

CAMBRIDGE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PLANTING

Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2020

Present:

Members: Paula Cortes, Joan Krizack, Seanna Berry, Nancy Phillips, AnnMacAdam, Chantal Eide, Maggie Booz, Florrie Wescoat, Michael Hanlon, Cynthia Smith

Staff: DPW: David Lefcourt, Andrew Putnam, Abigail Bentley; CDD: Eric Thorkildsen

Guests: Phyllis Simpkins, Francesca Holinko

Minutes submitted by Paula Cortes

Meeting began at 5:30pm.

Agenda Items:

1. Minutes for November and December were reviewed, minor adjustments made, and approved.

2. Arborist Report: Abby Bentley was introduced, the new Assistant City Arborist. She is from Westford originally, and comes to us from working for New York City, Bronx, where she did contract management, tree inspections, and data analysis. Her duties in Cambridge are TBD. She has just started this week.

This is a quiet time for the Department. Pruning contracts reviews, Arbor Day planning, etc.

Q: will staff comment on Urban Master Plan? Comments are those that have been made through the planning process. Now Plan goes to City Council for comment and action. There will be further comment/coordination on Tree Protection Ordinance for any revisions.

3. CDD report: Erik mentioned two projects: 1) 402 Rindge Ave – Just A Start proposes 2 low rise buildings on western edge of current Rindge Towers site. Plantings and site considerations, trees and shading are being looked at. 2) 101 CambridgePark Drive: We've seen this project already. He reports agreement around tree removals and transplants, filling in street tree gaps – replacing and/or keep existing trees. Pedestrian and bike path connection will be made with MWRA permission to add and replace trees. Utility issues preclude some tree placement. Bike path width discussion: one way 5 feet plus 2 feet either side without vertical obstructions; tow way 10 feet with 2 feet either side.

4. CPP letter re UFMP Technical Report: Committee received a final draft. Comments by J. Krizack and C. Smith were incorporated. Committee to receive final working, and this will be sent this week to listed recipients.

4. Other: F. Wescoat initiated a good discussion of previous year's work and projects for 2020. 2019 was busy with UFMP work as well as usual arborist activities.

2020 focus possibilities:

- UFMP follow through to ensure this work continues. Engagement of City Councilors: possibly attending special meeting with CPP, perhaps our April meeting, providing them with key summary points in Plan, working so that they will read the Plan.
- CPP provide a draft Council Order regarding implementation of UFMP:
- CPP writing article/press release/flyer or working with City Manager for city publication
- Advocate for position as recommended in UFMP report.
- There was discussion of Private Property Tree Ordinance which expires March 11. General consensus that this should be extended, giving time to discuss, revise if needed, and perhaps made permanent. Officials should be urged to not let this expire.

- Discussion of CPP outreach in accordance with various UFMP report items. Potential to work with DCR on improvements of their properties in Cambridge. Various methods – City MOU's, Friends groups (Friend of Magazine Park have been very effective).
- Discussion of how best to use our meeting time, beyond standard agenda items. Possible subcommittees to focus on outreach, advocacy; Town/Gown reports to City, with hope that they will begin to include landscape and tree canopy items in their reports; other projects. February meeting will begin this discussion.

Meeting was adjourned at 7pm.