

## **Committee on Public Planting**

Cambridge, MA

**Date:** October 13, 2021

**Time:** 5:30 – 7 pm

**Location:** via Zoom

### **Participants:**

1. Abby Bentley
2. Ahron Lerman
3. Andrew Putnam
4. Bill Deignan
5. Bryan Jereb (presenter)
6. Chantal Eide
7. Cindy Carpenter
8. Cynthia Smith
9. Erik Thorkildsen (CDD liaison)
10. Jerry Friedman (presenter)
11. Joan Krizack
12. Kate Riley
13. Kevin Beuttell
14. Maggie Booz
15. Maria Hottelet
16. Owen O’Riordan
17. Ruth Loetterle
18. Sandra Fairbank
19. Sara Cohen
20. Sophia Emperador
21. Tracy Orr

### **Attendees:**

1. Ellen Coppinger
2. Patrick Callahan

### **Agenda**

#### **1. Review minutes from June, July and September meetings.**

- Q: Do we have a quorum? Owen: 7 people constitutes a quorum for this Committee
- **Decision:** Minutes are approved.

#### **2. Project Presentation: River Street/Carl Baron by Jerry Friedman (DPW)**

- **Presentation:**
  - Review of project, similar to Western Ave project. Driven by underground utility work.
  - Trees: 139 trees currently, will remove 38 due to decline/end of life span or conflict with desired design elements. Will lose 338 caliper inches.
  - Will add almost double the caliper inches in new trees.

- Notes on tree palette:
  - Incorporating Cherry trees to be near/interact with art installation
  - Trees selected for different flowering times – earliest near Mass Ave., later down the River St. corridor.
  - London Plane Trees will replace specific London Plane trees removed
  - In Carl Barron Plaza – plan for Honey Locusts around perimeter for light to filter through
  - Extending plaza, removing low plantings to increase trees. Proposed Honey Locust here on edges, and Pin Oak in middle.

### TREE COUNTS (PROJECT WIDE)

EXISTING REMOVAL			PROPOSED TREES		
CAL(IN)	QTY	TOTAL CAL (IN)	CAL(IN)	QTY	TOTAL CAL (IN)
3	2	6	2.5	147	367.5
4	7	28	4.5	26	117
5	2	10	5.5	9	49.5
6	3	18	6.5	9	58.5
7	2	14			
8	3	24			
10	7	70			
12	8	72			
14	3	42			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>592.5</b>

- **Discussion:**
  - Q: Possible to transplant the trees restricted by above ground tree wells to other places?  
A: Yes, some of that is happening.
  - Committee recommendations to swap species in some spots:
    - Suggest swapping Honey Locusts with River Brches or Kentucky Coffee Tree
    - Consider using Osage Orange tree in place of Lindens
    - Consider Bald Cypress that can be clustered
    - Suggest fewer Honey Locusts in Carl Barron plaza – it's a hot area, could use more shade
    - Discussion of surface and soil structure: permeable asphalt, starts with sand, sand-based structural soil, layers of crushed stone, concrete paving slab, unipavers
- **Next steps:** PPC to send short memo with species recommendations.

### 3. Updates from City Arborists

- Tagged ~400 balled & burlap trees in NJ nursery last week
- Planting about 85 bare root trees, to be delivered in last week of Oct., first week of November – esp. for Miyawaki forests.
- Using balled & burlap trees this fall because the contractor works better with them, and they're a little bigger, better for street trees.

### 4. Updates from CDD Rep Erik Thorkildsen

- 2 affordable housing projects advisory reviews coming up:

- 52 New Street
  - Rindge Ave.
- No formal review by CPP, encourage members to look at the site plans and participate in advisory reviews if possible.
- **Next steps:** Erik to send links to the project sites

## 5. Defining the CPP and future goals:

A. Presentation by Owen O’Riordan on CPP’s role/purview

B. Identification of action items for 2021/2022

- **Presentation:**

- Ordinance – on the City Council page – is in the municipal code, spells out the purview of the CPP

• *It shall be the **purpose** of the committee to **promote and improve** the quality and diversity of **public plantings** throughout all areas of Cambridge*

- This committee shall:
    - Advise to the DPW, CDD and the Planning Board
    - Serve as resource
    - Review all proposals for new public works with landscape components
    - Advocate to City Council
  - Committee includes members, plus the City Arborist, member of CDD, and should include a rep from the Open Space Committee

- **Discussion:**

- CPP is mostly advisory, not regulatory authority
  - Q: Where is Open Space Committee rep?
    - **Next step:** Owen will follow up
  - Q: Is it only trees, and only City or development projects? A: Not specific to trees, and purview could include other plants and other ways of working with the public.
  - Sophia proposes next steps:
    - Subcommittee focused on secretary work, meeting minutes, CPP advisory or response letters, also maintenance of GoogleDocs site
    - Establish monthly discussion topics to focus on in a given area
    - Subcommittee focused on outreach – more/different kinds of communication, City website – improve presentation for initiatives
    - City Council – can speak to them as individuals
    - Subcommittee on zoning
    - Work with Bicycle and Green Cambridge committees
  - Q: How much advocacy?
  - Request for monthly email from Arborists about number of trees planted/ planting. **Next step:** Arborist to institute process.
  - **Next steps:**
    - Create subcommittees

- Maggie to send out note about Zoning SC
- Sophia to head up the housekeeping SC – or Governance & Communications?
- Ruth and Cindy to head up the Outreach SC
- Sophia to send out email asking for sign-ups, also for topic interests – e.g., soil structures, tree protection ordinance process, identify the heritage trees around the city
- **Discussion:**
  - City DPW has done a good job with addressing public right of way tree plantings, but private land plantings less so. Now can do more/better work with public ROW plantings.
  - Can we get neighbor-to-neighbor conversations, with city paying for trees? Also talking with bigger property owners in city. Canopy was mostly lost on residential property.