



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR

THOMAS GALLIGANI
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Urban Forestry Committee Meeting
FEBRUARY 16, 2023 4:30PM
MINUTES

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting was held remotely

A recording of the meeting can be accessed here:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/9152099923324391085>

Meeting notes prepared by Breck Miller & Vanessa Boukili

Committee Members in attendance: Chris Dwan (Co-Chair), Tori Antonino (Co-Chair, arrived ~4:40pm), Amy Mertl, Jennifer Clifford, Leah Grossman, Vanessa Boukili (Senior Urban Forestry and Landscape Planner), Breck Miller (Tree Warden)

Committee Members absent: Murphy Langevin

Others in Attendance: Calla Taylor, Crystal Huff, Hunter Gates, Logan Elliot Brill, Max Meinhold, Nick Sohn, Pamela Blittersdorf, Diyyanshu Verma, Matt Carlino

Call to Order: Dwan called meeting to order at 4:34 pm

1. **Introductions / Housekeeping**
2. **Resident Concerns**
 - a. Clifford: Concerns about conduits in tree wells on Somerville Ave.
 - i. Boukili - for twinkle lights - moving away from this, starting to remove lights from trees, clip zip ties. Notify Boukili or Miller if problematic situations observed.
 - b. Concern regarding hazardous tree on private property
 - i. Tree warden will inspect and notify owner of need to mitigate hazard if potential to impact public property.
3. **Green Streets Presentation**
 - a. Mathew Carlino presents.
 - i. Public infrastructure to capture storm water before it enters sewer system. Several environmental and social benefits. Promoted by EPA.
 - ii. Consultants: ample opportunity to utilize in Somerville. Can be used to promote Somerville's greening goals. Cheaper and lower impact than other methods for

dealing with storm water. Significant financial ROI. 40-50% cheaper than ‘grey’ solutions.

- iii. Need to develop City Ordinance. Need to establish staff position/ownership of project - have representative, etc. Lots of funding, grants etc. available.
- iv. Can incorporate into bike networks on permeable pavements, safety bumpouts, etc.
- b. Grossman: how can UFC help promote?
 - i. Carlino: input on language in draft, contents, etc. Will make sure that UFC is involved. Support from UFC towards mayor, city council, etc.
- c. Will require integrated approach, coordination across departments.
- d. Miller: stats on survivorship of trees/plants in green infrastructure areas?
 - i. Grossman: not specifically- check GIWiz.

4. Updates from City

a. City Tree Removals

- i. Miller: new contract starting soon. No official word on City Tree Crew but getting “close”

b. Private Tree Removal Permit(s) and Exception(s)

- i. Boukili: 7 permit applications in 2023 so far, most are still pending. Several exemptions for invasives/hazardous trees.

c. Parks Tree Health Program

- i. Boukili: Program cycles through City parks. Pruning and hazard removal, some soil remediation. Getting ready to start this year’s program. Info on City website (<https://www.somervillema.gov/treehealth>), includes list of parks. About 300 trees will be worked on. Banner will be hung at each site while work is ongoing for public awareness.
- ii. Antonino: does program include planting?
 - 1. Boukili: no, but efforts will be made to replace trees that are removed

d. Young Tree Training Program

- i. VB: proactive tree maintenance program for structural pruning of recently planted trees (planted 3-10 years ago). Started a couple of weeks ago.

e. Spring Tree Planting

- i. Boukili: IFB (Invitation for Bids) posted yesterday – closes on March 9. Goal is to plant 175 trees in the Spring (and another 175 in the Fall).
- ii. Antonino: tree knocked down on Vinal to be replaced?
 - 1. Yes, that tree is under warranty. Warranty trees not included 175 trees.

f. Quincy Street Open Space

- i. Boukili: answers questions from list provided previously:
 - 1. Parks included in Horticultural Contract: Quincy, Symphony, Chuckie Harris, Hoyt Sullivan, Lou Ann David, Lincoln Park. Parks were assessed for horticulturalist work plan. Plans based on existing plans, but natural changes taken into account. 5 yearly visits- list of horticulturalist tasks for each visit, including hand weeding. Last year was first full year, has been developing as program progresses- work in progress. Pemberton is contractor, PSUF is very happy with them. Directive to keep native plants as long as no safety issue.

2. For Quincy revegetation plan – a native plant list is under development. Considering a dog waste area and plant establishment fence. Unclear what has been happening with disappearing plants. Snakeroot was pulled intentionally because of aggressiveness.
3. Boukili shows work schedule/ task list.
4. Grossman: would like to have more opportunity for collaboration for future contracts.
5. Boukili: contract doesn't involve planting. Contract does not include money for updates.
5. **Urban Forestry related job postings and RFPs**
6. **Arbor Day Planning**
 - a. Boukili: time to start planning. Seedlings available through Mass Tree Warden and Foresters Association. Add to agenda for next month.
7. **Ongoing Work Updates**
 - a. **Adopt-a-Tree Program**
 - i. Clifford: will continue to work offline in working group, revisit in March.
 - b. **Outreach & Arbor Day Poster Contest**
 - i. Mertl: tree workshop with school, poster contest- at least one school submitting.
 - ii. Tufts Collaboration
 - iii. Farmer's Market tabling Event – April 8th
 - c. **Species Selection and Planting Protocol** – *visioning session, made a list of what to accomplish this year*
 - d. **Use of Pesticides at Maxwell's Green** – *no update*
 - e. **Tree Preservation Ordinance** – *no update*
 - f. **Somerville's Most Wanted Weeds** - *no update*
 - g. **GLX Corridor Greening**
 - i. Antonino – met with Calvin Layton - landscaping planning consultant for MBTA. Interested in keeping eye on this and will consider including in 4-year Vegetation Management Plan. Antonino to set up meeting with a few staff and UFC members, etc.
 - ii. Boukili – information from Agustin. Species list of what was planted on the slopes – seed mix. Will share with group. Opening community path sometime in Spring.
8. **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings**
 - a. January 19th, 2023

Roll call vote to approve meeting minutes

Yay: Mertl, Miller, Dwan, Clifford, Grossman, Boukili, Antonino

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Motion unanimously passes at 6:39 pm.

9. **Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm (motion: Grossman, second: Clifford)