

COMMITTEE FOR PUBLIC PLANTING MEETING MINUTES – 8 MAY 2013

Present: City Arborist David Lefcourt, Chantal Eide, David Davis, Florrie Wescoat, Emily Axelrod, Carolyn Matthews, Michael Hanlon; Nancy Phillips, E. Thomas Flynn, Paula Cortes, Janet Burns, Maggie Booz; and Taha Jennings, Community Development Department.

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

1. **Minutes** for the meeting of April 10, 2013 were reviewed, though not formally approved.
2. **Halberstam Square** (at the Harvard Lampoon Building) – In followup to the discussion at the April 10 meeting, Ellen Coppinger is not going to install trees in the triangle area, and another planting plan is being made. We discussed opportunities for trees in other sites around the triangle area. Next steps: coordination among Harvard, Ellen, Lisa Peterson, David Lefcourt.
3. **Vassal Lane Plaza** – This is being redesigned as part of the Huron Village sewer separation project. We reviewed the planting plan; *the sense of the Committee was that the plan calls for too many plants too close together.*
4. **Massachusetts Avenue Improvement Plan** – David Lefcourt answered the questions the Committee had asked at its April meeting, as follows:
 - Is there a standard for size of street tree wells? Wells will only occur where sidewalks are at least 6' wide, in order to comply with new ADA rules mandating 4' wide sidewalks. This means beds will be 2' wide at a minimum, more where possible.
 - What is the planting medium? (This was provided at the April meeting.)
 - What tests/standards are there for materials surrounding planting beds? None.
 - Is there an effort to coordinate location of trees and location of parking spaces? No, except to try not to obstruct HC parking spaces.
 - Why are tree wells not connected where there is a relatively small space (10' or less) separating them? The attempt is to make them contiguous where possible; but in some cases this is impossible because of obstructions above and/or below grade.
 - Why isn't permeable pavement used? Because it requires deeper excavation. *The Committee expressed concern about the absence of permeable pavement.*
 - Why is there only 1 tree in the proposed Temple Bar bump-out? This appears to be because of underground obstructions. David Lefcourt will ask a DPW engineer to bring drawings at our next meeting that show the obstructions.
5. **Draft CPP Annual Report** – David Davis and Emily Axelrod provided draft templates for the annual report (note that David's is the one dated 5/8/13 not the earlier draft). Note that the current fiscal year ends June 30. The Committee is asked to comment on both drafts – see Action Items below.

6. **240 Sidney Street Special Permit Project** – Taha Jennings brought landscape and other plans from the special permit application, which will be reviewed at the June 4 Planning Board meeting. *The Committee was concerned that the landscape plan is so schematic it cannot be evaluated.* Emily Axelrod will draft a memo about this to the Planning Board on behalf of the CPP.

7. **Fulmore Park, Cambridgeport** – Taha Jennings reported on this renovation project. As David Lefcourt hasn't been involved with the proposed landscape plan, the Committee hasn't been informed about it. Taha was asked to bring plans to the next meeting.

8. **Planting List Review** – The Committee has proposed creating lists of recommended trees, shrubs, and perennials for use by developers and homeowners. As a start, the Committee will review the recommended street-tree list on DPW's website and propose additions (and deletions – Florrie Westcoat pointed out that Sophora, and also Silver Linden, seem to be toxic to bumblebees).

9. **Action Items** – The Committee decided that a list of Action Items should be included in each meeting's minutes.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Review David Davis' and Emily Axelrod's draft Annual Report templates and send comments to David by Wednesday, May 22.
- Review the DPW's website list of street trees and propose additions/deletions to create a broader list of "recommended trees" for developers and homeowners.
- Emily Axelrod will draft a memo to the Planning Board concerning the vagueness of landscape plans for the proposed Sidney Street project.
- Taha Jennings will provide landscape plans for the Fulmore Park renovation.
- David Lefcourt will invite a DPW engineer to our next meeting to clarify the underground obstructions at the Temple Bar / Mass. Ave. bump-out.