



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
*MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT*  
**JACOB D. WILSON**  
**MAYOR**

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Urban Forestry Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, March 19, 2026**

**MINUTES**

**Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting was held remotely**

*Meeting notes prepared by Vanessa Boukili*

**Committee Members in Attendance:** David Jackson, Leah Grossman, Joelle Renstrom, Luca Choly, Michael Hendrix, Tori Antonino, Suzanne Warner, Vanessa Boukili

**Associate Members Present:** Rob Vandenabeele

**Committee Members Absent:** Marion Davis, 2 vacant positions

**Others in Attendance:** Anne Ryan, Miranda Grace, Malik Drayton (City of Somerville)

**Call to Order:** Grossman called the meeting to order at 4:37 pm.

**1. Introductions / Housekeeping**

- a. Committee members introduced themselves
- b. Housekeeping: youth member applicant rescinded application. Two vacancies remain.
  - i. Grossman will be stepping down when moving out of Somerville. Can attend two more meetings. We will need a new co-chair.
  - ii. Antonino will also be stepping back to allow other voices to join the committee.
  - iii. Boukili to discuss with Administration how process would work for filling open positions ASAP.

**2. Resident Concerns**

- a. Anne Ryan – 90 Washington St. Working with Miles Byrne to see how can help city to consider environmental value and not just property value. City priority is to recoup the amount of the judgment. Byrne has sent a letter to the mayor, signed

by tenants, to keep in mind that they should be able to recoup costs by developing just the non-tree areas of the land (i.e., excluding the berm).

- i. Ryan has reached out to some foundations for help.
- ii. Land has saved the City money via snow storage - it is a useful working space for city.
- iii. 90 Washington St fence is a mess, strewn with nips.
  1. Boukili recommends putting in a 311 to get it cleaned up.
- iv. Boukili shared link to 90 Washington RFP:  
<https://www.somervillema.gov/90-washington-redevelopment>

### **3. Updates from City**

#### **a. City Tree Removals (Jackson)**

- 1 Ellsworth Street – Callery Pear with break out and included bark
- Nunziato Dog Park – right off Putnam. Sugar maple with declining canopy.
  - Antonino – can replant in dog park?
    - Boukili – difficult place for various reasons.
      - Warner – maybe street tree nearby?
      - Jackson – totally fence off?
      - Grossman – circular benches around the trees? Trash concern, but otherwise could provide a barrier.
- 26 Meacham St – 9 inch lilac – blew over in snow storm.
- 44 Charnwood – Huge linden failed at the base and fell over in wind storm.

#### **b. Private Tree Removal Permit(s) and Exception(s) (Drayton)**

- i. 32 Dartmouth St – 12-inch Mulberry
- ii. 32 Clifton – exempt Ailanthus
- iii. Permit application for 10 Stephenson Aman. Clarendon Hill project. More review necessary.
- iv. 64 Albion – 16-inch Sycamore Maple
- v. 57 Cameron – compromised birch tree

#### **c. Spring 2026 Tree Planting (Boukili)**

- i. Wagon Wheel will be contractor this year (3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row).
- ii. Will plant ~175 trees. Locations still pending – please submit any requests.
- iii. Boukili to share lists of planting locations and species as she has them. Will attempt to find hoptree and sourwood.

### **4. UFC Support Letter for Green and Cool Somerville MVP grant (Boukili)**

- a. Submitting a grant proposal to fund a planning project for novel solutions to tree planting in difficult locations, while maintaining sidewalk accessibility.

Committee reviewed support letter. Anne Ryan mentioned this project would be useful for seniors.

**Role call vote to approve and sign support letter** (motion – Grossman, second – Jackson)

- i. Yay: Jackson, Renstrom, Grossman, Choly, Hendrix, Warner, Antonino, Boukili
- ii. Nay: none
- iii. Abstain: none

Motion unanimously approved at 5:35 p.m. (8:0:0).

## **5. UFC Support Letter to MDAR to Reduce Use of Anticoagulant Rodenticide**

- a. Miranda Grace, member of Save Somerville Wildlife:
  - i. There are currently two State bills regarding Anticoagulant Rodenticides (AR), one is at the Ways and Means Committee (ban on ARs).
  - ii. Pesticide subcommittee decides whether to suspend registration of all AR. They are currently accepting written testimony. At a recent meeting, the industry reps said that banning AR takes away an important item in their toolbox. Similar pushback has happened before, like with DDT.
  - iii. Antonino crafted a letter supporting the prohibition of AR registration for UFC review. Committee reviewed the letter and made some minor edits.
  - iv. In addition to sending the letter to the Pesticide Board Subcommittee, UFC will CC: Somerville City Council, Rep. Christine Barber, Rep. Mike Connolly, Rep. Erica Uytterhoeven, Senator Patricia Jehlen, Senator Rebecca Rausch, Somerville Public Comments.

**Role call vote to approve and sign support letter** (motion – Boukili, second – Antonino)

- i. Yay: Jackson, Choly, Renstrom, Grossman, Hendrix, Warner, Antonino, Boukili
- ii. Nay: none
- iii. Abstain: none

Motion unanimously approved at 6:11 p.m. (8:0:0)

## **2. Ongoing Work Updates**

- a. UFC Recommendations for Mayor Jake Wilson - *tabled*
- b. Outreach
  - i. Winter Farmer's Market
    - 1. Grossman, Suput - Lots of good conversations and urban forestry enthusiasts signups.

- ii. Arbor Day 2026 – May 8<sup>th</sup>
  - 1. At Lincoln Park, “party in the park”
  - 2. Subcommittee meeting – Leah, Suzanne, Joelle, Vanessa, Tori. Boukili to set up a meeting.
- c. UFC Overview and Startup question answering - *tabled*
- d. Species Selection and Planting Protocol (SSAPP) – *remove from future agendas*
- e. Somerville’s Most Wanted Weeds
  - i. Grossman to reformat it to be larger, and to put in Powerpoint. Ready for review at next meeting to print.

**3. Urban Forestry Related Job Postings and RFPs**

- a. Job Postings: Tree foreman starting in early April. 2<sup>nd</sup> position still available.
- b. RFPs: 90 Washington.

**4. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings**

- a. February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Roll call vote to approve February meeting minutes** (motion – Hendrix, second, – Jackson)

- a. Yay: Jackson, Renstrom, Grossman, Warner, Antonino, Boukili, Hendrix
- b. Nay: none
- c. Abstain: Choly

Motion approved at 6:26 p.m. (7:0:1).

**5. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m. (Motion – Grossman, second – Boukili)