

Cambridge Committee on Public Planting Minutes 13 January 2021

Present: David Lefcourt, Chantal Eide, Abby Bentley, Joan Krizak, Maggie Booz, Erik Thorkildsen, Nancy Jordalen, Paula Cortes, Sophia Emperador, Kate Riley, Cynthia Smith, Andrew Putnam, John Nardone, Ann McAdam, Abby Bentley

1. Review Minutes from December 2020
 - a. Minutes to be reviewed in February. MB will distribute.
2. CPP reaction letter re: Review of Tree Protection Ordinance
 - a. CE to write reaction letter to Review of Tree Protection Ordinance presented by Owen O'Riordan in December with aid of MB's minutes from the last meeting. SE has notes as well.
3. Follow-up on school planting opportunities with Owen O'Riordan
 - a. Andrew Putnam will follow up on school planting locations with OOR.
4. Updates from City Arborists
 - a. Abby Bentley says they are finding locations for spring planting. Also looking for locations for trees funded by the Participatory Budget - these should be in urban heat islands. East Cambridge locations would be suitable.
 - b. They are also identifying locations for urban microforests in case those win the Participatory Budget. They are hoping to find some areas to de-pave and forest.
 - c. Linear Path is a trial run,
 - d. Little Mass Ave around the 1600 block is another possibility.
 - e. The Star Market at Mt. Auburn seems desirable but was put on hold by the CDD because of other street developments there.
 - f. Russell Field, the Grace property, and Danehy are candidates.
5. Updates from CDD Rep Erik Thorkildsen
 - a. A playground showcasing Universal Design Principles is being designed at Danehy by Weston & Sampson. Projected Summer 2022. Danehy is landfill, so must work gently. Kate Riley will see if the Department of Human services can give a presentation next month.
 - b. Glacken Field - in addition to the renovated playing fields a small transition forest playground for children is envisioned here. KR will ask DPW for a presentation for next month. Trunks here will be sculpted by Mitch Ryerson.

- c. The bike path at Fresh Pond - there are drainage and flooding issues - it was developed from an old plan. A new drainage plan has been developed.
 - d. Possible purchase of a section of land on Fresh Pond Parkway from BB&N, possibly for affordable housing or open space.
 - e. North Cambridge, Jerry's Pond - there have been meetings with the community, developers, and the city regarding cleaning up the site and connecting it with Russell Field and the swimming pool. It's owned by GCP Applied Technologies / W.R. Grace on Whittemore Ave. The site is contaminated with asbestos.
 - f. The bike path is very disjointed around Alewife and the area should be made more welcoming. The Alewife Reservation drainage project completed by DPW is beautiful. Connectivity is desirable. Applied Technologies wants surface parking on Whittemore street, possibly in exchange for cleaning up the pond, creating boardwalks and an overlook, making the site more accessible.
 - g. There is an RFP put out by the CDD for design for the small, narrow rail trail between the parking lot of Whole Foods and the housing at New street.
 - h. Erik Thorkildsen presented a plan at Graves Landing and the Monsignor O'Brien Highway near the Cambridge Galleria mall to be considered on 19 January. Drainage issues above the underground parking are forcing structural repair and redesign of landscape above. An accessible ramp necessitates taking out some trees, the project has been asked to consider larger, more canopy trees.
 - i. On 26 January, MIT College of Computing on Vassar St. will present a plan - this will be an opportunity to replace some of the dead trees and an opportunity to connect to Washington Park through a plaza.
6. Other business
- a. CPP membership updates - eleven applicants spread evenly throughout the city (9 of the 13 neighborhoods were represented) David and Andrew will interview. It is hoped they will be able to join the February meeting.