

Committee on Public Planting Minutes  
2-14-18  
Submitted by: Chantal Eide

Attendees:

David Lefcourt DPW, Ellen Coppinger DPW, Matt Girard MVVA, Gary Chan CDD, David Davis, Julie Lynch architect CDD, Kurt Massey of Gregory Lombardi, Carolyn Matthews, Florrie Wescoat, Kathleen Kelly, Maggie Booz, Dennis Jen, Sophia Emperador, Chantal Eide, Karin Weller, Cynthia Smith, Jon Lewis.

The meeting was called to order and the December and January minutes were approved.

Plans for the entrance to City Hall Annex 344 Broadway - entrance - Kurt Massey of Gregory Lombardi.

The goal was to make it safer and more accessible, to improve wayfinding and readability, and to improve ecological function. High shrubs were blocking views, light, and visibility; mailboxes were front and center; the two Lindens were stunted and in decline. The goal was to make the entrance accessible to the broadest group, improve wayfinding, and to make the entrance more obvious. The new plan has a symmetric entrance with two accessible pathways and a rain garden with steel anti-slip stairs. The rain garden absorbs rainwater runoff, captured on site and turned into groundwater. Sand based structural soil will give the new street trees a better chance to reach maturity. A heated sidewalk, run off photovoltaic cells on the roof, will reduce the need for salt.

Some plant choices are: ilex verticillata Nana red sprite, fothergilla, Amelanchier, blue flag iris, nepeta, and Princeton elm.

David had agreed not to block handicapped spaces with trees - is it possible to shift spacing to the boundaries between cars so as not to block vehicle entrance/exit?

KK suggested aster purple dome for fall color as many of these plants bloom in spring. Blueberry was also suggested.

Flexipavers for the trees were discussed - the city has the vacuum necessary, and water by bike people flush the salt out. Aesthetics and durability were discussed.

Rogers Street Park - Matt Girard, Michael Van Valkenburg Associates

The two acre site, excavated four feet down, currently grass, will be landscaped to have distinct and harmonious spaces with topography, pathways, trees, shrubs, and vine pergolas. There will be a lawn, playground, water play, sledding hill, sports area, and a dog run.

There is an existing Chinese elm street tree which served as inspiration for a grove at this entrance.

London Planes will flank the Third Street side, planted in structural soil. There will be an oak grove entrance, a honey locust entrance, a beech grandiflora and musclewood cluster, tall narrow evergreens at the top of the hill.

Species the Committee felt would not thrive in the environment: Himalayan pine, quaking aspen. Counter suggestions: Magnolia acuminata, tulip trees or other large native trees that would provide shade and thrive in a park setting.

Ellen Coppinger and the committee asked for more and taller trees, not just individual trees - think groves of mixed understories and taller trees - don't miss this opportunity for mini forests or copses. More canopy and more natives, more mini forests.

Several members felt that the angle of the rectangular pergola close to the sidewalk should be corrected to

reduce awkwardness.

Glass fragments in the asphalt as at Danehy Park were suggested.

The contractor for the Urban Forestry Master Plan was discussed - the city is in negotiation with Reed Hilderbrand, the committee's unanimous first choice. The final product hopes to address canopy loss on private land, to augment the urban forest with science and research, and to address climate change resiliency and its symbiotic relationship with the urban forest.

Arborist updates:

David Lefcourt is hoping stump grinding can start in March. He would love planting to start in April but it usually ends up being May. The new Work Management system is helpful. The DPW collected 400 gator bags to give the trees some air over the winter. Bags are tidied up and redistributed in the spring.

There were no CDD updates.

CPP would like to reach out to community groups that are interested in tree issues in their neighborhoods; would also like new members from all neighborhoods - current members are encouraged to reach out to friends.

Discussed what happens to large tree trunks - if they are not chipped up, they will sequester carbon. We need to change the perception that it is beneficial to make and apply mulch all over the landscape. Long-lived wood products, such as an oak table, have carbon-storing properties, as distinguished from mulch or wood pellets slated to be burned in a power plant.

Action items:

1. Examine the possibility of street trees on Rogers St. Even if the park will provide back of sidewalk trees, street trees provide pedestrians protection and go further to creating canopy over the street for cyclists.
2. Anything we can do to make David's wish of planting in April come true?
3. More canopy, more natives, taller trees on Rogers St Park site.
4. Blueberries and asters at City Hall Annex.
5. The 100 additional trees in the participatory budget bring us over the threshold of the six year pruning cycle - can we ask for additional resources for David to keep the six year pruning cycle?
6. Shift tree wells at City Hall Annex to not block accessible spaces?
7. Reach out to friends from all neighborhoods for new members.

Thanks to David, here is the list of minute takers for 2018 up through Oct:

March - Jonathan

April - Sophia

May - Dennis

June - Nancy

July - Carolyn

August - No meeting

September - Kathleen

October - Cynthia