



Travel Information Council  
1500 Liberty St. SE, Suite 150  
Salem, OR 97302

MINUTES  
Oregon Heritage Tree Committee  
Thursday, August 11, 2025  
Virtual Meeting  
TIC Office, Salem

**Committee Participants:** David Hedberg, Chair; Al Tocchini, Vice-Chair; Mike Hogan; Jennifer Karpis; Brittany Oxford; Carol Palmer; Samantha Wolf.

**Excused:** Arne Nyberg; Nancy Appling, Molly McKnight, Kristin Ramstad; Kristine McConnell.

**TIC Staff Participants:** Beth Dehn, Jessica Carbone

---

**Call to Order/ Introductions:** Hedberg called the special meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Self-introductions were made.

**Public Comment:** Carbone shared the email comment provided by Ramstad, who was unable to attend the meeting. Ramstad stated that she did not feel the nomination warranted approval because the tree species did not have a strong connection to Oregon's heritage. The story about the Olmsted design and vision of the location where the arboretum is located has a better association. Ramstad said she felt the linear Arboretum is a cool place and concept, but not necessarily worthy of a heritage designation.

### **Heritage Tree Nomination**

**Ainsworth Linear Arboretum:** Hedberg summarized the history of the nomination, recognizing this is the committee's third review. Hedberg said the original nomination was for a single Hornbeam in the arboretum. After the committee's July review, the nominator was asked to expand his nomination to include the entire arboretum, its work in grassroots community forestry, and the initial Olmstead planning of the site's location. This expanded nomination is what the committee is asked to consider for this meeting. Hedberg asked Dehn to share the committee's nomination criteria. Palmer said that she did not grasp the nomination's connection to local, regional, individual events, trends, or industries of historical significance. Karpis said that this nomination is not a direct correlation to a historical entity, yet it is no less important to honor the site as an example of 21st-century urban forestry practices. It reflects the current times of densification of urban areas, climate change, community-led movements, and the continuous evolution of urban forestry. Karpis said the arboretum is an intersection of all the stories, enabling the community to be involved in urban forestry. This undertaking may be something to be honored after its completion, or this nomination could be an opportunity to honor it in progress. It may be situated in Portland, but it could be replicated anywhere. Tocchini said if this was an urban forestry award, it would be a very successful nomination, and if the arboretum is in existence 30 years from now the nomination would be approved for all the points mentioned by Karpis. But Tocchini felt now, as a Heritage tree nomination, it falls short. Wolf noted that some of the trees in the arboretum were very interesting but asked the committee if the nomination should include the arboretum as a whole or if a few model trees should be selected to represent the arboretum. Hedberg said this is an interesting balance before the committee, not to be anachronistic, and also recognizing the intentions of people in the past. Hedberg said the potential for the site is being able to draw the connections between the planning and planting styles of Olmsted's

plan, the foresters that followed him, and the community foresters of the present, though he recognizes the current nomination doesn't make that case. Hedberg felt the strongest parts of the nomination are the sections that talk about the neighborhood, the city, the city's support, and the citizen tree collection. These support a more grassroots history of people and communities that aren't associated with big names. Palmer supported Hedberg's statement that there is important context the nomination alludes to about working-class Portland neighborhoods and possible red lining, but she did not see this idea expanded on and tied to the arboretum. Oxford said the arboretum, as a community-led project, is unique. The nomination, as it stands, has a lot of information and points in many different directions but lacks depth to connect those to a specific focus. Oxford asked if there was any information that supports this arboretum being important to the changes that were made in the urban forestry practices in Portland. Hogan said he agreed with Tocchini that he could not find a solid heritage connection to the site. Karps said that she felt Gersbach would provide additional information if it was requested by the committee. Karps then mentioned approval from the City of Portland is still needed, as they are the managers of the land. The committee discussed the nomination's pros and cons and what information they would like to see included in any future nominations about the arboretum. Hedberg and Karps volunteered to help Gersbach revise the nomination to be resubmitted. Dehn asked the committee if they felt the arboretum has been in place long enough to show a historic perspective of what its development has done for the state, country, and/or urban forestry. Hedberg said generally, within this program or the National Register, 50 years is the benchmark, but there are exceptions.

*Karps made a motion to table until the nomination can be revised to clarify its important content and provide missing information. Palmer seconded. 1-6 Vote. Hedberg - Aye, Tocchini - Nay, Hogan- Aye, Karps- Aye, Oxford- Aye, Palmer- Aye, Wolf- Aye.*

Hedberg and Karps volunteered to contact the nominator and work on the revised nomination.

Hedberg thanked the committee for its thorough deliberation and shared his appreciation for their honest and open discussion.

### **Updates & Reports / New Business**

**JQA :** Dehn provided details of the upcoming JAQ Tree dedication taking place on September 21, 2025.

**Adjourned at 10:00 a.m.**