

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, August 29, 2023 – 5:00 p.m.
5555 Perimeter Drive**

Council Chamber

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Reiner called the August 29, 2023 Community Development Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members present: Ms. Amorose Groomes, Mr. Keeler, and Mr. Reiner

Staff present: Matt Earman, Robert Ranc, Shawn Krawetzki, Michael Hiatt

Minutes of the August 15, 2023 Meeting

Mr. Keeler moved to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2023 Community Development Committee meeting. Ms. Amorose Groomes seconded the motion.

Vote: Ms. Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes.

US 33/I270 Interchange Planting Beds Renovation

Mr. Earman introduced the changes to the planting beds renovation plan. Staff has incorporated feedback received from the Committee at the meeting on August 15, 2023 and created two new concepts. Staff is proposing the following substitutions/additions:

- Removal of Magnolia Sweetbay;
- Addition of Norway Spruce for evergreen diversity;
- Removal of Redbud and replacement with Crabapple Prairiefire;
- Addition of Bottlebrush Buckeye shrub.

Mr. Earman explained that Concept 2 is the same as the Original Concept with addition of the preferred species. Concept 3 is a new planting concept. He introduced Mr. Hiatt and commended him for all of the work and expertise on this over the past week.

Mr. Hiatt shared Concept 3 and explained it as a dynamic windswept, organic design. The grid will stay the same though the design flows over the grid. He shared different views of the new planting concept. Proposed plantings include Redwoods, Norway Spruce, Japanese Tree Lilac, and Prairiefire Crabapple. He showed the height relationship between trees when in bloom. This concept has about 20-30% more trees and significantly more shrubs than the original concept.

Mr. Earman stated that something particularly unique with Concept 3 is how different locations on the interchange will see different views of this design. It is quite a dynamic layout. This does have a substantially higher cost because of the number of trees. The original design as well as Concept 2 are estimated to cost around \$250,000. Concept 3 would require trees, drainage, and irrigation and is estimated at \$900,000. That does not include the amendment or addition of soils, which can dramatically increase costs.

He shared two questions for discussion:

1. Does the CDC have any additional feedback or questions regarding the proposed landscaping concepts for the I-270/U.S. 33 Interchange Planting Beds Renovation?
2. Does the CDC recommend one of the proposed concepts for consideration by the full Council?

Mr. Keeler stated that is a lot more money, but if we can determine how to pay for it, he is supportive of Concept 3. Mr. Earman stated that they could lessen the amount of irrigation and add in watering options for manual watering for the first two or three years. Drainage is another issue. Those changes could drop the cost down to \$750,000. There are also some phasing options that could be considered. Mr. Ranc stated that, after discussions with Finance staff, there may be the opportunity to utilize funds previously allocated to Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) that have come in significantly over estimate that are not going to be executed this year. The Finance Director is cautiously optimistic about the ability to fund this through a re-appropriation of funds. We are still waiting on soil samples, which could also affect cost. If Concept 3 is the plan, staff could return to Council with fully fleshed costs.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she is comfortable with Concept 2. There was much discussion about an entry feature with stone columns and walls at SR161 and that will be lovely. Concept 2 is very nice. She is mostly comfortable with the plant palette. Norway Spruce is a risk due to pine needle blight. Concept 2 is perfectly appropriate and she feels the City should spend more resources on SR161 at the entrance to the City. Regarding CIP allocations, she would be in favor of rolling funds over to next year to be able to fully fund those CIP projects when time permits. Concept 2 would be lovely and it will be in the middle of the interchange. It is far more than anyone else is doing in the center of a cloverleaf interchange. It will be lovely, unique, and striking.

Mr. Reiner thanked staff for their creativity and ingenuity with the plan. Concept 3 is outside the box. We must consider if the impact is really worth those costs. He thanked staff for putting in plants that are really long-term plants. Interesting changes were made. He likes the design of Concept 3 and wonders if the same effect could be had with fewer rows of plantings. He also posed the question of whether it could be done a couple of nodes at a time. This has moved a static project into something in motion and something of which Dublin can be proud.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that Concept 3 would be much more dramatic. Concept 2 will be dramatic but not as much. Some of the trees could be reduced; however, the real cost comes down to irrigation and drainage. Some irrigation would need to be amended with Concept 2 but Concept 3 would be a complete rework. They are two different philosophies.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that half of the traffic at this interchange is not coming into Dublin. It is a lovely design. The grid is a neat juxtaposition to the circles of the cloverleaf making Concept 2 somewhat interesting. The entry to Dublin is really at SR161. Concept 2 is exceedingly more than anyone else in the area is doing. We do not want to create the biggest impact here. Dublin cannot spend \$1 million on every entryway into the City and this is only half of an entryway. Concept 2 will make a lovely presentation throughout the year. Color is dispersed nicely through the seasons. Option 3 is beautiful but may be too much for the location.

Mr. Keeler agreed with Ms. Amorose Groomes. When approaching this area, drivers are not looking at the cloverleaf. From above, Concept 3 clearly stands out as creative but unless you are in the air, you will not see it from that point of view. He believes with Concept 2, the colors will make the difference. He is unable to justify more than three times the cost for Concept 3. Ms. Amorose Groomes made a good point that this cloverleaf is better than anything in the area.

Mr. Reiner stated that he thinks Concept 3 could be done with fewer plantings and achieve the same impact. He would rather have two intersections that we are really proud of than four okay intersections. He asked if the Council opts for Concept 2, if there would be funding to improve Frantz Road.

Mr. Earman stated that at one time, the money was programmed in the CIP for the whole intersection at Frantz Road and 161. The money is not currently programmed but the idea is still on the radar. There has been an initial design done for Frantz Road all the way down to Blazer Parkway but it is on hold until we understand what that whole design looks like. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the Metro Center Visioning discussion was caught up in that plan. Mr. Reiner stated that 161 desperately needs shade trees. Westerville did a nice job with their entry off the freeway. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she recalled the stonework was the focal point off 161.

Mr. Reiner summarized that the Committee preferred Concept 2 but he would like to see the cost to do two of the four nodes of Concept 3.

Mr. Keeler stated that the plans use the same species of trees and shrubs in both Concept 2 and Concept 3 so the color and variation is same. Concept 3 has a more imaginative layout and quantity. When driving at speed approaching this interchange,

the view will not be as long. Concept 3 is beautiful but when considering the time someone can actually take this in, he cannot justify the costs. If you trim Concept 3 back by 20% or 30% it is still over and above Concept 2.

Mr. Reiner stated that Concept 3 is a motion design and Concept 2 is a block grid design. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated this is a recommendation to City Council and could have further discussion. Mr. Reiner confirmed Concept 2 is the same ballpark costs as originally proposed. Mr. Earman answered affirmatively and noted this still has to go through the Ohio Department of Transportation for approval.

Mr. Keeler asked which presentation all of Council will see. Mr. Ranc stated that the Chair will report back and staff will give this presentation with any additional information. Mr. Keeler confirmed Council will see Concept 3.

Ms. Amorose Groomes advised staff to stay away from the Norway Spruce due to pine needle cast. Sea Green Juniper may be a good substitution.

Ms. Amorose Groomes moved to recommend to City Council approval of Concept 2 with the substitution of the Juniper for the Spruce. Mr. Keeler seconded.

Vote: Ms. Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Reiner, no; Mr. Keeler, yes.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.



Chair, Community Development Committee



Deputy Clerk of Council