLC is conducting health checkups and providing extra assistance and education to locations found struggling.

Amber has presented at neighborhood council meetings and plans to begin reaching out again to gain interest for Spring 2026 planting.

The Spokane Conservation District also has a tree planting program – within the same geographic boundaries – for trees on private property.

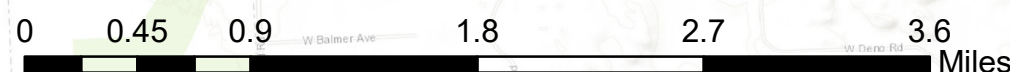
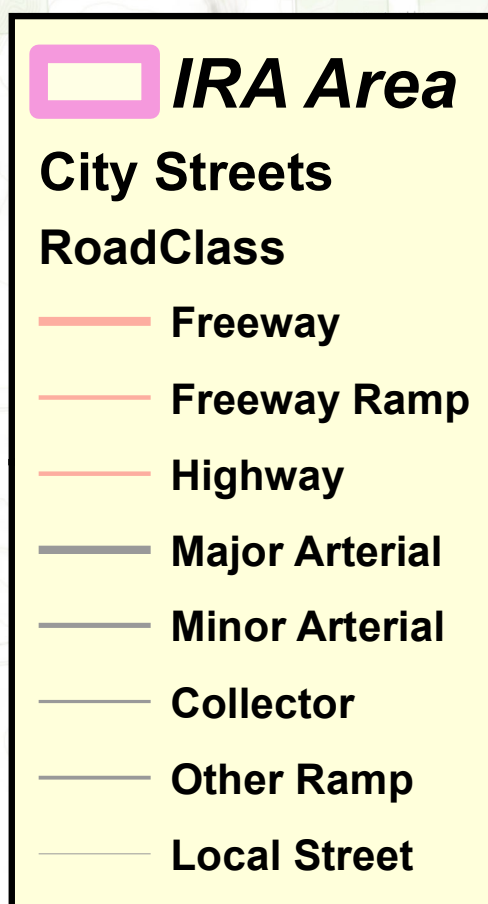
8. **DVC standing reports:**

A. None

9. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

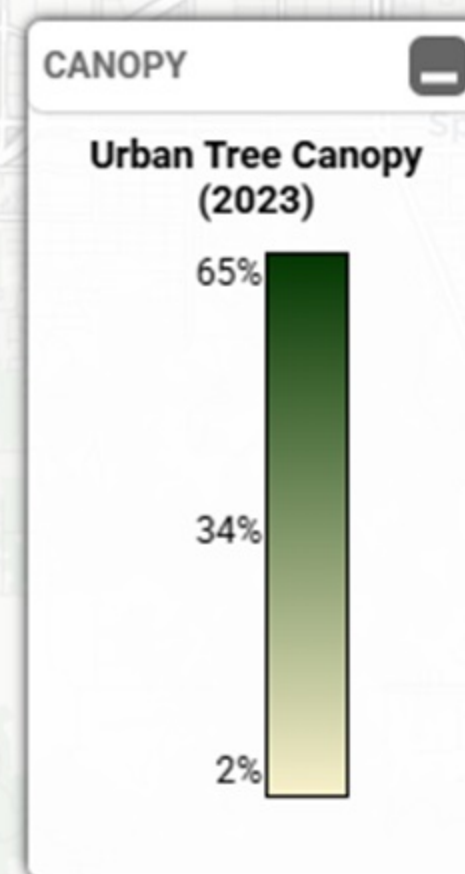
The next regularly scheduled meeting is 12:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 11, 2026, in-person in the Finch Arboretum Ponderosa Room, and virtually via Webex.

Tree Equity Spokane



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Urban Tree Canopy



Urban Heat Index

