

CPP Meeting Minutes - May 9, 2018

Attendees

Maggie Booz, Gary Chan, Chantal Eide, Gretchen Friesinger, Michael Hanlon, Dennis Jen, Richard Krushnic, David Lefcourt, Jonathan Lewis, Ted Line, Carolyn Mathews, Nancy Phillips, Cynthia Smith, Charles Teague, Florrie Wescoat

Review of minutes

- Last month's minutes weren't available for review

City Arborist David Lefcourt - Updates

- Spring planting and stump grinding
 - David has the planting locations. The first load of trees will arrive May 18th and planting starts on the 21st. There are 250 new trees; these do not include warranty trees of which there are roughly 30.
 - Stump grinding ongoing. The bottleneck for grinding is often access to the grinder itself as DPW only has one. This grinder goes down 2-3 feet., whereas most grinders only go down about 6 inches. For large stumps grinding is often an all-day operation.
 - Florrie asked whether it was possible to get another grinder. David says that there is both talk of getting another stump grinder in addition to keeping the current one.
 - Generally, stump grinding starts early April and goes until late November / early December.
 - The planting list is not currently online.
- Tree information on the adopt-a-tree website
 - David will meet public relations to get updated adopt-a-tree information online. This action item was carried over from the last meeting.
- Arbor Day report; and possibility of planting a tree at every school
 - Activities included information signs about trees, handing out seedlings at city hall, a guided tree walk, and tree planting.
 - David noted that they had ordered too many seedlings and too shade trees. People preferred ornamental trees and plans on reducing the number of seedlings for next time to closer to 300 and to focus on ornamental varieties.
 - David hopes to perform analysis on whether tree adoption has increased through the Arbor day event
 - Florrie asked where there can be an Arbor Day Part II to plant a tree at schools?
 - David will look into this and potentially working with City Spouts and noted that there are a number of logistics involved in organizing this for all school.
- New membership for CPP; City Manager's posting for applications
 - An advertisement for new members has gone out and due June 11th. Moving forward, David and Own will interview applicants.
 - To apply, fill out an application at cambridgema.gov/apply.
- Maggie asked if something could be done about the poor condition of the gingko trees at the Haggerty School? She noted that there was a good deal of concrete in the soil when she was planting shrubs there earlier.
 - David says that he will can perform soil tests to evaluate the conditions and see the state of the trees himself. He generally likes to give trees the benefit of the doubt.

CDD Rep Gary Chen - Updates

- Public meeting for Alewife draft plan will happen on May 16th. This is a proposed scenario in includes zoning recommendations, frameworks, and actionable recommendations.
- Envision Cambridge's Climate & Environment working group will take place May 20th.
- 1043 Cambridge st. project is scheduled for the planning board next week.
- The Masses project (at Walden and Sherman st) was brought up. There is general frustration that CPP recommendations coming from reviews do not end up being incorporated into final plans.
 - With respect to the Masses project, shrubs have been planted in raised planters rather than street trees recommended by the CPP.
 - Gary noted that planning board meetings are open to the public and that the public can submit letters.
 - CPP members feel like moving forward, when reviewing landscaping plans, we should capture our recommendations in written format.
- Maggie and Florrie brought up the Market St. & Broadway development, which just had tree wells dug. The wells appear small and spaced far apart. They raised the question as to why the tree wells aren't contiguous? The concern is that trees may not be able to thrive in these wells. David will look into what can be done and thinks that the project might have been old enough that they are working off of old specs.

Urban Forest Task Force (UFTF) update

- Florrie and Maggie request that members of the CPP write letters to share their points of view in regards to what their individual concerns are, goals for the UFTF, and how the task force and CPP will collaborate.
- Various members of the CPP offered some ideas for what could be written in the letters, including: priorities for public and private trees, goals for density, and topics critical for tree success. It was also noted that the Request for Proposals would be a good place to start.
- Michael brought up the point that we shouldn't just be concerned about tree inventory, but also capturing information about the conditions of how trees are planted, including whether biochar was used, whether flexi-pave used, if the pit contains crusher run, etc. David notes that much of this information is collected already and ultimately he'd like to run comparative analysis across different dimension to understand what factors have an affect on tree health.

Idea for tree walks organized by CPP members in their neighborhood

- Interested CPP members are invited give and go on tree walks of their neighborhoods. It's informal and friends can join too. There's no need to be able to identify all the trees--members of the CPP can help with that.