



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 27, 2016

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Katjana Ballantyne	Chair	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Vice Chair	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Absent	

Others present: Steve McEachern - DPW, Luisa Oliveira - OSPCD, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Oliver Sellars-Garcia - OSE, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:30 PM by Alderman Ballantyne

Approval of the June 6, 2016 Minutes

RESULT: ACCEPTED

199983: That the City Arborist inspect the health of the trees at the locations named within.

Mr. Rosen distributed the 2015/2016 arborist tree inspection requests and discussed software that might be helpful with the tracking of trees.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

200143: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD commission the arborist and tree warden to inspect the trees on Greenville Avenue, from Munroe Street to Boston Street, to determine their vitality and report back to the Ward 3 Alderman.

See 199983

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200185: That the Arborist inspect the health of the trees at the locations described within.

See 199983

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200289: That the Administration review concerns raised by residents about LED street lights, and change course if the problems seen in other communities are imminent.

Mr. McEachern will check the lights at each location, making adjustments where necessary, and report back to the committee. There was a discussion about the health impacts of blue lights and Mr. McEachern explained how consistency of lighting is the goal. He asked that any concerns be referred to the Constituent Services Department (311). Although the lights can be dimmed, doing so may pose the risk of not enough light being a safety hazard. Mr. Snyder will explore the dimming options.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200638: That the Director of SPCD provide this Board with the 2016 tree planting/replacement plan for all Wards.

The committee discussed unfulfilled tree planting requests and Mr. Rawson reported that 200 trees would be planted in the fall. Regarding trees cut down at the Kennedy School, Mr. McEachern explained that notice of the cutting was not required since they were not public shade trees. He also explained how the area would be re-landscaped. Mr. McEachern asked that any suggestions and/or complaints be referred to the Building and Grounds Department. Mr. Snyder will follow up with the Law Department regarding what determines if a tree is a public shade tree. Chairman Ballantyne would like the committee to meet on September to discuss tree planting.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200876: That the Commissioner of Public Works submit written responses to the Ward 7 Alderman regarding several LED street light maintenance questions.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200896: That the Commissioner of Public Works request that the city's LED lighting contractor review the report by resident Luis Morales and provide their written comments.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201019: That the Director of SPCD explain the process for selecting trees and plants for city parks, specifically when choosing non-native species over native species.

There was a discussion about non-native and invasive species trees and members were told that some non-native trees do not have a detrimental impact, may be more tolerant of road salt and may have other characteristics that are appealing. Several factors are considered when selecting the type of tree to plant, e.g., pollinators or type that can survive urban conditions. Planting only native trees doesn't work since urban conditions aren't native conditions. Alderman Davis stated that he needs a compelling reason for not using native trees.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201378: That the Director of Sustainability and Environment provide an energy master plan for the most effective systems to approach net zero for Union Square and other "transformative zones" as outlined in SomerVision.

Mr. Sellars-Garcia spoke about carbon emissions, micro-grids in Union Square, a 2017 climate change plan with carbon neutrality, the results of a vulnerability study, Somerville green tech and pilot programs.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201408: That the Director of SPCD plant a tree at 26 Illinois Avenue.

Mr. Rawson stated that this will be evaluated for a fall planting.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201421: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the numerous dead trees on lower Broadway and citywide and update this Board on his progress.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201488: That the Director of SPCD confirm that only native trees are being used in the Lincoln Park renovation and advise of the species.

See 201019

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201567: That the Arborist check the health of the tree at 143 Powerhouse Blvd.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201582: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD provide to this

Board responses to constituent concerns regarding the Emerald Ash Borer prevention program.

Mr. McEachern reported that all 67 ash trees in the city's parks have been treated and that he receives weekly updates from the contractor regarding the health of those trees. Presently, the cutting down of all ash trees is on hold and a list will be provided prior to any tree being cut down.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201584: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD trim the trees around Nathan Tufts Park near Powder House Terrace.

Mr. McEachern said that a smaller machine will be rented, since the city's equipment is too big.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201585: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the dead tree at 50 Hall Avenue.

Alderman Davis would like this to be a priority.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201614: That the Commissioner of Public Works report to the Ward 2 Alderman on the removal of a tree at 25 Durham Street, and on its replacement.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200192: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 9/24/15.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200354: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 10/22/15.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200491: Commissioner of Public Works responding to various Board Orders submitted 10/8/15.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200501: Submitting an update on the residential food composting pilot project.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200558: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 11/24/15.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

200860: Conveying a Presentation from SPCD, Recreation, and SomerStat on Fields.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

201571: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 5/12/16.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED