

## Committee for Public Planting Meeting Minutes 14 March 2012

Present: City Arborist David Lefcourt, Denise Heintze, Chantal Eide, Susan Glazer, David Davis, Paula Cortes, Tom Flynn, Florrie Wescoat, Kathleen Kelly, Madeline McDowell, Nancy Phillips, Craig Kelley, Maggie Booz, and one other woman ?

The meeting was held at City Hall in the Ackerman Room due to construction at 147 Hampshire St. Susan Glazer, Deputy Director for Community Development, and City Councilor Craig Kelley were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 by David Davis.

### 1. Review Minutes

The Public Planting committee expressed a desire to be helpful to contractors building in the public domain. It would be desirable to be made aware of such projects during the permitting process. Then helpful suggestions about selection of appropriate planting material could be made sometime before the 90% completion stage. Les Barber used to informally make the committee aware of projects but he is retired. We seek someone from Community Development to perform this function. It was suggested that a couple of interested members of the committee would contact David Lefcourt, who would get in touch with Ms. Glazer.

### 2. New CDD Representative – Susan Glazer

David Lefcourt presented Cambridge's yearly review for the application for the 2011 Tree City USA award. This review enumerated projects the City Arborist's office has initiated and the responsibilities they have. Some of these are: the tree survey to track diversity and for analysis, the junior forester program, the water by bike program, and tree walks. For protection of large trees, the arborist has printed on contractors' permits that if they encounter a root greater than 2" diameter, they must call the arborist.

It was suggested that we calculate how the new 4' sidewalk clear space requirement for ADA affects the urban tree canopy. A tree canopy analysis is being performed Jarlath O'Neil-Dunne of the Spatial Analysis Laboratory at the University of Vermont. David L will follow up on this.

David L. showed us the ArcGIS tree viewer available on the city's website.

David L. enumerated the conditions that dictate emergency tree removal. These factors include storm breakage, dead sections, cavities, and fungus growing on roots and tree indicating decay. One such example was at 79 Pemberton St.

Requirements by NSTAR for free space around trees were discussed.

### 3. 2011 Year in Review

There was further discussion of the tree inventory, which is fairly complete but needs finalization and analysis.

### 4. Species Selection

The City Arborist hopes that some trees may not be Asian Longhorned Beetle hosts as much as thought. Nonetheless, starting this fall he is going to try one to two years of planting non-host species around the city. There was brief discussion of various species and their characteristics vis a vis street tree suitability: Styrax (low branches), Yellowwood (too tall for wires?), and Sweetgum (varied success as street trees).

### 5. Back of Sidewalk Tree Planting Program

The revised ADA regulations requiring four rather than three feet of sidewalk width will be enforced starting immediately in Cambridge, making the back of sidewalk program even more important. There was a mention about the city requesting permission to use very small pieces of private property for the back of sidewalk trees, and the question was raised of an appeal regarding strict enforcement of the ADA regulations.

The new bumpouts on Prentiss and Lowell streets were described as successful. These are popular in certain situations but are decided on a case-by-case basis. Hydrants are a related issue, as evidenced by the recent Myrtle avenue bumpout – it's possible to move hydrants in order to accommodate a tree or a bumpout-parking space swap.

The meeting adjourned at 7pm.