



City of Cambridge

Executive Department

YI-AN HUANG
City Manager

CMA 2025 #258
IN CITY COUNCIL
October 20, 2025

I am writing to inform you that I am reappointing & appointing the following as members of the Committee on Public Planting for a term of **three (3) years**, effective October 4th, 2025:

- Christina Mann
- Paola Massari
- Rachel Eva Tine
- Rob Vandenabeele
- Carrie Burke

These new members will join the additional eleven (11) members who are seeking reappointment at this time.

The Committee on Public Planting was established in 1998 and is charged with the responsibility of promoting and improving the quality and diversity of plantings throughout all areas of Cambridge. This includes reviewing planting plans for new public work in the city; advising the city on effective maintenance of public plantings; supporting the role of the Urban Forestry Division; and encouraging interest in public plantings in all neighborhoods.

The Committee currently has sixteen (16) serving members representing 8 out of 13 Cambridge neighborhoods.

The City Manager's office posted a request for applications for the Committee on Public Planting on the City website which stayed open for 30 days. During that time, members of the Committee conducted outreach with their networks. The call for applicants was also posted in several of the City's daily email updates and in postings on the City website. There were 11 applicants, 5 of whom were interviewed. The interviewers consisted of Andrew Putnam, Superintendent of Urban Forestry, David Lefcourt, City Arborist/Tree Warden, and Abigail Bentley, Assistant City Arborist.

I am pleased to welcome these five new members whose expertise and experience will enable them to contribute to this committee's important work.

Christina Mann (Neighborhood Nine)

Christina works as a horticultural and landscape designer. She has previous experience working with the New York Botanical Garden. Christina currently serves as a Trustee with the Mount Auburn Cemetery, and is an active member of the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club.



Paola Massari (Riverside)

Paola has a degree in Biology from the University of Naples, Italy. She has a strong passion for plants and is looking for an opportunity to give back to the city.

Rachel Eva Tine (Port)

Eva is a long-time resident of Cambridge. She does a lot of advocacy work around homelessness, housing and health issues and would like to bring her experiences to the Committee on Public Planting. She is interested in community engagement around trees and plants.

Rob Vandenabeele (Mid-Cambridge)

Rob is a Forest Friend and would love to get more people involved as Forest Friends. He would like to work on reducing the heat islands throughout the city. Rob would contribute more to the outreach goals for the Committee on Public Planting.

Carrie Burke (Mid-Cambridge)

Carrie has been a resident of Cambridge for 18 years. She is an avid gardener and board member of a prison garden program. She understands the importance of green spaces in the urban environment.

In addition to the five (5) new members above, i would be pleased to put forward these eleven (11) returning members whose expertise and experience will enable them to continue to contribute to this committee's important work.

Raymond Fahrner(Cambridgeport)

Mr. Fahrner is a retired Cambridge resident who has cultivated a rare native plant garden at his home in Cambridgeport. He has been an active member on the Committee on Public Planting with helping the city improve its urban tree canopy.

Gretchen Friesinger (North Cambridge)

Ms. Friesinger has been a long-time advocate for preserving trees in Cambridge. She has coordinated many tree care volunteer events in her neighborhood and beyond. She has been very good with outreach efforts with the committee.

Robb Johnson (Cambridgeport)

Mr. Johnson is avid gardener and has promoted the Back of Sidewalk in his Cambridgeport neighborhood. He has been active with the Committee on Public Planting by advocating for the committee and the Urban Forestry Division.

Margaret Booz (Strawberry Hill)

Ms. Booz is a longstanding member of the Committee and past chairperson. Ms. Booz was a member of the UFMP Task Force. She is a engaged resident who has tirelessly advocated for the highest standards regarding tree planting and preservation.

Cindy Carpenter (Strawberry Hill)

Ms. Carpenter is currently the co-chair of the Committee. Under her leadership, members have been engaged to further enhance the effectiveness of the CPP. Her primary focus has been public outreach and awareness.

Sara Cohen (Port)

Ms. Cohen is a landscape architect by trade. Ms. Cohen actively reviews landscape plans presented to the committee.

Chantal Eide (Mid-Cambridge)

Ms. Eide is a passionate member of the Committee with an interest in the Tree Fund and best management practices for tree planting within the City.

Sophia Emperador (North Cambridge)

Ms. Emperador is currently the co-chair of the Committee and a member of the Cemetery Masterplan Advisory Committee. Under her leadership, members have been engaged to further enhance the effectiveness of the CPP. Ms. Emperador is committed to improving the working relationship between the CPP, Public Works and the Public.

Ahron Lerman (Neighborhood 9)

Mr. Lerman has worked for DCR with the Greening the Gateways project. He was a member of the UFMP Task Force and is interested in improving his city by assisting with reviewing landscape plans and tree planting.

Tracy Orr (Neighborhood 9)

Ms. Orr is the owner and designer for Tracy Orr Landscape Design. She has also worked as a research plant biologist. She values the City's parks and open spaces. Ms. Orr is interested in reviewing park plans.

Cynthia Smith (Baldwin)

Ms. Smith Landscape Architect, who owned and operated a business that completed many streetscape, park and public planting projects within Cambridge.

I appreciate the willingness of these community members to serve and look forward to their contributions as members of the Committee on Public Planting.