



CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS
DOMINICK PANGALLO
MAYOR

APPROVED MINUTES

Salem Beautification Committee:

Chair: Henry Gulergun

Vice Chair: Ariana Lema-Driscoll

Secretary: Kim Parkinson

City Liaison: Janelle Rolke

1/9/24 – Hybrid Meeting

Present: Kim Parkinson, Henry Gulergun, Janelle Rolke (City Liaison), Charlene Bailey, Brooke Nagle, Jason Lang, Ariana Lema-Driscoll, Sam Fiore, Laurie Biel

Absent: Jeremy Baker, Zachary Schaad, Mary Ellen Halliwell

Guests: Brian Donnelly, Maria Connell, Andrew Varela, Kyle Davis

Agenda:

1. Call to Order 7PM
2. Mission Statement
3. Approval of November 2023 Minutes
4. Old Business:
 - MOU Changes for 2024 update
 - Artbox Sponsorship (Guest, Brian Donnelly)
5. Sub-Committee Reports:
 - Lady of Salem (Mary Ellen)
 - Traffic Island (Charlene & Sam)
 - Monthly Cleanups (Kim & Zach)
6. New Business:
 - Lafayette Park Traffic Island Discussion
 - Great Salem Clean up
7. Adjournment

Mission Statement: The mission of the Salem Beautification Committee is to assist the City in developing and pursuing initiatives that promote the beautification of the City. The goal of the Committee is to create civic pride and to motivate the City's diverse population to participate in the beautification process. The Committee will identify areas in need of improvement, will create programs, recruit volunteers and will secure the funding resources to achieve its goals.

- **Minutes Approved from November Meeting unanimously**

Old business:

- **MOU Changes**
 - We've identified that the MOUs are outdated and unclear so we'd like to make it more obvious to the city, volunteers, and sponsors exactly what their roles are for the traffic islands in 2024
 - The committee needs to decide on the mulch. Last year was the first year that DPW did a trial with the mulch. Some sponsors were fine with it, some don't want the city touching their islands moving forward and some are fine with some stipulations. What Janelle gathers is that mulch will be all or nothing - they do it on the city timeline or their own.
 - 5 or 6 of the businesses were very vocal about it
 - Katie wants to do it 2-3 weeks earlier dependent on winter which the committee thinks is worse and way too early.
 - Ideally, it would happen more like mid-May.
 - We likely either go with everyone has to mulch their own (and say they have to do the same color) or we put an opt in on the MOU saying yes I want it or I will do it on my own.
 - In the MOU we would need to be explicit that the mulching is on the sponsor to own and we need to hold them accountable to have their islands ready by xx date. It is on us to make sure that the sign only goes up when it is prepped.
 - We will still need the city to mulch Riley Plaza, potentially Salem Waterfront, and need to confirm if there are any others.
 - MOU changes were worked on by Charlene, Laurie, and Janelle. This group will take this feedback and return to the group in February with a final proposal.
 - Everyone in the committee who is interested should review what Laurie shared by the end of this week by putting comments in the Google doc directly.
- **Artbox sponsorship**
 - In the summer, we identified a city-owned space on the corner of Essex and Sewall St. that was cleaned up but there is also an electrical box that was uncovered. It has been spray painted but has a lot of potential. Charlene and Janelle looked into what it would entail to own it with the Public Arts Committee and Julie Barry shared it would cost \$500 to sponsor it. We would be responsible for finding an artist and the sketch needs to be approved by the Public Arts Commission so we decided to explore it further.
 - Maria introduced us to Brian who lives right next to the intersection and has been interested in doing one for some time now.
 - Need to confirm this is something the committee is interested in pursuing.
 - Brian has done a study and can share his findings if we'd like.
 - He thought it would be great to do a mixture of organic plants and music. The committee thinks it would be great to do something that incorporates a little combo of everything we do - flowers/native plants, Lady of Salem, waste bucket, window box?
 - Brian will put together a sketch before our next meeting in February.

- o Sam to fill Mary Ellen in and link up her with Brian to give perspective for LoS.
- o Charlene raised a motion to approve moving ahead with the \$500 cost and Ariana seconded. It was voted to move forward unanimously and the committee approved.

Sub-Committee Reports:

- Lady of Salem (Mary Ellen)
 - o No updates this month.
- Traffic Island (Charlene/Sam) - full report attached as an addendum.
 - o MOU updates were mentioned above.
 - o We thought this was the slow period but Nov 3-20 we put in 1100 bulbs and had lots of volunteers from the committee (thank you!). It seemed to go well and we can't wait to see the flowers pop up in the spring!
 - o Fall cleanup - we usually go through the gardens to weed them out. The team got the strip done and luckily Riley Plaza got cleaned up as well. Cleanup will continue in spring.
 - o Concerns are the usual - we need more volunteers, MOU changes, and we'd like new signs to put up when the garden volunteers are working on traffic islands.
 - Jason volunteered to take a stab at a design for the signs so we can get something ordered (thinking of a sandwich board).
 - Should include a QR code or link to the website and a contact number. Consider Gorilla for the printing and ideally, we'd order 4.
 - Brooke suggested getting something that we could buy and switch out the graphics for so we could use them at other events as well.
 - To try and get more volunteers, it may be good to start being more consistent with where/when we meet each week. We could also plan a schedule further in advance that we can post that includes morning and afternoon slots.
 - For the committee members overseeing the traffic islands, they wouldn't need to manage the layouts or be gardening experts, they'd just need to make sure it is maintained to B-Comm standards (cleaning up litter on and around it, deadheading, weeding, trimming, pruning, turning mulch over and edging) and if something seems off, let Charlene and/or Sam know.

Monthly cleanups (Kim/Zach)

- o Ariana put together the list of cleanups for the whole year (thank you!).
- o Working out if we need to change 1 or 2 of the dates because of SSCW.
- o The next cleanup is this Sunday 1/14 from 10-2, ~30 people signed up currently.

New Business:

- Lafayette Park Traffic Island Discussion
 - o In the past, BComm has been taking care of that space but we have had a few sponsors show interest and at the same time, a volunteer also expressed interest. They were broken up in the past into 3 separate gardens. Need to figure out how to manage moving forward
 - Maria is interested in managing this garden whether it is 1 or 3 sponsors.
 - If we split it up, it would be great to coordinate them so they don't all look thrown together.
 - We could also split it up so that the 2 on the side are 1 sponsor and the one in the middle is a different sponsor, but would still want coordination.
- Great Salem Clean-up

- o Targeting 4/20 for the Great Salem cleanup.
- o Reached out to East Regiment to see if they'd host the after-party again.
 - If that doesn't work out, we could consider Couch Dog.
- o Need to identify the different locations, captains for each location, location for the after-cleanup event, and volunteer appreciation food.
- Other items that came up
 - o Volunteer opportunities on the website
 - Would be good to add something here that gives information about what it means to be a volunteer and what that entails so it doesn't seem intimidating.
 - Maria volunteered to help with this.
 - o By laws
 - Ariana and Henry have been working on them with Janelle.
 - Should be ready to present in Feb.
 - There aren't by laws for each committee, they are standardized by the city so Janelle needs to get those from the city.

Meeting Adjourned: Unanimous Vote

ADDENDUM

Traffic Island Report

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

Charlene Bailey

Gardens:

1. Bulbs were planted throughout traffic islands and gardens in the City. Bulb planting started on November 3, 2023, at Lifebridge and Dunkin and was completed on November 20, 2023, at Temperance Park. There were 670 bulbs purchased by B-Comm, 75 purchased by RCG and the remaining bulbs, purchased by some of the bulb-planting volunteers, brought the total count to 1100+.

The following volunteers helped us plant 1100 bulbs in various locations: Janelle Rolke, Brooke Nagle, Kim Parkinson, Joann Kowalski, Meara Baker, Jack Melin, Sandi Power, Nancy Neville, Janis Manning, Maria Connell, Laurie Biel, Mary Ellen Halliwell, Zachary Schaad, Hannah & John (Essex Tech students) . . . and Sam and Charlene. We are all thinking SPRING and FLOWERS popping up around Salem!

2. As we worked along with bulb planting, we did some Fall cleanup on the gardens themselves. That was more difficult this year because we had to focus our attention on getting the bulbs in the ground. Trash gets picked up occasionally down along the Washington Strip, Hosta Gardens, Mazow & McCullough . . . thanks, Sam. In December, the urns on Washington Strip were emptied of summer flowers and repotted for winter and the holidays . . . thanks, Sam and her assistants, Beverly and Charlene.

Concerns: Volunteers for the Gardens 2024.

Mulch: Discussion is needed about distribution of mulch in Spring.

MOU for 2024.

Signs for Traffic Islands (sandwich-board style or other):

Info that the island is maintained by Volunteers.

Temporary Sign or it is only there when we are working?

Phone number to volunteer and/or website contact.

,,,,,, New Volunteer Shirts are Needed