

**Committee on Public Planting  
Meeting Notes  
October 13, 2010**

**Present:** Emily Axelrod, Magrit Betke, Maggie Booz, Janet Burns, Paula Cortes, David Davis (co-chair), Chantel Eide, E. Thomas Flynn, Mauricio Gomez, Michael Hanlon (co-chair), Madeline McDowell, Cynthia Smith, Florrie Wescoat, David Lefcourt, City Arborist, Les Barber, Community Development Dept. representative

**1. Membership Review/Recruitment Update**

- Interviews were conducted by Lisa Peterson, DPW commissioner and David Lefcourt, City Arborist.
- The committee now comprises 7 reappointments and 10 new appointments
- Les Barber continues as CDD representative.
- November meeting will focus on the enabling ordinance and other orientation topics.
- In general the purpose of the committee has been improvement of urban forestry practices through advice and support of the arborist. Now seems an opportune time to consider specifics and how to be in line now with the ordinance. Members can bring their own interests to the table.

**2. Environment Committee Meeting**

- The Environment Committee of the City Council, chaired by Henrietta Davis, held a public meeting Sept 30 to discuss planting, maintenance, and protection of street trees. The several members attending this meeting reported back on some of the issues covered.

- David L. started off with the power point presentation prepared for the environment committee meeting about the urban forestry program. It covers staffing, statutes, and ordinances, tree pruning, planting, removals, protection, and the ongoing development and maintenance of a tree inventory. There are about 17,000 city owned trees (street, parks and cemeteries). The city has no jurisdiction state DCR trees. Danehy Park and the golf course are managed by the Dept of Human Service Programs and Fresh Pond Reservation by the Water Dept.

- In discussion, Dave Davis suggested that the committee think about the entire tree removal process - from reasons for removal to follow-through on replacement (or not).

- There were questions about a resistograph, what is it and when is it appropriate to use. David L. explained the technology and suggested a demonstration at a spring meeting.

- Beyond the state-mandated Tree Warden duties, another goal is to understand the other ordinances, statutes, policies and programs affecting city trees- such as ADA standards, any planting guidelines for private developers through community development, what are committee responsibilities under chap 8.66 of the Cambridge Municipal Code, tree planting as part of state Chapter 90 projects, utility company tree work, construction damage, such as due to sewer separation, resulting in tree decline and loss. Narrow sidewalks often preclude replacement trees due to ADA requirements.

- There was discussion about ways to help foster concern for public trees, with more outreach and information. Make advice and instructions available. Support volunteer efforts. Build-up the back of sidewalk program. Could there be an annual communication that goes out through the DPW encouraging tree care such as watering young street trees and weeding tree pits, etc. and advice for tree care on private property. Florrie will look into the feasibility of this.

- David L. had information about challenge grants available for urban and community forestry projects from Mass DCR.

**3. Updates on Street Tree Planting, Pruning, Park & Cemetery Pruning and the Tree Inventory**

- This fall approximately 155 trees are being planted, including some new cultivars, (experimentally, 18 trees are bare root). Locations and tree types will be found on the DPW website. About 150 trees will be planted next spring including a focus on replanting in the parks. In a separate contract, maintenance pruning is proposed at Cambridge Cemetery during November. Maintenance pruning of school grounds is proposed for the Feb & April school vacation periods.

- Dave D. suggested that Dave L. might send out, with the agenda, a simple list in bullet form, the information in these categories to be discussed as needed at the meeting. Also list emergency tree removals, if any, with a follow-up plan for replacement, if necessary.

**4. Next meeting November 10, 2010**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:00**