

## COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PLANTING, Meeting Notes July 13, 2016

Present, Members: Florrie Wescoat, Kathleen Caldara, Nancy Phillips, Jonathan Lewis, Maggie Booz, Chantal Eide, Paula Cortes, Carolyn Mathews

Staff: Dave Lefcourt, David Webster, John Nardone, Gary Chan

Visitors: Nicholas Dankers, Sylvia Barnes, Charles Teague, Brian Johnson (Green Cambridge), Gretchen Friesinger (Green Cambridge), Tori Antonino, Erik Thorkildsen

The meeting started at 5:40, at the outdoor location at Donnelly Park. There were a number of visitors present, so more time than usual was spent answering questions to bring them up to speed on general matters of the committee, and in general how the committee and DPW work together.

The minutes of the June 8 meeting were approved, with the change to state that Chantal Eide, Nancy Phillips and Paula Cortes were at the meeting but not listed in the minutes as circulated. Also, the insertion of "fall" to dig hazards clarifies that statement in the minutes.

### Arborist report

There was considerable question and answer of the City budget items for tree planting, the difference between capital projects and operating funds, due to visitors not being at previous meetings where this was explained. The 'tree fund' is a separate pot. The budget is online. John Nardone and Dave Lefcourt are available to provide more information. The main point is that the City is trying to have a consistent amount of money year to year for tree planting. It is hoped that for FY17 there will be \$100,000 for operating and \$225 for capital projects.

Trees planted under the new specification includes a two year watering requirement.

Since there was no spring planting, the fall planting will be about 300 trees, which includes the Participatory Project trees. Trees will come from New Jersey and planted, it is hoped, in early October, by Leahy Landscaping. About 50-75% of these trees are from request, residential and business. Dave L. said that bare root planting is done, usually in parks. Western Ave and Cambridge Common are sites where 'bio-char' is being tested, as a top dressing for tree planting. If it looks promising, it would be incorporated into the planting mix.

Somerville visitor stated that they are pushing for all native planting in that city. Florrie commented that native plants are usually more challenged by urban conditions and there is a smaller list from which to choose.

The use of Christmas lights on trees is being rethought. Leaving the lights on too long (the wires have been wrapped around the tree limbs) can damage the tree. Paula stated that this is a problem with the trees so wrapped in Raymond Park. Also, in installing the lights, branches are damaged.

Yellowwoods were removed at 10 Winthrop and Gore Hall and Harvard has submitted a mitigation plan (money) and possible replanting of some trees.

Tree mapping – it is only updated sporadically. Dave L stated he hopes this can begin to be done in real time with new technology which he hopes will be available in the next months.

Maggie asked whether there was a city strategy to deal with the situation where trees are removed and then due to ADA regulations no new tree can be replanted in that location, resulting in many areas with no trees. There was considerable discussion. The City deals with this on a case by case basis. Back of sidewalk trees are one way to mitigate. These are then maintained by property owner.

Gary Chan, CDD report

3 Special Permits: 135 Fulkerson St, July 26; 135 Cambridge Park Drive, July 26: #313 (name ??) Aug. 2. These are all online.

Cambridge Envision meeting July 21, Alewife area, at Tobin School, 6:30 pm. An Advisory Committee is now working on this, and a Working Group soon to be formed. Info online at CDD 'Envision Cambridge'

Maggie Booz, Chair's report

Looking ahead to the upcoming year, Maggie requested committee members give feedback for goals for coming year, and specifically ways to reach overall goals of a 'greener Cambridge', in order to be more effective in help to the City.

Discussion about Vanessa's inventory – there needs to be a better process to update it. Jonathan commented need to update data, long term, in order to see trends. Also he noted need to figure out how to foster getting/growing large trees. Current planting does not encourage this sufficiently.

Discussion of Dennis Jen's mockup of electronic newsletter – comments requested. Will serve as a vehicle for disseminating information and fostering discussion.

Maggie – might we envision a broader view of the City, encompassing many concerns within the City; how to get different groups talking with one another. General discussion of Envision process. Needs to be more explicitly inclusive of 'green' issues. They are only peripherally noted.

Gary was encouraging all to attend meetings to articulate concerns.

Meeting adjourned at 7 pm.

Compiled and submitted by  
Paula Cortes