

**PPA Environment Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, May 9, 2023**  
**6:30 - 8 pm**  
**Luxton Park**

Present: Rick McCormick, Mary Britton, Kathleen Davis, Vera Marshall

**1. Planting at Venture Academy on May 12 & 19**

Mary B ordered 6 trees to plant at Venture on Friday, May 12 and May 19. Three of the trees are sugar maple trees. The holes for the trees will be dug on May 12 and the trees planted on May 19 with Venture students doing most of the work. Mary and Vera will also be planting a pollinator garden at the site.

**2. Organizing planting elsewhere**

Mary B noted that there is money (\$470) left in the budget for planting additional trees and plants around the neighborhood. She encouraged anyone with a potential community planting project to bring the proposal to the committee.

**3. Earth Day Cleanup: debriefing**

Rick reported that 5 or 6 neighbors joined about 20 folks from Surly to clean up the West River Road area near the river. Mary and Kathleen reported that several folks joined them to clean up the Tower area. Generally it was considered to be a successful endeavor.

**4. Biochar Discussion**

The PPA Environment Committee discussed the proposed Biochar site in Prospect Park. Having reviewed some of the research on Biochar, the committee was supportive, for the most part, of this attempt by the city to use Biochar as an environmentally friendly way to dispose of brush, tree stumps and branches. It is a technology that promises to eliminate a small percentage of the city's carbon footprint. While impressive, the committee believes that if older housing in the city (including, and especially, in PP neighborhood) were properly insulated, a much larger percentage could be eliminated. The other major concern was the siting of the Biochar plant in PP. Concerns were raised that its presence could increase truck traffic in the area when the PP neighborhood is already experiencing an unacceptable level of traffic on Malcolm Avenue, north of University. The committee would like the PPA approval of the site to be contingent on the city's willingness to address the traffic problem and also to assure that the trucks used for the Biochar site will be electric vehicles.

**5. Update on environmental bills at Capital (if Peter Wagenius can attend)**

Peter Wagenius was unable to attend.