



City of Cambridge  
Department of Public Works

147 Hampshire Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
theworks@cambridgema.gov

*Katherine Watkins, Acting Commissioner*

Voice: 617 349 4800  
TDD: 617 499 9924

November 18, 2022

To: Yi-An Huang  
City Manager

From: David Lefcourt  
City Arborist

Through: Katherine Watkins  
Acting DPW Commissioner

Re: Tree Hearing Recommendation

The following trees were heard on November 17, 2022. Objections to the removals are attached.

632 Mass Ave – 2 oaks (8.1” & 7.6”)	632 Mass Ave (Carl Barron Plaza) – 6 trees (2 oaks – 15.2” & 11”, 4 golden raintrees – 10.8”, 11.5”, 11.6”, & 10.1”)	17 Central Sq (in median) – 2 Zelkovas (10” & 10.8”)
VFW Park (street tree on West side) – 11.2” linden	26 River St – 3.8” red maple	44 River St – 9.3” linden
45 River St – 5.7” linden	62 River St – 3 trees (9.5” & 8.1” lindens and 3.1” elm)	91 River St – 9” linden
92 River St – 8” linden	94 River St – 4.4” linden	140 River St – 7.9” linden
148 River St – 7.6” linden	156 River St – 1.8” Ginkgo	158 River St – 7.3” linden
160 River St – 10.3” ash	168 River St – 4.3” Ginkgo	183 River St – 13.3” Norway maple
202 River St – 5.7” linden	222 River St – 8.1” linden	248 River St – 3.5 hackberry
258 River St - 6.4” Norway maple		

**DESCRIPTION:**

The initiation of the Public Tree Hearing for the 34 street trees along River Street and within Carl Barron Plaza was by the City Arborist in response to a request from the Engineering Division at the Department of Public Works. The City is reconstructing River Street and Carl Barron Plaza to address utility infrastructure issues and provide new street and open space designs which meet project goals which are described below. The design requires the removal of 34 trees due to reconfiguration of the cross-section of River Street, and significant revisions to Carl Barron Plaza.



## PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The City is reconstructing River Street and Carl Barron Plaza to:

- Build new sanitary sewers, stormwater, and water infrastructure to ensure adequate utility levels of service. Parts of the underground utilities are more than 100 years old and need replacement.
- Build a new street to allow people of all ages and abilities to move along and across the street safely, provide spaces for activity near small businesses, and improve the quality of the landscape and urban design.
- Build a new Carl Barron Plaza which allows for flexibility of use and is welcoming to all members of the community.

River Street Corridor (23 trees to be removed / 3 trees to be transplanted / 139 new trees to be planted)

The proposed design of River Street generally consists of:

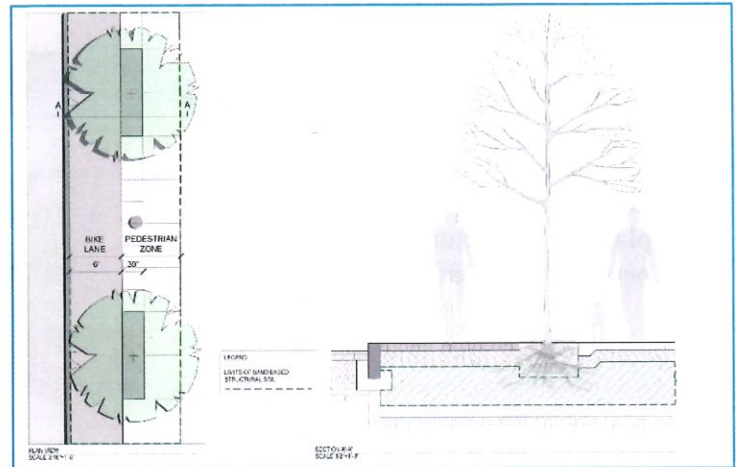
- Street furniture, tree and sidewalk zones on each side of the street
- A left-side parking/loading lane, or curb extension/activity zone, (depending on location)
- A single general travel lane
- A "bus only" lane usable by MBTA buses, private shuttle or bus operators, school buses, etc.
- A sidewalk-level bicycle lane on the right side



*Proposed design of River Street - looking eastward*

In order to provide enough width for snow plowing and other maintenance activities on both the roadway and bicycle lane, as well as ADA compliant driveways, ramps and landing zones, the cross-section encroaches 1 to 2 feet into existing tree pits at a number of locations. These locations are generally on the south ("even" numbered) side of the corridor. A total of 26 trees are impacted, most of which are in poor-fair condition. Twenty-three of the trees will be removed, and 3 trees are in suitable condition to be transplanted to Riverside Press Park.

The project proposes to plant a total of 139 new street trees along the River Street corridor, on both sides of the street. The new trees will be planted in sand based structural soil which generally extends the full of the sidewalk, tree well, and bicycle lane. This planting method will provide a much healthier environment for the new trees as compared to existing trees which are in small, constrained tree wells. A similar detail was used on the nearby Western Avenue corridor, and new trees in that corridor are doing very well after approximately 7 years. The River Street construction contract includes a 2 year establishment, watering, and guarantee period for the new trees.



*Typical street tree planting detail*

Tubman Square (3 trees to be removed / 4 trees to be transplanted / 14 new trees to be planted)

Norman Tubman Square is the triangular area formed by River Street, Kinnaird Street, and Pleasant Street. In its existing condition, the central planted area is not accessible to the public, and the geometry of the nearby intersection is characterized by a very long crosswalk and an oblique angle traffic merge from Pleasant Street which can cause pedestrian safety issues. At the rear of the triangle, a section of Kinnaird Street has been closed for several years for construction purposes.



*Tubman Square Existing Condition*

The proposed design includes the permanent closure of the short section of Kinnaird Street described above, and a significant enlargement of the Square itself. The redesign greatly shortens the pedestrian crossing distance of Pleasant Street, and organizes the 3-way intersection of River/Pleasant/Cottage. In response to neighborhood feedback, the Square will become entirely accessible to public use, serving as a local focal point with extensive seating, plantings, and lighting; and playful elements.



*Proposed plan of Tubman Square*

As part of construction, 3 trees will be removed, and 4 smaller trees will be relocated to Riverside Press Park. The design includes 14 new trees, which will be planted in structural soil and watered by a permanent automatic irrigation system.



*Rendering of proposed Tubman Square - looking east*

Carl Barron Plaza (8 trees to be removed / 18 new trees to be planted)

The City's design team performed extensive public outreach over the past several years concerning redesign of the Plaza, which is the main public open space in Central Square. A common theme which the City heard throughout this process, was a desire to "open up" the Plaza so that it was more welcoming to all members of the community, and to make the space more flexible and useable.

The design team was sensitive to the benefit that the existing trees in the Plaza provide. The designers attempted to meet the community's goals for the Plaza, while also preserving the existing trees in their current locations. Unfortunately, the current configuration of elevated planters was seen by much of the public as creating the type of walled-off and subdivided space which limited the usefulness of the Plaza and made it unwelcoming. In addition, the condition of trees in elevated planters was not seen as sustainable in terms of long-term tree health.

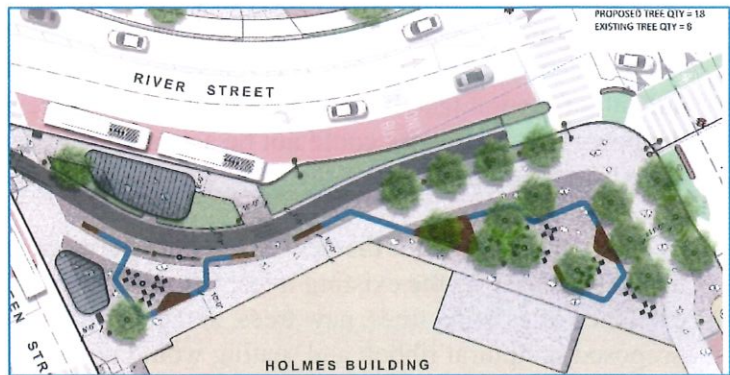


*Carl Barron Plaza - existing condition showing elevated planters*

A new design for Carl Barron Plaza was therefore created, which includes an expansion of the Plaza into what is today the MBTA bus bays adjacent to Green Street. To meet community goals as described above, the design provides a combination of fixed furniture and moveable

furniture, as well as a seating element which can double as a small stage. The design is intended to accommodate planned and impromptu performances, temporary art-shows, small-scale food vending, and other types of changeable uses mentioned by the community during the planning process.

The design includes the planting of 18 new trees, and these will all be planted at 4.5" minimum caliper; with 6 of the trees to be planted at 6"-6.5" caliper. All planting areas are to be underlain by extensive structural planting soil and a new irrigation system. These features should allow the new trees to reach full maturity and canopy extent, which has not been achieved by the existing trees due to their constrained planter condition. Tree plantings have been maximized to the extent possible, but were necessarily limited by existing underground utilities, including a major MWRA water transmission main in the "new" expansion area of the Plaza.



Plan view of proposed Carl Barron Plaza



Photo rendering of proposed Carl Barron Plaza

### Transplanting of Carl Barron Plaza trees

During the Tree Hearing process, a number of comments were received which recommended transplanting the existing Plaza trees elsewhere in the City. The City's Urban Forestry Division unfortunately finds this idea to be infeasible. The trees at Carl Barron Plaza have been growing in a confined space for nearly 30 years. Their roots are most likely growing in a circulating way which is probably girdling the trees. It is also noted that the trees have not put on much growth in the past 10 years or so.

Based on industry standards, it is recommended that there be 10"-12" inches of root ball for every caliper inch of tree in order to support planting. It is expected that it would be very difficult to achieve a root ball large enough to support successfully transplanting the trees at Carl Barron Plaza.

### Phased implantation of the Plaza

A number of comments were received asking if the Plaza construction could be phased to allow for the existing and new trees to co-exist for some period of time. This would allow shade and other benefits from the existing trees to continue while the new trees grew. Unfortunately, this is not a feasible option. As mentioned above, the new trees will be provided with significant

supporting infrastructure, including substantial structural soil volumes, and an extensive subsurface irrigation system. This requires essentially excavating the entire Plaza, in phases, to a depth of several feet, building it back up with the new infrastructure, and then, lastly, planting the new trees. This work could not be accomplished with the existing trees in place in their raised structural planters.

In addition, a number of the new trees and other plaza features are located within the same horizontal space as the existing trees, (although they will be "at-grade" and not elevated.) So co-existence of existing trees, new trees, and construction of other features such as footings for the proposed sculptural ribbon and seating would not be possible.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

While I am concerned with and take issue with the removal of healthy trees, after reviewing the project background provided by the Engineering Division; the recommendations of the City Engineer and the Commissioner of Public Works; and the proposed mitigation for the tree removals, including the additional tree plantings; it is my recommendation that the 34 street trees along River Street and at Carl Barron Plaza be removed in order for the project to proceed.

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Elizabeth Greywolf <esgreywolf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2022 5:24 PM  
**To:** Lefcourt, David  
**Subject:** removal of shade trees mtg 11/17

Regarding the City meeting 11/17 on to discuss removal of shade trees in Central Square,

I am wondering how that could ever be a good idea, given climate change and the fact cities need mature trees more than ever?

I hope you will reconsider the proposal to do so, or at least consider a recent suggestion made by one of our local residents:

"As part of a city redesign along River St. 34 trees are to be cut down, including all the mature trees at Carl Barron Plaza in the heart of Central Square. I think that instead of replacing all mature trees with saplings, we should do redesigns in two phases. Save some of the mature trees to allow the saplings to establish, then complete the project a few years later, so there is always some amount of established tree canopy."

Thank you for your consideration in saving the existing trees.  
Elizabeth Greywolf, 17 Buena Vista Park

What: Tree hearing

When: tomorrow, Thursday Nov 17 at 5:30pm

How: by zoom, register at [this webpage](#)

[You can view the slides that will be presented at the tree hearing by clicking here.](#)

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Heather Hoffman <heather.m.hoffman.1957@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 11:26 AM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** tree removal hearing November 17, 2022

I cannot attend tonight's tree removal hearing because there are too many meetings going on, and I am only one person. Therefore, I am writing to object to the removal of any tree being voted on tonight unless it has been determined to be dead or dying. As you must know as well as anyone, Cambridge has been losing its tree canopy at an alarming rate, and environmental justice communities, such as the people who live in this area and people who frequent it, bear most of the brunt of this loss. Mature, thriving trees are a valuable resource for the health of our physical environment, including but definitely not limited to climate resilience, and for the mental health of the people who encounter them. Humans did not evolve in a concrete wasteland, and we do not thrive in one. The City Council has declared trees essential infrastructure. It is long past time that our city government act like it.

To the extent that trees must be removed for good cause and cannot be transplanted, they should be used for a better purpose than mulch and sawdust. There are artists, educational programs (including at CRLS) and woodworkers who could use these trees if given the opportunity. The arborist's office should maintain a list of such people as a matter of course and should make a practice of notifying them whenever a tree is being removed and of cooperating to the extent possible with them. Otherwise, we are just pretending to care about the environment and contributing to worsening what we claim is a climate crisis that requires all of us to change our lives drastically.

If possible, trees that must be removed should be removed in separate phases in order to minimize the ill effects of wholesale tree removal and to create a better environment for new trees to establish themselves. Of course it's easier for construction crews to clear cut and then give us puny saplings that the City has shown little ability to keep alive, especially in the face of the recurring droughts we know are in our future, but we don't have that luxury any more, if we ever did. We need to put our money where our mouth is.

I hope you will take all of these objections to heart as you decide what to do tonight. It is not a foregone conclusion unless you choose to make it one.

Heather Hoffman  
213 Hurley Street



## Lefcourt, David

---

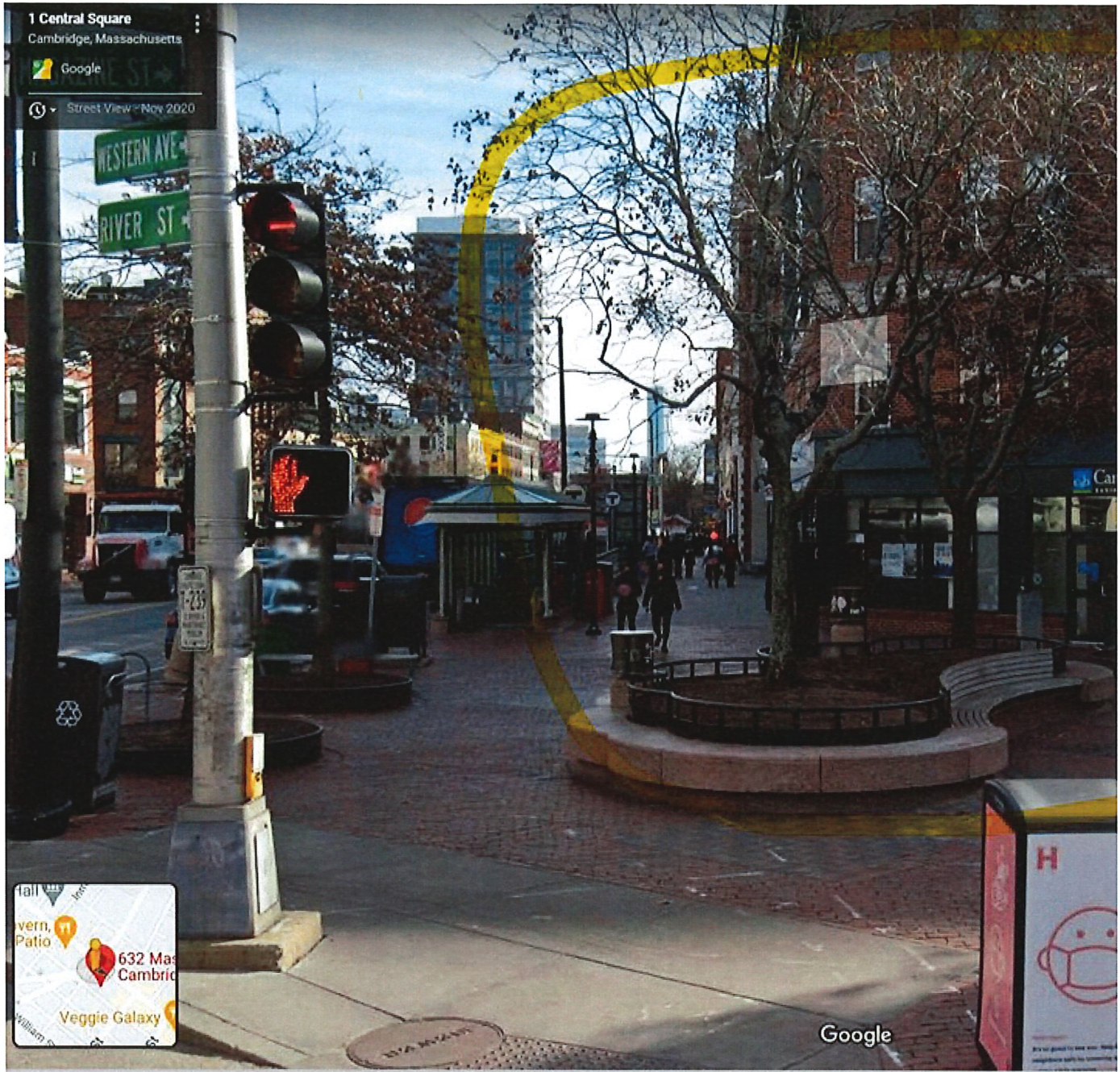
**From:** Kathryn <kkg1355@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 11:35 AM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Submission for Hearing 11/17/22 @ 5:30PM  
**Attachments:** 2 Trees on Mass Ave.pdf

Dear David Lefcourt, City Arborist for the City of Cambridge,

Please consider keeping at least one of the two trees located inside of the center circle on:

**632 Mass Ave (Carl Barron Plaza) – 6 trees (2 oaks – 15.2” & 11”, 4 golden raintrees – 10.8”, 11.5”, 11.6”, & 10.1”)**

Below is a photograph of the trees in question (circled in yellow) wherein the two trees referenced are directly in the middle of the photograph:



Thank you very much for your consideration. I believe these are beautiful trees, and as I work in Cambridge I benefit from their beauty. I understand if they absolutely need to be removed due to the construction, and per the slideshow presentation for the hearing on 11/17/22, both trees will be removed. If they are removed, what becomes of them? Are they simply used for firewood?

Relevant Links:

- 1) <https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/publicworks/Calendar/view.aspx?guid=097343eaf6e44eafadc48b9678c0329>.
- 2) <https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Transportation/riverstreetreconstruction>.

Thank you again for your consideration, I deeply appreciate that you took the time to read this!  
Kathryn Gillis

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Madeleine A <master4222@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 12:24 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees; Putnam, Andrew; Lefcourt, David  
**Subject:** Object to mature trees being removed at Carl Barron Plaza, please consider a two-phase approach

Dear Owen, Andrew, and Dave,

Please consider Mike Nakagawa's plan to do the redesign in two phases.

**Phase 1:** Save some of the mature trees to give the saplings a chance to get established while maintaining tree canopy, carbon sequestration, and the DNA library that the mature trees have accumulated on how to survive in a tough environment.<sup>1</sup> The saplings do not have this knowledge and many will not survive. A special emphasis on keeping the oak as a cornerstone species would prevent destabilizing the caterpillar, butterfly, and bird populations while waiting for the saplings to grow.<sup>2</sup>

**Phase 2:** Complete the project a few years later. This keeps the neighborhood cool and will have less impact on nature and the community.

Thank you,

Madeleine Aster  
North Cambridge

- 
1. *The Man Who Planted Trees*, p. 97, by Jim Robbins
  2. *The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees*, by Douglas W. Tallamy

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Nancy E. Phillips <nanphill73@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 12:32 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Carl Barron Plaza

As a concerned citizen and also a former longtime member of the Public Planting Committee, I strongly object to the removal of the mature trees on Carl Barron Plaza. Their replacement with much smaller trees is not a real 'replacement'. With global warming so clearly taking place, it is utterly irresponsible to remove mature trees.

Nancy E. Phillips

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** S Ringler <sringle23@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 12:33 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** I object

I object to cutting down the mature trees at the Central Square Plaza. These trees are not majestic and the people who shelter under them are not eminent or renowned. But these trees have real value as do the people who currently use the Plaza. Our tree canopy is in tatters and we MUST stop cutting mature trees. It is a fallacy that their contribution to our climate can be easily replaced by a few spindly replacement trees. I strongly object to these trees being cut down.

Susan Ringler  
82 Kinnaird St.  
02139

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Elena Saporta <esla@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 12:55 PM  
**To:** S Ringler; Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Re: [trees] I object

I assume the goldenrain trees at Carl Barron Plaza are being cut down and the plaza is being dismantled to accommodate a bicycle lane? Is this the case?

We need trees and bicycles both (as well as public plazas) - they should not be placed at odds to one other...

In any case, the trees at Carl Barron Plaza are in planters so could be relocated elsewhere. Absolutely no need to kill them! - E

-----Original Message-----

From: S Ringler <sringle23@hotmail.com>  
Sent: Nov 17, 2022 12:32 PM  
To: cambridgetree@cambridgema.gov <cambridgetree@cambridgema.gov>  
Subject: [trees] I object

I object to cutting down the mature trees at the Central Square Plaza. These trees are not majestic and the people who shelter under them are not eminent or renowned. But these trees have real value as do the people who currently use the Plaza. Our tree canopy is in tatters and we MUST stop cutting mature trees. It is a fallacy that their contribution to our climate can be easily replaced by a few spindly replacement trees. I strongly object to these trees being cut down.

Susan Ringler  
82 Kinnaird St.  
02139

--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Cambridge Trees CORE" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to [cambridge-trees-core+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:cambridge-trees-core+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com).

To view this discussion on the web visit <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/cambridge-trees-core/SN4PR10MB55763CF927F7C2CE022D9DBCA6069%40SN4PR10MB5576.namprd10.prod.outlook.com>.

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Judy Johnson <shakatam@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 1:57 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** cutting down mature trees in Central Square

I object to the city continuing to cut down mature trees. Makes no sense.

Judy Johnson  
55 Antrim Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Marilyn Wellons <marilyn.wellons@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 2:09 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** I object

from a thousand miles away, I object to the plan.

Marilyn Wellons



**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** JANICE STCLAIR <janstclair@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 2:12 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Cutting down trees in Central Square

I object!

The trees in the small plaza in Central Square are mature and healthy, and provide much needed shade and oxygen in the summer heat sink that is that paved over area! Also, saplings take just as many years as the mature trees have lived in order to replace their canopy...if they even survive. They are fragile until they are well established.

I object to the cutting down any of the healthy mature trees in Cambridge, and especially these.

Janice Ellison  
3 Michael Way  
Cambridge 02141

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Gretchen Friesinger <gfriesinger@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 2:13 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Don't cut down the mature trees at Carl Barron Plaza

Dear David Lefcourt, Andrew Putnam, and Owen O'Riordan

I write to register my objection to cutting down the mature trees at Carl Barron Plaza. As the UFMP dictates, our highest priority in maintaining and growing the canopy should be to "curb tree loss." Please stop this loss in Central Square.

Gretchen Friesinger  
Orchard St 02140

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Peggy Lynch <mlynch4@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 2:20 PM  
**To:** S Ringler  
**Cc:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Re: [trees] I object

I agree.... we need every tree .... except dangerous trees.... to mitigate CO2 in the... air.

Peggy Lynch  
617-549-7694

Sent from my iPhone (forgive the spelling errors)

On Nov 17, 2022, at 12:32 PM, S Ringler <[sringle23@hotmail.com](mailto:sringle23@hotmail.com)> wrote:

I object to cutting down the mature trees at the Central Square Plaza. These trees are not majestic and the people who shelter under them are not eminent or renowned. But these trees have real value as do the people who currently use the Plaza. Our tree canopy is in tatters and we MUST stop cutting mature trees. It is a fallacy that their contribution to our climate can be easily replaced by a few spindly replacement trees. I strongly object to these trees being cut down.

Susan Ringler  
82 Kinnaird St.  
02139

--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Cambridge Trees CORE" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to [cambridge-trees-core+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:cambridge-trees-core+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com).

To view this discussion on the web visit <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/cambridge-trees-core/SN4PR10MB55763CF927F7C2CE022D9DBCA6069%40SN4PR10MB5576.namprd10.prod.outlook.com>.

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Bernice Buresh <b.buresh@me.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 3:11 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Central Square Trees

I object to cutting down mature trees and replacing them with young trees that will take years to grow. This doesn't seem like a sensible plan.

Bernice Buresh  
140 Upland Road  
Cambridge MA 02140

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** nonie valentine <nonie.valentine1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 3:16 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection to cutting mature trees Carl Barron Plaza

Greetings,

I cannot attend tonight's meeting so would like to register vehement objection to the elimination of mature trees in Carl Barron Plaza for the Riverside Redesign Project.

It is nonsensical to replace larger, mature trees (even if not in the best shape) with young vulnerable saplings. The former sequester far, far more carbon, provide bigger canopy and shade, and do not need careful monitoring/watering in the same way as the younger ones. It is also an aesthetic travesty to remove larger trees that give dignity to a public square. Larger trees carry a history of survival and knowledge built up over there theirs which means they have the wherewithal to withstand difficult conditions.

May the designers come to their senses.

Respectfully,

Nonie Valentine  
4 Washington Ave.  
Cambridge 02140

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Julie Ray <julie\_ray@jsi.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 3:30 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection to tree removal in Carl Barron Plaza

I implore you to leave the mature and healthy trees in this plaza. They are NOT the problem, and replacing them with saplings is NOT the answer; they are no match for the shade and CO2 absorption that their mature counterparts offer this heat island. Even if the new trees survive, which is unlikely, it will take a lifetime for them to provide the benefits of those that are already there. Please reconsider this unsustainable practice and let these and other mature trees in the city live.

Thank you,

Julie Ray  
248 Walden St., 2

 JULIE RAY  SENIOR EDITOR, COMMUNICATIONS  
PHONE: 617.820.2559 | [WWW.JSI.COM](http://WWW.JSI.COM)  

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Melissa Ludtke <melissa.ludtke@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 3:33 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Opposed to tree cutting in Carl Barron Plaza

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the city's plans to cut down mature trees in Carl Barron Plaza, and then replace them with immature saplings. Older growth trees and their canopies are critical for our city and its residents, especially in the denser areas of our city.

Melissa Ludtke  
30 Buena Vista Park  
Cambridge, MA 02140

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Elizabeth Gilmore <gilmore.eliz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 3:43 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Please cycle removal and replacement of trees

I understand the proposal is to remove all the trees at Carl Barron Plaza at one time, which would mean years of waiting for the new trees to establish (if they do) and NO heat mitigation in the meantime. If the trees have to be removed, please consider cycling through on an alternating year schedule. Take some now. Plant some saplings. Take others in 2 years and replace those, and so forth. Yes we will have small and larger trees intermingled in the meantime, but isn't that what would happen anyway in a natural habitat ? Please slow down on your current proposal and think from a climate resilience viewpoint.

Thank you,  
Elizabeth Gilmore



**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Margaret Studier <margaretstudier@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 3:56 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Trees

I object to the removal of 34 trees in Central Sq and along River St. They are valuable in supplying oxygen, shade, and beauty—and perches for birds and playgrounds and homes for squirrels.

Margaret Studier  
14A Allen St.

Sent from my iPhone

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Hannah Gold <hnnhgold@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 4:03 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** I strongly object to the city cutting 34 street trees - Central Sq and River St

I strongly object to the city cutting down 34 street trees in Central Sq and along River St.

At any time the removal of 34 trees is shockingly destructive; during a climate emergency it is obscene. Mature trees are one of the city's most essential and least replaceable resources. Please preserve them!!!!!!

Hannah Gold  
7 Shady Hill Sq.

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** helen snively <hmsnively@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 4:28 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** I object to your cutting of mature trees in Central Square

Surely someone on the city staff can figure out a way to rework the plaza without cutting down trees? They do take years to become mature, and replacing them with spindly saplings, which often don't survive, doesn't strike me as a good use of city funds.

And meanwhile we all lose out on the shade.. not just the folks who gather under them.

Thank you for respecting Mother Nature.

Helen Snively  
Fayette Park

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Ana Nieto <ananieto77@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 4:33 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection to the cutting of mature trees

I'm writing to express my objection to the plan to cut 34 mature trees.

I support the proposal put forward by fellow neighbors that instead of replacing all mature trees with saplings, we should do redesigns in two phases. Save some of the mature trees to allow the saplings to establish, then complete the project a few years later, so there is always some amount of established tree canopy.

Best regards,  
Ana María Nieto

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** John Pitkin <john\_pitkin@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 5:22 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection to River Street Improvement Tree Removal

To the Arborist, for consideration at the Hearing on Removal of Public Shade Trees, Thursday, November 17th, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.:

All people need trees, and we need them more than ever as summer heat increases. There are no "design improvements" that can compensate us for removal of mature trees in good condition on Carl Barron Plaza and River Street. They cannot be replaced in less than a decade if ever. They are the best possible design for these important public spaces and the people who use them.

Please maintain these trees, make changes around them if necessary, and plant new trees to replace them when they can no longer be maintained.

Sincerely,  
--John Pitkin  
18 Fayette Street, Cambridge

*--Our Trees, Our Parks, Our City*  
*--Our Sidewalks, Our Streets, Our City*

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Mike Nakagawa <alewife.miken@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 5:22 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Fwd: [trees] Meeting Thurs 11/17: City cutting 34 street trees - Central Sq and River St

Hello,

I oppose cutting mature trees as part of the River St. Reconstruction project. As a member of the Cambridge Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience planning Alewife Focus Group then later the Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force, which resulted in draft zoning that the Planning Board this week to be forwarded to City Council, and having attended and commented at almost all of the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) Task Force meetings, I am well aware of the importance of trees, and in particular mature trees, in the city's climate change resiliency efforts.

One big outcome of the UFMP was the realization that we need to curb the rate of loss of mature trees or we will be unable to meet our future canopy goals. Without curbing tree loss, we'd need to plant 200,000 trees at a rate of 4,000 per year to achieve the goal of restoring the canopy to where we were 15 years ago, and it would take 50 years to get there.

But the City continues to cut down significant numbers of trees on properties under its own control, such as at the Tobin School (93 trees) and Jefferson Park (about 150, mostly Significant trees). The River St project will cut down 34 street trees. In particular, Carl Barron Plaza will lose 8 trees, six of which are greater than 10 inches in diameter and in good condition, including a 15" oak.

I did a quick calculation of trunk areas, which represents tree canopy better than trunk diameters, which is a common measure that the City staff uses to measure trees. Because of their large size, the 8 trees at Carl Barron Plaza represent 38% of the total trunk area being cut down in the project.

The trunk area of the 8 trees represents more than half of the area that the 171 replacement trees will bring in the whole project.

The cross-sectional area of a tree trunk is what is needed to carry nutrients between the roots and leaves and is proportional to the square of the diameter of the tree trunk.

Area of 8 Carl Barron Plaza trees:	754 sq. in.
Total Area being cut down in entire project:	1976 sq. in.
Total Area of replacement trees:	1443 sq. in.

The Urban Forestry Dept has indicated that they cannot keep up with watering street trees as it is, but we will need to water 85 new trees to match the 8 that will be cut down.

Other places find a way to build around existing trees rather than over them. If the roots are constrained, we can fix the soil just outside their current root zone, and the trees will find the better soil for their new growth. The pictures of existing vs. future conditions shows extensive shading where people can sit, vs. sparse shading in the proposal.

For projects that require tree removal, I think that instead of replacing all mature trees with saplings, we should do redesigns in two phases. Save some of the mature trees to allow the saplings to establish, then complete the project a few years later, so there is always some amount of established tree canopy.

Again, I would like to go on record as opposing the cutting of the trees in the River St. Reconstruction project as presented.

thank you,  
Mike Nakagawa  
51 Madison Ave  
Cambridge, MA 02140

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Rika Welsh <rikaqui@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 5:33 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Object vehemently to tree removal in City

Specifically Central Square!! And Cambridgeport!!

Cutting mature trees is so contrary to all "climate change" indicators

How can this City continue to be so regressive in protecting our precious trees EVERYWHERE in the City!! Why not cherish rather than destroying our ever decreasing canopy?

Replacing trees is NOT equal to killing existing ones. Look at Inman Square and the demolition of those trees 2 + years ago. Really?

Look at the track record on the little trees the DPW sticks in the ground then ignores!! Dead toothpicks.

Please wake up, leaders?? Please Listen & pay attention to those who have lived and loved this City and it's noteworthy green streets.

Please!!

It's your JOB !!! (After all)

Rika Welsh  
616 Green Street  
02139

Sent from my iPhone



**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Pam Matz <pjminca@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 5:47 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** I object to taking down the trees at Carl Barron Plaza

Trees are an essential part of the city's infrastructure, and the trees at Carl Barron Plaza help provide an area where unhoused people with few resources can spend time together with some degree of healthy shade.

As Elena Saporta wrote, The goldenraintrees at Carl Barron Plaza, besides being beautiful, drought-tolerant, summer-blooming specimens, provide precious shade in the heart of one of the city's major heat islands. They also define a plaza which functions as a social gathering space.

Pam Matz  
22 Essex St.

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Diane Martin <moumar@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:24 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Central Sq Plaza Trees

Cutting down trees in Central Square Plaza is more of the same misguided, hypocritical urban neighborhood destruction with little regard for the people who actually live here, that the City of Cambridge is becoming known for.

I oppose the proposal to cut trees in Central Sq Plaza. Lately it seems the CDD likes nothing more than to make overheated (in summer) neighborhoods even more so with irresponsible tree cutting practices.

Diane Martin  
34 Madison Avenue  
Cambridge

--

Diane Martin  
Email: [moumar@comcast.net](mailto:moumar@comcast.net)

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Dr. Lloyd Sheldon Johnson <lloydsheldonjohnson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:27 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Fwd: Traffic, Air Quality, and Safety

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Dr. Lloyd Sheldon Johnson" <[lloydsheldonjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:lloydsheldonjohnson@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Traffic, Air Quality, and Safety  
**Date:** November 17, 2022 at 6:18:52 PM EST  
**To:** [cambridgetrees@cambridgema.com](mailto:cambridgetrees@cambridgema.com)

As a matter of law regarding public hearings, I am assuming the concerns I posted on the Q&A during this evenings meeting have been recorded. Not all of my questions were addressed. As a resident of River Street, I foresee a lot of problems with traffic, safety, and congestion, especially during the winter. Has any serious thought been given to this? During the winter, River can be tied up from Memorial Drive to Massachusetts Avenue for hours. Though there is beauty and bike lanes on Western Avenue (which seem to be under-utilized), there is a huge issue with traffic and safety. Talk to the residents on Putnam Avenue! River Street is a thoroughfare for huge trucks, 18 wheelers and other transport vehicles that are oversized. As we move into winter and the snow season, many of these concerns will have to be addressed. Please consider these concerns!

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Mike Nakagawa <alewife.miken@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:29 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Tree Hearing - Carl Barron Plaza

(in case my previous letter to [cambridgetree@cambridgema.gov](mailto:cambridgetree@cambridgema.gov) bounced)  
Hello,

I oppose cutting mature trees as part of the River St. Reconstruction project. As a member of the Cambridge Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience planning Alewife Focus Group then later the Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force, which resulted in draft zoning that the Planning Board this week to be forwarded to City Council, and having attended and commented at almost all of the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) Task Force meetings, I am well aware of the importance of trees, and in particular mature trees, in the city's climate change resiliency efforts.

One big outcome of the UFMP was the realization that we need to curb the rate of loss of mature trees or we will be unable to meet our future canopy goals. Without curbing tree loss, we'd need to plant 200,000 trees at a rate of 4,000 per year to achieve the goal of restoring the canopy to where we were 15 years ago, and it would take 50 years to get there.

But the City continues to cut down significant numbers of trees on properties under its own control, such as at the Tobin School (93 trees) and Jefferson Park (about 150, mostly Significant trees). The River St project will cut down 34 street trees. In particular, Carl Barron Plaza will lose 8 trees, six of which are greater than 10 inches in diameter and in good condition, including a 15" oak.

I did a quick calculation of trunk areas, which represents tree canopy better than trunk diameters, which is a common measure that the City staff uses to measure trees. Because of their large size, the 8 trees at Carl Barron Plaza represent 38% of the total trunk area being cut down in the project.

The trunk area of the 8 trees represents more than half of the area that the 171 replacement trees will bring in the whole project.

The cross-sectional area of a tree trunk is what is needed to carry nutrients between the roots and leaves and is proportional to the square of the diameter of the tree trunk.

Area of 8 Carl Barron Plaza trees:	754 sq. in.
Total Area being cut down in entire project:	1976 sq. in.
Total Area of replacement trees:	1443 sq. in.

The Urban Forestry Dept has indicated that they cannot keep up with watering street trees as it is, but we will need to water 85 new trees to match the 8 that will be cut down.

Other places find a way to build around existing trees rather than over them. If the roots are constrained, we can fix the soil just outside their current root zone, and the trees will find the better soil for their new growth. The pictures of existing vs. future conditions shows extensive shading where people can sit, vs. sparse shading in the proposal.

For projects that require tree removal, I think that instead of replacing all mature trees with saplings, we should do redesigns in two phases. Save some of the mature trees to allow the saplings to establish, then complete the project a few years later, so there is always some amount of established tree canopy.

Again, I would like to go on record as opposing the cutting of the trees in the River St. Reconstruction project as presented.

thank you,  
Mike Nakagawa  
51 Madison Ave  
Cambridge, MA 02140

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** livia qoshe <liviaq27@live.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:30 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection to tree removal river st project

Hello,

I attended the tree removal meeting, and appreciate the efforts that have gone toward the project and considering the trees and community togetherness.

However, I do object to the current proposal. I believe we need to think about how to preserve, healthy mature trees for as long as their lifespan will allow.

It seems that the timeline is only tied to the river street project, and not the joint needs of the environment and the community.

I would like to see another proposal that takes this into greater account.

Please feel free to reach out.

Thanks,  
Livia Qoshe

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Allison Rebecca Penn <allisonrebeccapenn@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:32 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Carl Baron Plaza/River Street Tree Removal Objection

Hello,

I am writing to object to tree removal along River Street in Carl Baron plaza. I encourage you to find ways to replant trees in good condition or redesign the project to accommodate these trees. There should be more effort put in to preserve what's in good condition. What design is being done to ensure new trees can withstand strong winds and drought as weather events become more extreme?

Also tree removal during the Carl Baron plaza will be incredibly disruptive for all the people who frequent that plaza, this seems to be to be a coded way to bulldoze the groups who use the space and reconfigure it. This doesn't seem equitable in the construction process, especially since the current trees offer evaporation cooling and shade as climate change worsens and summer becomes more intense. If the design wants to open up space, particularly around Mass Ave, the new design doesn't seem to offer that. What else can be done to keep these large, mature, 26-year-old trees? I believe you can find another creative way to design around this and create a space that doesn't displace the groups who use the space and get value from the trees. Large mature trees are essential for climate resilience and joy.

Removing trees will release so much carbon and the new trees won't make up for that. It's essential to keep more trees than you're currently planning.

From a cyclist perspective, I appreciate more protected lanes, but now with the proposed design, there are more challenge for bike/pedestrian collisions than in the past. It's an existing issue I face on Western Ave, and having this on River Street and the Plaza will make the problem worse.

I am disappointed that the decisions seem to be made already so I implore you to read this objection and come up with some alternate solutions that will be more effective and beneficial for the people and trees of Cambridge.

Thank you,  
Allison Penn

*copywriter ; creative thinker*

401.714.4142

[allisonrebeccapenn@gmail.com](mailto:allisonrebeccapenn@gmail.com)

<https://www.allisonrebeccapenn.com>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/allisonpenn/>

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Katherine Carter <katherinecarter3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:33 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Prospect and Mass Ave plans

Hi,

As a concerned local employee I object to the removal of the mature trees at Prospect St and Mass Ave.

Thank you,  
Katherine Carter



**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Liz McNerney <liz\_mcnерney@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:34 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection

Hello - please do not cut down healthy mature trees. They are vital infrastructure and must be preserved. Thank you -  
Liz McNerney  
32 Garfield Street

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Emerson McNerney <emerson.mcnerney874@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:36 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Trees

Greetings

I am writing to lodge objections to the proposal to remove mature trees from the Prospect and Mass Ave intersection. As a long time resident of Cambridge and routine bicycle Commuter I object to the cutting of mature trees.

Sincerely

Emerson McNerney

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Gabriel Robinson <robinsongabriel64@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:37 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** trees in carl baron plaza

Hello! I understand from the presenters the long-term value of replacing the trees in Carl Baron because they're in fixed planters that don't give them room to grow. But I'd still like the city to explore a phased approach that would keep some of the mature, good condition trees that are there (and the shade that they provide) while new trees grow and fill in.

Thanks,  
Gabriel Robinson  
26 McTernan St. #3  
Cambridge MA 02139

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Mike Nakagawa <alewife.miken@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:49 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Tree Hearing - Carl Barron Plaza, pt 2

Hello,

I just wanted to add to my previously submitted comments what I had conveyed in the meeting - that even if you feel you cannot preserve all the trees currently living in the plaza, saving one, two, or three of them for a few years until the new ones are established would allow their huge contributions to continue. If desired later, the remainder of the project could be completed after the new ones have filled in. The project may need to be altered to accommodate the preserved trees, but that seems a small price to pay for continuity of canopy in our rapidly changing climate.

thank you,  
Mike Nakagawa  
51 Madison Ave  
Cambridge, MA 02140

## Lefcourt, David

---

**From:** Jeb Mays <jebmays@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:52 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** Objection

I write to register my strong objection to cutting down mature trees in Carl Barron park at Massachusetts Avenue and River St. Our established trees need to be maintained across the city as much as possible.

Jeb Mays  
175 Harvey St., Apt 13  
Cambridge 02140

**Lefcourt, David**

---

**From:** Annie <wildwatercress@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:55 PM  
**To:** Cambridge Trees  
**Subject:** No cutting of mature trees

I object to the City's plan to cut mature trees anywhere within its borders, including at Barron Plaza- in Central Square.

The City's policy of planting saplings while continuing to take down healthy, mature trees is unsustainable./ As a practical matter the City's subcontractors with water trucks are not even allowed to water per their contract. As many in Cambridge are aware, mature trees provide better and faster healing for post-surgical patients, increased learning rates among children, and an increase in mental health metrics. All of these have been shown to be proven benefits for patients in hospitals facing trees outside, for children learning and playing outdoors among trees, and for destitute, severely addicted and mentally ill people living near and walking in parks with mature trees.

Thank you for reading and recording my comments.

Sincerely,  
Ann Spanel