

CPP Meeting – DPW 147 Hampshire St. -- Feb. 13, 2013

Present: David Davis, Michael Hanlon, Gitte Venicx, Kathleen Kelly, Emily Axelrod, Tom Flynn, Chantal Eide, Maggie Booz, Florrie Wescoat, Taha Jennings, David Lefcourt

Minutes from January 9 meeting were approved.

It was suggested that the note taker for the meeting email the notes to David Lefcourt within two weeks. This would allow David to then send the minutes to CPP members for review, giving everyone enough time to read them prior to the next meeting.

Regarding the annual report we are preparing for 2012, we discussed different formats: chronological or topical. David Lefcourt will inquire with other departments to see if there is a standard form or template used for annual reports, and report back. The question arose as to whether the City Arborist's budget should be included in our annual report, and additionally whether the budget should be presented to the CPP. Taha Jennings said that all departmental budgets are online, in the budget section of the City's website, www.cambridgema.gov/.

Taha updated the meeting on the comprehensive network of open spaces and parks being planned for East Cambridge. The Planning Department holds public meetings seeking input on all of these park redesigns, and Taha suggested that a representative from CPP attend. A current park project is Hurley Park, and it is a good test case for our committee to review park plans. After the public meeting, there will be a preliminary plan drawn up, and that plan will come before the CPP. Taha will keep the CPP informed on the Hurley Park calendar of events.

Tom Flynn stated that the City budget is set a year in advance and that it's a good way to know about upcoming projects that involve landscaping and planting.

Michael Hanlon suggested the committee might have a role in advocating for planting in some large private projects. How, for instance, did the Fresh Pond Shopping Center get approved, being a vast expanse of stores and parking, and devoid of any planting? Taha stated that letters written to the Planning Board have an impact; and Tom Flynn talked of neighborhoods organizing and going to City Council meetings to voice their opinions about large development projects.

Maggie Booz reported on a parcel of land that was recently sold at 93 Kirkland Street. It appears to be zoned "BA" and should therefore be brought before the CPP for review of planting plans. Inspectional Services would be the department to do so.

David Lefcourt presented plans for two large projects that he is working on involving trees being removed and new ones being planted: the sewer/storm water separation project; and the MLK School on Putnam Ave. He is working with residents to determine preferred species, and looking for all possible places to plant trees.

Finally David Davis suggested that the CPP set the agenda for the next meeting. So far three items are on the agenda for March:

1. Review the planting plan for Alewife Reservation, in the area of the new retention ponds
2. Expand our list of recommended tree species for public projects; possibly develop shrub and herbaceous lists as well
3. Taha's report on zoned areas (C-2B, BB-1, BB-2 and others?) that should come before CPP when they are being developed