



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

THOMAS GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Urban Forestry Committee Meeting
OCTOBER 17, 2024 4:30PM
MINUTES

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting was held remotely

Meeting notes prepared by Vanessa Boukili

Committee Members in Attendance: Breck Miller, Calla Taylor, Doris Jenkins, Leah Grossman, Tori Antonino, Vanessa Boukili

Associate Members Present: Rob Vandenabeele

Committee Members Absent: Dorothy Suput, Marion Davis, Michael Hendrix

Others in Attendance: Amelia Morton, Sada Schumann, Tara McManus

Call to Order: Grossman called the meeting to order at 4:38 pm.

1. Introductions / Housekeeping

- a. UFC members and associate members introduced themselves.
- b. Housekeeping: Boukili – the posting for the two committee vacancies is out – applications are due by next Friday.

2. Resident Concerns

- a. Tara McManus: 9 Central Rd – letter new tree planting, but need to prune hedges first. Does want a tree but can wait until Spring in order to have time to deal with hedges?
 - i. Boukili – sure, sounds good.
- b. Audience members given opportunity to introduce themselves: Crystal, Amelia (Tufts master student), Sada (Tufts undergrad)

3. Updates from City

- a. **City Tree Removals**



- i. Miller: No new removals since the last list
 - ii. Tree Hearing in November (14th). Will send out details when have them.
- b. Private Tree Removal Permit(s) and Exception(s)**
 - i. Boukili went over list of permits issued and exemptions, will be easier to navigate with filters going forward.
- c. Fall Plantings**
 - i. Boukili - MyWRA tree planting grant(s) – 66 trees on public property and 60 on private property from this fall through next year. Planting 6 on public property this fall (next week). Program for private property plantings includes resident ambassadors – Allie Bernard, Jennifer Clifford, Amy Mertl.
 - ii. Planting 9 trees at Lincoln Park behind skate park with DPW Tree Crew.
 - iii. ~180 with Planting Contractor Wagon Wheel. Will send species list. Is about 60% native.
- d. Somerville Pollinator Action Plan Advisory Committee updates**
 - i. Grossman and Jenkins - word is getting out about the SPAP.
 - ii. There is no longer any work done by the Advisory Committee, but we need more of an Action Committee.
 - iii. Reach out to nurseries with the Plan – add this to outreach subcommittee list.
- e. Community Preservation Act**
 - i. Boukili shared information with the Committee. CPA is celebrating 10 year anniversary this year. CPA supports a lot of work that intersects with UFC – such as building parks. This year there is a question on the ballot to increase the Somerville CPA surcharge. Increasing the surcharge would double the funding for the CPA program. It is supported by the Community Preservation Committee. Check out the Somerville website for more information.

4. Ongoing Work Updates

a. Outreach

- i. Monster Mash – Michael & Tori & Rob & Allie & maybe others.
- ii. Boukili to print pollinator pantry
- iii. Pollinator yard signs – part of SPAP outreach package?
- iv. Add reaching out to nurseries to the to-do list
- v. BSLA formed a neonicotinoid working group – Grossman joined

b. Adopt-a-Tree Program

- i. Pause this until next year – Boukili putting out signs for now.

c. Species Selection and Planting Protocol

- i. No updates. SPAP helped with a lot of the work this working group was planning to do.

d. Greening the Greenline

- i. Antonino: Slope planting not successful. Supposedly seeded with native grasses and flowers. GLX can replant? When replant?

1. Boukili: we all want more vegetation. Soil could be toxic so can't crowdsource. Need time and money for project once City is in control.
- ii. Antonino: is Viola still the liaison? Can she come to a meeting?
 1. Boukili: maybe, but if you have specific questions, I can try to get answers for you.
 2. Antonino questions:
 - a. What is the timeline of the handoff from the GLX to the city?
 - b. The seeding of the slope which was supposed to be a native seed mix does not seem to have worked. What was the agreement between the GLX and the city or MBTA regarding the warranty on that piece of the work?
 - c. Is the GLX under contract to make good on that?

e. Most Wanted Weeds

- i. Taylor: Graphics are done. Waiting for more images. Maybe find copyright free images?
- ii. Grossman can help. Taylor to loop Grossman in. Bernard may want to be involved too – worth reaching out.

5. UFC structure

- a. Answered question 7 on the startup document: “What is the committees role vis a vie the arborist and other staff?”

6. Urban Forestry Related Job Postings and RFPs

- a. Jobs:
 - i. City Council Land Use Analyst
 - ii. DPW – Tree Surgeon and Public Grounds Caretaker/Gardener
- b. Upcoming contract bids: Horticultural contract, PTHP, YTT, Tree Planting, and GSI maintenance contract (Engineering)
- c. Short discussion of bioswales vs. raingardens, bumpouts around trees, and flexipave.
- d. Naomi Gross – Climate Ambassador's training program. New one starting soon. 4-5 month program. 1 zoom meeting per month info session, one meeting to discuss info. UFC may enjoy the presentations from the June ambassador projects. Boukili to reach out to Naomi to see if UF or UFC information would be a useful addition to the program.

7. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings

- a. September 19th, 2024 - *tabled*

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 6:16 pm (motion – Boukili, second – Antonino)