

Committee on Public Planting Minutes  
12-14-16

Present: Maggie Booz, Janet Burns, Cathy Caldera, Ellen Coppinger(DPW), Gary Chan (CCD), Paula Cortes, David Davis, Chantal Eide, Michael Hanlon, Dennis Jen, Kathleen Kelly, David Lefcourt, Jon Lewis, Carolyn Mathews, Nancy Phillips, Owen O’Riorden (DPW), Florrie Westcoat

1. CCD: Presentation of Watermark Central Venture Group landscape plan for buildings 3,4,5 by Lisa Serafin of Redgate (accompanied by Mair Lydecker of Hargreaves Associates), with discussion and recommendations by CPP. In a future meeting, Redgate will present the landscape plan for Building 2.
  - a) They reviewed the project intentions and state of the project
  - b) There was an active discussion about plantings, soil composition, hardscaping, plant sociability (inherent qualities and how they get along together), what’s worked well in Cambridge already, and other trees that fit the city profile and urban conditions.
  - c) There was a discussion about tree removal and replacement
  - d) The answers provided by the presenters met with CPP approval.
2. Main Street and Mass Ave, Columbia Ave and Bishop Allen Drive
  - a) Florrie stated that the city needs to install more canopy trees because it’s so hot in that area during the summer. The committee agreed to send a letter to the planning committee to ask for larger canopy trees.
  - b) There are currently plans for planters and street furniture. There have been complaints by pedestrians that street furniture presents an obstruction.
3. Discussion about what happens when trees are removed and the sidewalks are too narrow for replacement trees:
  - a) Several ideas were discussed, including shared streets and sidewalks, utilizing bumpouts (which may reduce the amount of available parking), back of sidewalks. There was some concern about whether back-of-sidewalk trees could replace canopy trees.
  - b) Owen estimated that the back-of-sidewalk option occurred less frequently than one would think but that he would obtain information to support his estimate.
  - c) Owen also mentioned that 90 parking spaces will be removed when protected bike lanes are installed between Quincy and Inman Streets. Additional parking spaces will be removed as protected parking is installed on additional streets.
4. Arborist Report
  - a) Tree allocations resulting from Participatory Budgeting purchases:
    1. David has been to all of the sites that had been identified as good street tree locations (Locations where stickers had

been placed on the sidewalk.) to speak with the home owners.

2. 80% of the people to whom he spoke agreed to the placement of a tree in front of their home. 20% of the people rejected the offer of a tree.
  3. David was not able to contact 100% of the homeowners, people who were away when he stopped by. He said that he doesn't have time for multiple visits to those locations.
- b) The waiting time for addressing requests to his department has fallen from 8 months to 3 months.
  - c) Tree planting next spring: David will "infill" parks and schools
  - d) There will be 3 new parks in East Cambridge
  - e) 'Envision: Climate and the Environment' committee is looking for working group members
  - f) There's an upcoming Alewife working group meeting to look at fast-track zoning

5. Ellen Coppinger: report on the Mt. Auburn St. Star Market pocket park:

- a) The site was chosen because it's wide open without overhead wires
- b) The funds were obtained from several Cambridge city departments.
- c) Tree choice: Honey Locusts were planted because they are "hard as nails"
- d) All plants were placed in soil rather than compost.
- e) Underplantings were chosen for hardiness, durability and rapid spread, plants such as caryopteris and blue juncus.

6. Other topics:

- a) Owen O'Riorden said he is willing to make a presentation on how information on climate change effects can be used with developers. The date for the presentation is to be determined.
- b) There was a discussion about holding the CPP meetings in different locations. Committee members decided to continue to meet at the DPW location pending additional supportive data for using alternative locations.
- c) There was a brief discussion about using uncut Christmas trees outside City buildings. The DPW tree is a live tree and other locations have been actively discussed.
- d) Florrie Wescoat's and Maggie Booz's terms are ending. All those present asked them to stay but there was an insufficient number of committee members available to provide a quorum.

