



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

February 2, 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	Present	

Others present: Oliver Sellers-Garcia - OSE, Jill Lathan - Recreation, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Rachel Kelly - OSPCD, Steve MacEachern - DPW, Stan Koty - DPW, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Rositha Durhami - Clerk of Committees

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alderman Ballantyne and adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Document List:

- Arborist Report (with 199983)

Approval of the December 1, 2015 Minutes

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

Mr. MacEachern provided the committee with a list from the arborist of the trees that were inspected. The arborist will return in April and will inspect the health of trees.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200032: That the Commissioner of Public Works inform this Board about Eversource's pruning of trees and vegetation near power lines, and whether there will be oversight of such work by city staff.

Mr. MacEachern stated that Eversource has its own standards when clearing lines with respect to trees and Eversource was told not to cut down trees unless they have dead branches. Mr. MacEachern performs spot checks and has Eversource send him emails every Monday with requests to remove trees. He has worked well with Eversource and there have not been many issues this year.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200044: That the City Arborist address the numerous dead and dying trees on Jasper Street and back to this Board on progress in remedying the situation.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200045: That the Director of SPCD (Transportation and Infrastructure) plant trees at 9-11 Indiana Avenue, along Kensington Avenue and on the corner of Tufts and Cross Streets.

Mr. Rawson and Ms. Kelly addressed the trees for 9-11 Indiana Avenue with a work order. There is an issue with low power lines on the left side on Kensington Avenue and Ms. Kelly will check the area again. Tufts and Cross Streets both have 4 new trees that are under warranty for the next 3 years.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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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.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200185: That the Arborist inspect the health of the trees at the locations described within.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200298: That the Commissioner of Public Works explain why 12 foot high tree stumps remain after trees have been cut.

Chairman Ballantyne spoke about 12 foot high tree stumps on Barton, North and Woods Streets and Josephine Avenue that were cut about 10 years ago. There are utility poles anchored to the stumps and the stumps are rotting. It was suggested that the DPW stop giving Verizon permits until this pole issue is addressed.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199715: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Sustainability and the

Environment report to this Board on why the city is not using its authority to request a recycling plan for apartment buildings, which has resulted in some apartment dwellers not being able to participate in recycling.

Mr.Koty said that some apartment buildings may only have space for 4 recycling barrels and he suggested working with the apartment buildings on a 1 to 1 basis. Recycling barrels are available for apartments, with some being provided at no charge and then incurring a \$50 per barrel fee. Mr. Sellers-Garcia said he and Mr. Koty met and will get a better sense of how many large buildings are having issues with a recycling plan.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

200040: That the Director of the Office of Sustainability and the Environment and the Commissioner of Public Works discuss with this Board, curbside gardens or bioswales, to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces, improve the environment, and beautify our streets.

Mr. Rawson said that the city is looking at different strategies for bioswales and spoke about street design standards, good engineering solutions for bioswales and “net zero” applications for storm water. Mr. Rawson stated that 10 million gallons of waste water goes to Deer Island and that the city is in need of a sewer separation system.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

200299: That the Director of SPCD, the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Sustainability and Environment consider the pros and cons of artificial turf and identify alternative designs for publicly accessible open space.

Mr. Rawson spoke about natural surfaces and well maintained areas and said that he would make a recommendation to the Board in a week's time. Alderman Niedergang asked about the final dates for the presentation on pros and cons adding that there are a few soccer leaders in his ward who maintain that the city cannot maintain the grass fields for our youths. Chairman Ballantyne commented that the city's fields do not look good and were set up as lawns rather than as strong playing fields. Alderman Davis agreed that the fields were not designed well.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200300: That the Director of SPCD and the Commissioner of Public Works advise this Board of the minimum ADA requirements for hard surfaces at publicly accessible open space.

Chairman Ballantyne commented that many Somerville parks have rubberized surfaces. Mr. Rawson will be experimenting with wood chips and hybrid solutions for the fields and noted that the rubberized safety surface is very common.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

200531: That the Director of the Recreation report to this Board on the use of city playing fields by non-Somerville leagues, including the residency of their participants.

Alderman Niedergang spoke about the use of field space by Somerville residents vs. renting space to organizations from outside of the city. It was noted that individuals who want to play in the City of Somerville may need to meet a residential requirement. Dilboy Stadium is a regional facility that must be self-contained and may not be operated with just Somerville residents using the space. Ms. Lathan spoke about adult leagues that previously played in Somerville which were not Somerville residents. Currently, youths monopolize the use of the fields and only a small portion of the time is used for adult recreation. Alderman Davis shared a concern about the volume of activities on the Somerville space and spoke about allowing the fields to rest and not be over used.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

199712: That the Mayor's Aide and/or the Director of Sustainability and the Environment report to this Board on progress in addressing the litter from Globe Direct circulars, and whether Cambridge's agreement with Globe Direct is being implemented here.

Mr. Sellers-Garcia reported that he contacted officials from the City of Cambridge, who have had previous contact with Globe Direct. Cambridge has an agreement whereby residents can call to cancel delivery of the circulars. Mr. Koty will speak to his counterpart in Cambridge in a couple of weeks.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

200439: That the Mayor's Aide and/or the Director of Sustainability and the Environment update this Board on addressing the litter from Globe Direct circulars.

See item 199712 (above).

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**