

Minutes  
Committee on Public Planting  
10-19-16

**Present:** Johan Paulsson, Kathleen Caldara, Ellen Coppinger, Gary Chan, Jonathan Lewis, E. Thomas Flynn, Florrie Wescoat, Chantal Eide, Janet Burns, Dennis Jen, David Lefcourt, Michael Hanlon, David Davis, Carolyn Mathews, Owen O'Riordan, Maggie Booz

**Minutes from September meeting** were read and approved.

**Arborist update by David Lefcourt**

Fall Planting will consist of:

- 1) 270 trees, 170 of which are requests and 100 of which are described in the Participatory Budget awardee's proposal
- 2) Huron B street project (50 trees) and Concord Avenue street project (40 trees)

Spring planting will be larger because some of fall planting was delayed due to construction schedules, and residents who declined trees or changed their minds about species.

Of the 170 trees, most are on streets, some on streets adjacent to schools (Baldwin, Cambridgeport, and Graham&Parks). In the spring, David intends to plant more on municipal grounds like schools, parks, and cemeteries.

Tree planting protocol is that David ask home or business-owner if they want a tree in the tree well in front of their home or business. David reports that Click-Fix can be frustrating because residents use it to make tree planting requests up and down streets that they don't reside or work on, or own property on.

Johann asked about planning to plant trees and then responding to a resident's objection rather than starting by asking for a yes. He made the point that we should be convincing people to plant and strategize about how to do that. David responded that multiple factors come into play, but that residents damage and vandalize trees they don't want, or worse.

David Davis commented that because of our transient population of temporary renters, we should put wells in advance of requests so that there will be a place for a tree if a request is made.

Maggie asked if tree wells where residents objected to a tree being planted were re-visited in a systematic way. David Lefcourt reported that in Cambridge he does not have the luxury of doing that though he would like to get to a point where that was possible.

**Planning Board news from Gary Chan**

605 Concord Avenue, plans are available online. CPP would like shade trees included along Concord Avenue.

Volpe Center development, a working group was appointed, developers are putting proposals together, first meeting 10-20-16, open to the public.

Envision Cambridge has formed a committee called Climate & Environment, asking for volunteers, write a letter to Melissa Peters.

Three new parks are planned in East Cambridge, public meeting 11-3-16 at 7pm at Kennedy Longfellow School.

**Star Market on Mount Auburn Street**

Maggie showed slides of tree-well weeding work there over the years, and recent City project expanding tree wells. Ellen Coppinger (new City title of: Landscape Administrator for Public/Private Partnerships) explained that concrete was removed between trees, and bricks removed at plaza over railroad tracks, drought-resistant perennials planted.

Maintenance will be performed by Cambridge Landscape.

Michael Hanlon asked if crusher run between trees and below concrete was also removed, Ellen replied no "that wasn't part of the project", City felt that 6" of loam would be sufficient for the honeylocust trees to expand their root system. Maggie asked if westernmost honeylocust that was witnessed to have been snapped off during construction was going to be replaced, Ellen said yes. Ellen had seen the stump but had been under the impression that it had died previously. CPP expressed some suspicion that roots would have sufficient expansion space, but liked the intention of the project to remove paving in favor of soil.

#### **Open Space discussion**

Fresh Pond Reservation becoming more and more populated because it is the only significant public green space in west Cambridge, and there has been explosive construction of apartments and condos along and behind Concord Avenue with little or no demand from the City to supply their own green space.

Gary reports that Envision Cambridge has an Alewife Area working group, looking at open space, runoff and drainage of storm water, and traffic.

David Davis made the point that the Alewife area is one of the Cambridge Gateways and should be treated as such by the Planning Board and the City. He expressed what many in Cambridge are feeling: that the City is a "candy store and the owner stepped out", that our City has been "giving it away".

Chantal Eide mentioned the idea of a development moratorium.

Owen O'Riordan said that all development work in the Alewife area had to be reviewed not only in regard to recreational green space but as it pertains to its ability to manage itself in case of a significant climate change event, and that he would be happy to present to the CPP new information the City has received on sea level change and how that will affect development proposals.

#### **Other business**

Kathleen Caldara brought up the development at the corner of Huron Avenue and Cushing Street in west Cambridge, and the fact that the owner there was allowed to install a curb cut that runs straight across the location of an excavated tree well. That tree well was planted last year at the request of Maggie Booz with a Princeton Elm. It was vandalized (pulled over) twice after planting and never replaced, shortly before construction began. Will developer/owner be contacted? Unresolved issue.

Tom Flynn brought up the tree at the corner of Magoun Street and Whittemore Avenue in north Cambridge. Unresolved issue.

There will be a presentation on proposed renovations at Magazine Beach at 6pm on 10-20-16 at the Morse School. CPP should attend to advocate for inch-to-inch replacement of trees being removed rather than tree-for-tree