



BOARD DISCUSSION

Architectural Review Board

Wednesday, August 26, 2020 | 6:30 pm

The Architectural Review Board took the following action at this meeting:

**1. Historic Dublin Stone Walls
20-133INF**

Informal Review

Proposal: Feedback on the installation of stone walls along S. High Street from Bridge Street to John Wright Lane. The area is zoned Bridge Street District, Historic Core and Historic South.

Request: Review and informal feedback under the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.066 and *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*.

Applicant: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager, City of Dublin

Planning Contact: Chase J. Ridge, AICP Candidate, Planner I

Contact Information: 614.410.4656, cridge@dublin.oh.us

Case Information: www.dublinohiousa.gov/arb/20-133

RESULT: The Board reviewed and provided informal feedback regarding the proposed stone wall details along South High Street, as requested by City Council. The members were supportive of the installation of new trees along the streetscape and the ultimate removal of the overhead power lines. They expressed concerns about the installation of stone walls in the right-of-way where these walls did not historically exist. They recommended the walls not be incorporated beyond where it is needed to retain, particularly along the east side of South High Street where they found that would be the most incompatible with the character. They questioned the limited width of the sidewalk in the area with no tree lawn. The members were also very concerned with the potential for tripping and falling where the sidewalk meets the cap of the proposed stone wall. They recommended the applicant investigate another design alternative to prevent this condition.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gary Alexander	Yes
Kathleen Bryan	No
Amy Kramb	Yes
Sean Cotter	Yes
Frank Kownacki	Yes

STAFF CERTIFICATION

DocuSigned by:

Chase J. Ridge

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Chase J. Ridge, AICP Candidate, Planner I



~~responsibility on these cases. The Chair swore in staff and applicants who planned to address the Board on any of the cases during the meeting.~~

CASES:

1. Historic Dublin Stone Walls, 20-133INF, Informal Review

Mr. Alexander stated that this is a request for feedback on the proposed installation of stone walls along S. High Street from Bridge Street to John Wright Lane. The area is zoned Bridge Street District, Historic Core and Historic South.

Case Presentation

Mr. Ridge stated that this is a request for an informal review and non-binding feedback on the installation of stone walls along S. High Street, north to south, from Bridge Street to John Wright Lane. This stretch of S. High Street is located within the City's right-of-way, and is comprised of a brick sidewalk, a tree lawn, and on the east side, primarily mature trees. On the west side of the street, a significant grade change exists between the sidewalk and curb, and the street trees have been removed. In the proposed site plan, a number of new trees are depicted. The tree species and locations have already been determined. There are a number of stone relics along the S. High Street corridor, which will be preserved, including two carriage steps, and a hitching post in obelisk style. In Phase 1, stone retaining walls will be installed along the west side of S. High Street. The primary purpose of the stone walls, which will be a maximum of 30 inches in height, is to establish a consistent grade for the trees that will be planted along S. High Street. Phase 2 will include the installation of stone seat walls and decorative columns that will be topped with a stone bookend. The Phase 2 walls will be installed later than the Phase 1 retaining wall in locations yet to be determined. The walls are proposed to be constructed of a natural limestone veneer with racked back mortared joints, which mimic Dublin's typical dry stacked historic walls. An example of this construction is at the Grounds of Remembrance. Staff is requesting the Board to provide informal review and feedback on the proposed stone walls along S. High Street.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that this project would be phased. Only the retaining wall in Phase 1 would occur initially. Future phases will involve a full design and will not occur until the trees on the east side begin to decline. The City arborist's review indicates that the trees are in decline, but it could be several years before the wall on the east side of the street would occur. Future phases of the walls will occur when appropriate locations have been identified. Those walls are intended to be seat walls for parade watching, etc. The Phase 1 wall is needed to retain the sidewalk, which exists high above the curb. Because the grassy space between will be removed so that the ground level will drop to the curb level, a retaining wall will be needed to hold up the sidewalk. The wall along the sidewalk will perch just slightly above it to provide an edge, so that a wheelchair or stroller will not topple over the edge; it will provide a block. It will be a stone course or two high, maintaining a 30-inch height maximum; there will be no need for a handrail. In the future, people watching parades will be able to stand next to the trees or sit/lean on the wall. The Engineering Department currently is working on a project to remove the power lines along S. High Street. That project will occur after the trees are planted but before they reach any size where they would be impacted by the lines. The trees must become established, then will begin to grow. By then, the power lines will have been removed. A few penetration points will be added via stairs, so that pedestrians do not need to walk to the end to get around the walls to access the sidewalk.

Board Questions

Mr. Cotter stated that there are many power line poles in that area. Does staff foresee any issues in lowering the grade two or three feet? Does AEP have any objections to that? Will the poles interfere with the locations in which the trees are intended to be planted?

Mr. Krawetzki responded that they would need to work around the poles initially, so there may be breaks in the walks where the poles are located. It may be necessary to delay planting a couple of trees. If so, the wall would be patched in later and the tree planted. They have not had a conversation with AEP yet about how much they will be permitted to excavate, but if there is an issue, that is how it would be handled.

Mr. Cotter inquired if the street lights that are above grade also would be cut down to grade and leave them or add a new pedestal.

Mr. Krawetzki responded that the street lights would remain in their current locations. They would pour new foundations and lower the street lights.

Mr. Kownacki inquired if the walls would be completely in the right-of-way, and the wall would serve as a divider between the sidewalk and the street.

Mr. Krawetzki responded affirmatively.

Mr. Kownacki inquired if there would be sufficient room; some of the areas seem somewhat tight.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that there would be an average of four-five feet of verge area. The slope and curved inconsistencies in the sidewalk make it appear less. In building the wall, it will be necessary to de-construct some of the sidewalk, and after the wall is built along the edge, the sidewalk would be re-fit next to it. There will be some sidewalk repair work, as well.

Ms. Kramb stated that on the east side of the street, there is no slope; therefore, the walls would not be retaining walls.

Mr. Krawetzki responded that is correct. When the walls are added on that side in the future, they will be constructed at grade with a natural stacked-stone look that is common in the City. They will be seat walls and would not be retaining any soil.

Ms. Kramb stated that the entire west side of the street is not sloped, only certain sections are; so will the west wall serve as a retaining wall only in those sections?

Mr. Krawetzki responded that in Phase 1, only the retaining wall sections would occur, which is most of the block. The wall would extend from Dublin Tavern to the end of John Wright Lane. There is only a small section at the end that does not slope, so most of that length will be in a retaining condition at various heights.

Ms. Kramb stated that he has indicated that the retaining wall would extend only a course or two above the sidewalk height. Will that be consistent the entire length of the west side?

Mr. Krawetzki responded affirmatively.

Ms. Kramb inquired if the wall would abut the street curve.

Mr. Krawetzki responded that it would not; it will be behind the street curve, vertical to the sidewalk.

Ms. Kramb stated that it would be vertical to the sidewalk and only a course or two higher than the sidewalk.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that the wall height would gradually lower as the sidewalk elevation lowers.

Ms. Kramb inquired if the height of the wall adjacent to the sidewalk would remain consistent the entire length.

Mr. Krawetzki responded affirmatively. The top one or two courses will follow the sidewalk.

Ms. Kramb stated that on the east side of the street, however, the wall will extend two feet above the sidewalk.

Mr. Krawetzki responded that future east wall would be a standing wall.

Mr. Kownacki inquired if the existing bike racks in the right-of-way would be moved elsewhere when the Phase 2, east wall is constructed.

Mr. Krawetzki responded that they would likely work around them. There has been interest for some time in adding more of the historic walls in Historic Dublin. None of the existing amenities will be eliminated, although they may be located farther down the street.

Mr. Cotter stated that there was a public comment about the power lines. There are many power lines here, and some lines cross from the west to the east side of the street. Staff indicates they have not yet been in contact with AEP. The public comment regarding where future power lines would be placed is valid. If they must be run under the street to the other side, will it be necessary to tear up the sidewalk? We do not want to invest \$1.6 million in this project and later, have to tear it up.

Mr. Krawetzki clarified that Parks & Recreation staff has not contacted AEP. However, Engineering staff deals with power line issues, and they have spoken with AEP. He believes their intent is to remove them from the street frontage back to the alleys, and everything will be fed from the alleys on both sides of the street. Businesses will receive power from the lines extended from the alley on their side of the street.

Mr. Alexander stated that the maximum height of the wall is indicated to be 30 inches. Are they anticipating that people will sit on the side facing the street? The typical seat height is 16-18 inches. There is a significant grade change between the street and the west grade.

Mr. Krawetzki responded that the wall would need to be a height of 30 inches in some areas for retaining purposes, but not the entire length. The purpose of the 30-inch maximum was to avoid the need for handrails. Some of the wall will be too high to be comfortably sat upon without hopping up on it; it will not be a chair height.

Mr. Alexander stated that it appears the goal is to level the grade from curb to wall on both sides. Is the intent that the walls on both sides of the street will appear to be the same height?

Mr. Krawetzki responded that is the goal, but there may be some difference. The intent is that the free-standing wall on the east side will serve as a seat wall where possible. The retaining wall on the west side will have to be the same height as the sidewalk, but everywhere else, it will be a seat wall height, proposed to be between 18 inches and 24 inches in height. The aesthetic will be consistent throughout the corridor.

Mr. Alexander inquired if the wall would be a sufficient distance for opening car doors to clear.

Mr. Krawetzki responded affirmatively. Additionally, a suspended pavement system will be installed under portions of the street and parking areas to increase the tree lawn soil volume needed to support large trees. A shade tree needs approximately 1,000 cubic feet of soil to grow. The small, 5-foot area between the curb and the sidewalks will not provide 1,000 cubic feet, so it will be

extended under the roadway. Planting the trees at the top of curb grade will allow the roots to access the soil. With the construction of the walls, they will not be using a footer that goes all the way down, but using piers or caissons that carry a grade beam. Tree roots will be able to reach under the wall and take advantage of the soil.

Public Comments

Kathy Lannan, 37 S. Riverview Street, Dublin, stated, "I see that you will be discussing the installation of stone walls along S. High St. at the ARB meeting this evening. I was not sure how to submit a question, but I have one question. I like the look, but the top of the wall appears to be level with the sidewalk. I'm wondering if there are liability issues that the City should consider before people inadvertently step off the edge."

Tom Bassett, 5720 Loch Maree Ct., 33 S. High Street, Dublin stated: "I think the walls and tree plantings are a wonderful idea! However, it seems like a repeat of past efforts: the City plants trees, the trees grow, the utility company removes! The area looks like a slum area! The streets are torn up, wires dominate the streetscape, and nothing changes. It is literally trying to make "a silk purse out of a sow's ear." Until a plan is developed to address the real issue, planting trees and building walls is absurd. North High has accomplished this, why not S. High? I, at my own expense, rerouted all overhead lines to the back of my properties at 35 S. High, and 41 West Bridge St. Why can't the City, or other property owners do the same, then replace curbs, pave the street, then plant trees and construct walls. South High is an embarrassment, but yet is touted as the heart of the Historic District! (The power lines along the rear of S. High also need to be cleaned up, new taller poles installed, and made safer). Interesting how rigorous review and approvals required for even minor changes in this area, but the most dominant characteristic of this area is ignored. I've owned numerous properties in Historic Dublin since 1974, and this is the third time trees have been planted, and then removed."

Tom Holton, 5957 Roundtree Place, Dublin, stated:

#01 - "I must be clear to staff and to the ARB that I am expressing an opinion as an amateur historian, and this is not the opinion of the Dublin Historical Society. I have not discussed this with any members of the Historical Society. I am no longer the President of the Society. Historically, there is not a precedent for stone walls along South High Street. Primarily for this reason -- absence of historic relevance -- I am not in favor of the stone walls in the application. The planning report does not state this nor specifically indicate it in the diagrams, but does the plan eliminate some of the parking on the west side of the street? It seems this is the only way to "modify the existing grades" from the walkway or sidewalk to the street. One of the photos shows vehicles adjacent to 55 South High, where there is very little grade change, but the slope is significant progressing south from 75 to 119 South High. I am curious how the plan allows for walkway, tree space, stone wall, grass, and parking." #02 – "The retaining wall vs. stone wall was confusing to me in the planning report. It is a little more clear now. I am still not in favor of it. The retaining wall is going to be even more difficult for opening car doors as people exit their cars, unless you eliminate parking."

Mr. Alexander stated that he believes a response to the first public comment was covered by Mr. Krawetzki's earlier explanation. The second comment relates to a significant issue, which we will rely on staff to handle, and it is that of coordinating the project with the utilities. Mr. Holton's questions about the opening of car doors was also answered earlier. This is an Informal Review,

and staff has asked the Board to provide input on whether we believe this is a good idea or have any misgivings concerning it.

Board Discussion

Mr. Kownacki stated that he believes Mr. Holton posed an important question, which is, are we attempting to add history where it did not exist before? Should we contemplate this further before extending a wall up to SR 161?

Ms. Kramb stated that in response to that question, it is her primary concern. While she understands the need and the practicality of the retaining portion of the wall, and she might be able to agree to certain sections having a retaining wall, historically, these walls would never have been here. The stone walls that exist in Dublin have the bookshelf top – never a flat top to sit on. They also served a purpose of defining property lines; they were not random segments between blocks. From a historical perspective, these walls do not fit at all. She also is concerned with the limited space. When walking along these sidewalks, if someone is coming from the other direction, it is necessary to move off the sidewalk and into the grassy lawn. There is insufficient room for two people and a stroller to pass someone coming from the other direction. With no grass lawn to walk into, there is a risk of walking over the retaining wall. Cutting the sidewalk off at the edge of it would tightly squeeze pedestrian traffic down the sidewalk. The grassy area really is needed to sidestep/accommodate that traffic, including the occasional bicyclist, strollers, etc. She does not see how all that activity can occur within an even more limited space in a usable manner; it is already very narrow. While the wall would look nice, it is not really appropriate.

Mr. Cotter agreed that the wall looks nice, although, historically, it would not have looked as proposed. He also is concerned about safety, particularly at night when people are trying to pass in areas not well lit. In shadowed areas, they could step in the wrong space. If the wall extends only one or two courses above the sidewalk edge, a person could attempt to move over, trip and fall over that edge. The space is too narrow for a bicyclist and a stroller to attempt to pass, and stepping out of the way and over a 30-inch wall is not safe.

Ms. Kramb responded that, essentially, stepping out of the way could be falling down into the street.

Mr. Cotter stated that, setting aside the historical issue for a moment, the risk of falling over the course into the open space below is a safety concern. If it is dark or raining, someone is moving quickly, or pedestrian traffic is moving in both directions – from a safety standpoint, this is a concern.

Mr. Alexander stated that the details of the proposed walls are different than original walls in the City. In the community, there are original, historic walls and non-historic walls. He actually appreciated that the top of these walls is different. He understands the need for retaining walls in the District, and it would help the streetscape to have retaining walls. However, he would prefer that they occur only on the west side where they would be serving a retaining purpose, not run along both sides of the street. His concern is that these walls would be so pronounced, if they were on both sides of the street, that they would become the defining element of the District. They will create a continuous street wall – a very prominent feature that is not original. He is concerned that they will be visually overwhelming to the streetscape. He personally loves the landscaping and would like the landscaping to be extremely elaborate. However, he is concerned the walls would be too dominant.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that Phase 1 is just the retaining section. There are no plans or full design for other walls. At this point, a discussion regarding whether there should even be additional walls is valid. The design shown tonight shows the full possibilities. In regard to the tight sidewalk, there are some spaces where people could step off on the other side of the sidewalk onto private property. Of course, in some places, the buildings are up to the edge of the sidewalk.

Mr. Kownacki stated that for at least three Board members, the issue is adding a historical element where none previously existed and never would have, as traditionally, they would have defined property lines.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that one Council member requested the Board's feedback on the look of the proposed walls. They would be modeled similar to the style of the Grounds of Remembrance wall. Would ARB be comfortable with that look?

Mr. Kownacki responded that he believes most people would like the Ohio limestone look, which would feel right in the neighborhood. Perhaps it would be better not to try to make it look too historic, as it would appear that the City was trying to fabricate a history that did not exist. If the walls had existed, they never would have been flat-topped; they would have been the bookend type.

Ms. Kramb stated that for a retaining wall, it looks fine. Actually, a bookend wall could not be placed here, as it would be even more risky. She understands the need for a retaining wall for tree planting. However, a long stretch of wall that never would have been there, and placing a six-inch lip next to the sidewalk that people will constantly trip over are concerns.

Mr. Cotter stated that from the appearance perspective, the wall looks fine. If it were located somewhere else with trees and raised beds, he would like it. From a risk assessment standpoint, a 30-inch fall is a long fall.

Ms. Kramb stated that the concern is that here, it will be very easy to step to the edge of the sidewalk to let someone pass. It would be very easy to trip over that six-inch lip -- people trip over curbs of that height frequently. In this situation, it would be tripping over a curb and falling over a wall.

Mr. Alexander inquired if staff had sufficient input to proceed.

Ms. Rauch responded that the Board's comments would be shared with Council.

Ms. Kramb stated that the packet rendering was of a wall on the east side of the street. She would suggest that staff bring back a rendering of the west wall as a retaining wall. There should be two views: 1) a view from a parking space along High Street looking at the retaining wall; and 2) a view from the perspective of walking on the sidewalk, showing the height of the one to two-course lip along the sidewalk from the inside.

Mr. Alexander stated that if a grass strip were added between the sidewalk and the upper lip of the retaining wall, the grass strip could provide a buffer, a warning. If the Board could view a plan that depicted all the dimensions, we would be better able to evaluate the space.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that the grassy strip would be difficult to maintain.

Mr. Alexander suggested a planting bed instead.

Ms. Kramb stated that, unfortunately, there does not appear to be room for that. It appears that the wall is abutting the sidewalk.

Ms. Krawetzki responded that it is. They were attempting to maximize the tree area, as it would help in restoring the tree canopy. There may be other planting opportunities in that area between the trees. The initial goal was to plant trees in there that would have some height and take advantage of the soil under the road.

Mr. Cotter stated that if this plan is brought back, it should contain a plan for the power lines and lighting, in addition to the other concerns stated.

Mr. Krawetzki stated that the lighting level would not change; the lights would remain in their current positions, but just be lowered.

Mr. Cotter stated that the light level would change when trees are placed there. There will be significant shadows between the trees that will obscure the walking area.

Ms. Kramb inquired about the procedure. Typically, an Informal Review would need to return to ARB for approval.

Ms. Rauch stated that because this project is in the City right-of-way and part of a Capital Project, Council is the approving body. However, staff will report ARB's feedback to Council.

Ms. Kramb stated that for the record, as reflected in the minutes, she does not approve of what has been presented today.

Mr. Kownacki stated that it would be important for staff to contact AEP regarding potential drops from the alleys instead of drops along S. High Street, so the poles can be moved out.

Mr. Krawetzki clarified that Engineering would be moving all the power lines to the alleys; there would be no power lines down S. High Street.

Mr. Cotter inquired how staff would present the Board's concerns regarding the historical inconsistency and the safety issue to City Council.

Ms. Rauch responded that a memo would be provided to Council outlining the Board's concerns and comments, as well as the public comments.

~~2. 86 Franklin Street, 20-122MPR, Minor Project Review~~

~~Mr. Alexander stated that this is a request for exterior modifications to an existing home east of Franklin Street, ±350 feet north of the intersection with John Wright Lane. The 0.36-acre site is zoned Bridge Street District, Historic Residential.~~

Staff Presentation

~~Mr. Ridge stated that this is a request for review and approval of a Minor Project Review for exterior modifications to an existing residential home located at 86 Franklin Street, including the installation of new skylights and a new window on the rear of the home. The .36-acre parcel has approximately 70 feet of frontage along Franklin Street, and the rear of the property is adjacent to Mill Lane.~~

To: Members of Dublin City Council

From: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager

Date: July 21, 2020

Initiated By: Matt Earman, Director of Parks and Recreation
Shawn Krawetzki, Landscape Architect Manager

Re: South High Street Streetscape Improvements Update

Background

As a follow up to the South High Street Improvements presented at the February 10th, 2020 Council meeting, the following is a summary of the subsequent project developments and staff's recommendation.

Phase I – "Treescape" Plan for South High Street

There was discussion and consensus among City Council to move this specific phase forward prior to the relocation of utility poles and lines that exist along the street. The opinion was that they would be repositioned prior to any conflict with the immediate planting and future growth of the larger trees.

Since the last meeting, staff has researched tree species' availability and overall site location requirements of the trees and determined that the Tuliptree (fastigiatum/emerald city) species is the preferred option to establish a uniform, symmetrical, single-species streetscape along South High Street. Staff has proactively and individually selected 53 trees from a nursery to ensure each tree is from the appropriate climate zone origin, optimum diameter, height and overall high quality.

Engineering design proposals for the modular suspended pavement sections (Silva Cells / Strata Vault) have been requested from multiple engineering firms. The scope of work for the design includes the entire streetscape from West Bridge Street, south to John Wright Lane to accommodate competitive bidding for components of the streetscape that are to be replaced and improved.

The initial estimated cost of performing the installations along both sides of South High Street is approximately \$1.3 million. The estimated costs to only construct certain sections of these modular systems will increase if the sections are reduced and phased in over time. The cost increase is related to the joining of some cells to the end of the previously installed cells, which requires oversized excavations in order to connect the cell to the previously installed system. Not connecting the cell systems in certain circumstances would reduce the shared root zones between the trees.

Based on these additional costs and the disruption to the existing pavement, local businesses and traffic patterns, it is staff's opinion that replacing all of the trees on both west and east sides of the street in one phase would provide the most symmetrical streetscape at the completion of this phase of work and be the most cost effective and efficient implementation.

An initial site plan showing trees planted along both sides of South High Street at optimal spacing distances as site conditions allow has been developed and is attached for reference as Appendix A.

South High Street Phase II – Landscaping

With the expressed desire to incorporate “Dublin-style” limestone walls, staff has pursued the addition of walls as part of the treescape and overall landscape design process. It is staff’s opinion that in the three southwestern blocks where the tree lawn is sloping downward from the sidewalk to the street level, the construction of retaining walls would be most advantageous to allow the trees to be planted at the same, lower street elevation, to take full advantage of the soil volumes added by the cell systems, structurally retain the sidewalk and provide public seating areas along the walkway, (Appendices B1 and B2.) The total length of the walls is approximately 600 linear feet, to include brick steps intermittently installed at the greater elevation changes on the southern end. Estimated cost of installation of the walls is approximately \$300,000 (\$450-\$500/lf.)

As a future phase of the landscape detail, additional Dublin-style stone seat walls with decorative column ends could be added along additional streetscape blocks at various lengths to provide additional seating and continue the desired Dublin style stone wall aesthetic. The estimated cost is approximately \$450-\$500 per linear feet.

In order to address the erosion issues associated with the building downspouts on the west side of the street, it is staff’s opinion that each of the individual properties would be able to substantially mitigate the issues by installing diffusing systems at the sites of discharge. Rather than installing drain piping under the sidewalk and discharge directly into the street or into the strata cell of the tree, it is staff’s opinion that this option would be too costly and unnecessary given the direct discharge diffusion would be sufficient to significantly mitigate landscape erosion issues.

If Council decides to proceed with the design and construction of Phase 1 and a portion of Phase 2 as described above in 2020, an appropriation for \$1.6 million would be included in the third quarter supplemental ordinance. Funding for this project would be made available by reallocating funding currently appropriated in 2020 for a project that will not be occurring until 2021.

Recommendation

Staff recommends proceeding with the design and bidding for Phase 1 and a portion of Phase 2 as described above to include the suspended pavement systems and tree installation for the east and west sides of the street, and the installation of the 600 feet retaining walls and steps along the southwest blocks.

With Council’s approval, the removal of the existing trees on the east side of the street, installation of the retaining wall and planting of trees could occur this fall. Construction could resume in the spring of 2021 with the installation of the strata cells and paving of South High Street.

Future design and installation of decorative seating walls along South High Street would be programmed as part of the City’s five-year Capital Budget programming process.

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~~Ms. Fox stated there are many great tips available from other cities, things they have learned along the way and we should take the time to explore those. Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she would be okay with this under limited circumstances, not this winter. She would like to be ready in the spring. Mr. McDaniel stated that staff was hoping to gain direction from Council. He summarized Council's comments as: starting small, however staff would recommend a larger footprint rather than start small and then grow it. Council holds control over days, times, etc.; spring is better than now, so staff will be back in the September timeframe with more specific recommendations; and staff will work on engaging residents, possibly HOAs to gain their input.~~

- **South High Street Trees Update**

Mr. Earman reviewed the challenges along the street such as compacted clay soils, signage, light poles, etc. He stated there are three large trees in the northwest block of the street close to Jeni's Ice Cream and there are 27 other existing trees on the east side of the street, 19 of which are fairly substantial in size. With the desire to create symmetrical streetscape and single species, these trees will need to be replaced at some point. The preferred species is the Emerald City Tulip Tree. Staff has selected the trees to ensure the inventory was available when the project was ready to proceed. Mr. Earman provide an illustration of the layout of the trees. 53 new trees are proposed. The cost estimates for this project are approximately \$1.6 million for both sides of the street. Mr. Earman reviewed the timeline for the project. There are some options for the project:

- Do nothing until east side trees decline and need to be removed.
- Complete only west side of the street and wait until east side trees need to be removed.
- Work on both sides simultaneously.

Staff recommended proceeding with the work on both sides of the street, the suspended pavement system and the installation of the 600 feet retaining walls and steps along the southwest blocks. The removal of the existing trees on the east side of the street, installation of the retaining wall and planting of trees could occur this fall. Construction would then resume in spring of 2021.

Ms. Fox inquired asked if the tulip tree will achieve the look that is desired for the streetscape.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated it is a wonderful selection. She stated it will provide great cover and has a great tree canopy. She stated it is hardy and proven in the landscape.

Ms. Fox stated that she is concerned it will take years to grow and improve the streetscape if all the trees are removed on the east side.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked Mr. Earman what size trees were purchased. Mr. Earman stated they were 2-3 inches caliper. In response to Mayor Amorose Groomes question regarding trunk height, Mr. Earman stated that staff was able to get 6-7 feet. Mr. Reiner stated that we should keep the east side trees in place for as long as we can. He stated the west side should be started and hold off on the east side. He is hoping the estimates are a little high.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked if the trees could all be purchased now, whether or not they are ready to be planted. She added that the wall will be great along the street.

Mr. Earman stated that the trees have been purchased.

Ms. Fox stated that she loves the idea of a seat wall also. Her preference would be to create the wall in the character of the district.

Mr. Keeler stated he agrees with proceeding with the west side and leaving the east side in place for as long as we can.

Mr. Earman reiterated that there are three Oaks in the northwest block by Jeni's Ice Cream and sought confirmation that Council wanted those left as well.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated the entire west side should be done all at once.

Mr. Reiner agreed with Mayor Amorose Groomes that the unified street tree planting looks better when it is done all at once.

Vice Mayor De Rosa inquired about any cost savings that may be realized by doing the work all at once. Mr. Earman stated that it would depend on how many trees would

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Meeting

BARRETT BROTHERS - DAYTON, OHIO

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need to be replaced in the future. Staff was conservative on estimates, but amounts could be affected by inflation.

Mr. Reiner stated that there is a benefit of doing one side, traffic wise, rather than tearing the entire street up at once.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked how the cost would be impacted if the west side was done in phases.

Mr. Reiner stated he wanted to look at the three large oak trees by Jeni's to see what kind of shade they are getting and if the streetscape would really require them to be removed.

Ms. Fox agreed with Mr. Reiner.

Ms. Weisenauer stated that one comment was received for this topic from the public. Mary Szuter, Franklin Street, asked for comment regarding when the power line relocation will occur.

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that staff has been coordinating with AEP regarding some of the phasing for the various work items that need to occur. They have also been coordinating with them for the resurfacing of Franklin Street and the extension of Franklin Street; this work will occur over the next few years. Currently, estimates have been received, so there will be discussions about the funding and timing of this project's phases during the CIP process.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that it would be complete in the neighborhood of 3-5 years.

Mr. McDaniel stated that the Franklin Street project is budgeted in the CIP in 2021 for phase 1. The relocation of the lines in the Historic District for South High Street back to the alley ways will be a 2022-2023 timeframe.

Mr. Earman summarized that:

- engineering and design will be completed for the entire project (east and west sides);
- Staff will work on a bid package for the west side of the street minus the three large oaks in the northwest corner;
- Staff will proceed with retaining walls and brick paver steps, and check-in with ARB regarding materials to be used; and
- continue with future landscaping needs in the CIP process.

Mayor Amorose Groomes suggested doing the entire west side of the street due to the life-span of the three existing trees in the northwest block.

Mr. Keeler stated that the stone wall, at a cost of \$450-\$500 per lineal foot, seems high. The City has to pay prevailing wage, but through his research, he found the City could possibly realize a savings of over \$200,000. He encouraged Mr. Earman to obtain competitive bids to make sure the City is getting the best price possible. Mr. Earman stated that there may be some differences in how they are installed and the City has certain standards for installation, but staff will definitely be hoping for competitive bids.

Ms. Fox suggested updating the bike path maps to indicate a better connection as the sidewalks are virtually unusable now as a bike path in this area and that is what the map indicates.

STAFF COMMENTS

Historic District Task Force:

Mr. McDaniel stated that the Historic District Task Force is requesting additional time to complete their work as the pandemic has delayed the Task Force being able to meet.

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved to grant the Task Force additional time.

Ms. Fox seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes.

Mr. McDaniel stated that the Task Force met last week and recommended a Chair and Vice Chair of the Historic District Task Force.

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved to accept the recommendation of the Historic District Task Force and to appoint Kim Way as the Chair and Kathy Lanan as the Vice Chair.

Ms. Fox seconded.

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Vote on the motion: Mr. Reiner, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Chair Alutto stated that at the recent meeting, debt issuance and callable debt were discussed. All members of committee indicated a comfort level with the debt profile and that it should be reviewed annually. Ms. Alutto stated that lease payments were also discussed and the committee brought forward recommendations. Ms. Alutto moved to accept the Finance Committee's recommendation to forgive the lease payments (\$1,000 per month) for Subway as long as they remain closed, which is projected as the end of 2020 with re-evaluation to be done at the end of 2020; and to forgive lease payments for the Dublin Village Tavern (\$3,374/month) and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (\$2,100/month) for the month of July 2020 with further evaluation to be done after that time.

Mr. Reiner seconded.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, abstain.

Ms. Alutto stated that the committee also recommends a refund to the Dublin Schools for the two months of payments made under the current SRO Contract for the Schools being closed due to the pandemic.

Ms. Alutto moved to refund the Dublin Schools for two months of payments made under the current SRO Contract to account for the time period when the Schools were closed.

Mr. Keeler seconded.

Vote on the motion: Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes.

Ms. Alutto stated in regard to bed tax grants that the committee recommended administrative approvals continue up to \$10,000, provided the nature of the services is not changing from previous requests. Anything over the \$10,000 would come back to the committee for consideration. Staff will provide background on the basis for the \$200,000 per year allocation for the grant program; it has been the same amount since 2009. The Committee will be meeting about this in November and will be bringing Council a recommendation on how to calculate what should be allocated to that program in the future.

MORPC and COMMA: Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that conversations continue daily regarding CARES Act dollar distribution.

Board of Education: Mr. Peterson stated that the Schools continue to work on plans regarding how the schools may re-open and extra-curricular programming.

Complete Count Committee: Ms. Alutto shared that Dublin is at 79.5% completion. Dublin is in the top 5% in cities across the nation. The door knocking program will begin in August and continue through October. She encouraged everyone to go online to complete the census so it will not be necessary to have people knocking on doors.

COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE

Mr. Reiner: He asked everyone to keep Pat Monahan, former Mayor of Shawnee Hills in their prayers as he is very ill.

Ms. Fox: She announced that the Architectural Review Board is having a special meeting to discuss the Historic District guidelines and code amendments. She encouraged the public to feel free to listen and ask any questions.

Mr. Keeler: He thanked Council and Staff for the birthday wishes. He also thanked staff for putting together the pop-up parades. He would like to explore further the feasibility of development impact fees.

To: Members of Dublin City Council
From: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager
Date: February 4, 2020
Initiated By: Matt Earman, Director of Parks and Recreation
Re: South High Street Streetscape Improvements - Community Development Committee Recommendations

Background

As a follow up to the Community Development Committee/South High Street visioning memo dated December 31, 2019 (attached,) the following is a summary of the subsequent Committee meeting held on Friday, January 17, 2020.

The main takeaways from the meeting are generally represented by three phases.

Phase I – “Treescape” Plan for South High Street

There was discussion and consensus among the Committee to move this specific phase forward as soon as possible. The discussion regarding the relocation of elevated utility lines led to the opinion they would be repositioned prior to any conflict with the immediate planting of larger trees. In order to accommodate this decision, it was requested that staff provide additional information to determine a preferred species.

Staff presented four species for consideration to achieve the desired effect, from which the Committee selected two: Tuliptree (fastigiatum/emerald city) and Hardy Rubber Tree. From these two options, one species will be selected as the single tree to be planted in order to achieve the desired aesthetics. The determination will be based on the available inventory of trees and the quality of trees readily available. Each tree will be individually selected based on the climate zone origin, optimum diameter at breast height (DBH), height and overall quality of each tree.

Trees will be planted along both sides of South High Street at optimal spacing distances as site conditions permit. As for the potential removal and replacement of the existing mature trees along the northwest segment of South High Street, further evaluation of the trees was conducted by staff and a third party consultant to determine overall health and estimated lifespan. Based on the analyses, findings showed varying degrees of three health issues (Appendix A – Tree Assessment Findings Summary.) The life expectancy of these trees is estimated within a wide range, spanning from approximately five to fifteen years. Based on these reports, there is no imminent danger noted; however, a few trees may need to be removed over the next few years to minimize potential future risk. It is preferred that only the least healthy trees be removed that pose a greater safety concern and/or a shorter life expectancy in order to temporarily maintain the existing tree canopy until the remaining trees require replacement.

A soil volume analysis was also conducted in order to compare variances with desired soil volume for the replacement trees. In general, existing soil quantity per tree is an estimated 400 cubic feet.

The desired quantity for the desired tree canopy for a 16-foot, 32-inch diameter tree is approximately 1,000 cubic feet – a deficiency of 600 cubic feet of soil per tree.

The desired approach in order to achieve the 1,000 cubic feet of soil at each planting site is to remove the existing soil, extend the planting bed into and under the existing roadway pavement and install a suspended pavement system (i.e.: Silva Cells.) Each suspended system will only be installed under the road pavement in order to minimize challenges and future issues with existing buried utility lines and walkways. Further feasibility and engineering analyses will be required for this option.

South High Street Phase II – Landscaping

In addition to the “treescape” along South High Street, there was discussion regarding the general landscape conditions alongside of South High Street which included inconsistencies and improvements that needed to be addressed.

Along the west side of the street, there is an existing stone wall that the Committee expressed a desire to extend the length of the wall toward the south to accommodate additional seating areas and aesthetic landscaping opportunities. The Committee also expressed an interest in studying additional sites at which new walls could be constructed along the street.

Another area of concern is with multiple building downspouts discharging directly into mulched beds, creating erosion problems. As part of the landscape plan, it is the Committee’s desire to analyze each situation and design mitigation plans that will improve storm water runoff. Such plans include directly channeling the water under the sidewalks to the street/curb and in cases where this was not feasible, installing dispersion areas to mitigate erosion issues.

In order to achieve the desired landscape design, “Assistance Programs” were discussed. It is the preference of the Committee that Staff offer a Landscape Design Assistance service to businesses along the street and include the current City sponsored “Façade Improvement Grant Program” as an additional incentive for property owners to enhance landscaping along South High Street.

Phase III – Long Term Plan/Policy for all Urban Streets throughout the City

It was the desire of the Committee to develop more specific policies regarding the current Street Tree Code, to include an additional component that would address urban environments.

At the request of the Committee, staff provided a list of preferred tree species for varying size of canopies, less than forty feet in diameter and greater than forty feet in diameter. For each category, the following species were preferred by the Committee:

Less Than Forty Feet in Diameter:

- Tuliptree
- Hardy Rubber Tree
- Basswood
- Dawn Redwood
- Miyabe Maple
- Sweetgum

Greater than Forty Feet in Diameter

Bur Oak
Swamp White Oak
Chinquapin Oak
London Plane
American Elm 'Jefferson'
Cucumber Magnolia

As part of the discussion related to these species, the Committee also expressed that the selection for urban areas would not always be limited to only these species and would be at the discretion of the City Forester. Additionally, the preferred planting soil specifications for planting trees should include a test certified, analyzed amended Silty Loam soil type at a volume of 1,000 cubic feet of soil where feasible and a tree able to reach a height that supports a desired minimum seven foot pruning clearance height.

It is also the expressed interest of the Committee to update the overall Street Tree Code to clarify the preferred uniformity and diversity of tree species throughout the City. It was determined the Code is ambiguous regarding the desire to maintain a uniform street appearance. The Code currently reads:

"Along an individual street, uniform street tree plantings are desirable. However, over-use of a few species is inevitable without a conscious effort to vary plant species and families. Diversity is achieved in Dublin by varying species selected for each street."

The Committees preferred updated language is as follows:

"Along an individual street, a uniform street tree species is desirable. A conscious effort to vary plant genera and families City-wide shall be achieved while maintaining the uniformity for each individual street. Diversity is achieved by varying species from one street to the next.

Recommendation

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Community Development Committee, staff requests City Council authorize staff to proceed with the implementation of the South High Street Streetscape Improvements plan as noted.

APPENDIX A – Tree Assessment Findings and Summary Report:

Completed 08/3/19

This assessment took a holistic approach in which risk and tree health were assessed and taken into account.

Two trees along the East side of S. High St. were identified as trees of concern and were determined to be in need removal within one to two years dependent upon an increase of risk or a significant degradation of the tree's health and or structural stability. These trees were located at 182, and 190 S. High St. Species include one hackberry and one boxelder.

The remaining trees, ({ 19 total } sawtooth oak, sweetgum, and sugar maple) were all identified to be trees with defects that would warrant regular monitoring and further assessments. Defects of note were large vertical cracks with wound wood along the main trunk as well as swelling of the buttress roots. Small areas with decay were noted as well. These are indicators of possible future tree failure (i.e. trunk splitting or uprooting of the whole tree). Other issues noted were high soil compaction and limited volume leading to depleted and damaged root systems further increasing the risk of future failure. Buried root collars were also noted at the time of assessment. Nutrient deficiency was also apparent in the leaves of most of the trees along S. High St.

Based on these observations staff would estimate that the life expectancy for these aforementioned trees with all current characteristics considered and assuming site conditions stay constant would be 5 to 15 years. It is important to note that based on risk assessment thresholds the trees will most likely not fail within the next 1 to 5 years. The structural issues noted are concerning but most likely would not cause significant tree failure during normal weather and site conditions. What is concerning is the possibility of failure in a severe weather event. The condition of these trees is such that they are more likely to fail in a severe weather event. There were no visible signs of pathogens or insect pests.

Third party assessment:

Completed 1/24/2020

Completed By: Russell Tree Experts

In summary, the assessment performed was completed with a focus on tree risk. As stated in the report the Tree Risk Assessment process does not necessarily relate to tree health preservation, suitability of a tree for its site, or any other consideration beside the objective observation of whether the tree in its current condition is a risk to a potential target, and what can be done to reduce such risk. This type of assessment was chosen because risk is a primary factor in the decision making process of whether or not to remove a tree in the urban environment. Tree risk assessments can also provide information that pertains to a trees structural integrity as well as the site conditions. Overall, TRAs offer four risk values ranging from extreme to low. Extreme being the highest rating and low being the least. The risk rating is determined by evaluating each tree in relation to potential targets should a tree or tree part fail. The likelihood of failure is combined with the observed likelihood of impact. This is combined with the perceived

consequences resulting from such potential failure and impact to assign a risk rating for a specific tree part. I would also like to make note that it is very difficult to achieve a risk rating higher than low or moderate. In general most trees will receive a low rating unless a high consequence of impact is associated with a target within the given timeline. This timeline is important to make note of as it is given by the risk assessor and is an indicator of risk (i.e. if a shorter timeline is given, then the possibility of a change in risk level is assumed higher or more likely).

The timeline given for the TRAs was from one to two years. A risk rating of low was determined for all trees. All trees were identified to be of similar age and size, and facing largely the same conditions, much of the information related to environment and targets was repeated from tree to tree. Defects and issues of note were buried root collars, limited soil volumes, codominant stems, dead limbs, as well injuries to the buttress roots and trunk. No leaf characteristics were discussed. No pathogens or insect pests were noted.

Simply, the results of the assessments completed tell us that these trees are not going to fall over tomorrow, but are in need of regular monitoring and mitigation options were provided to attempt to resolve current and future issues (i.e. root collar excavation and pruning). A point of note is the issue of power lines hanging in tree limbs as well as the close proximity of many branches to structures.

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Vice Mayor De Rosa announced the appointments as follows: Leo Grimes to the unexpired term of William Wilson on the Planning & Zoning Commission, effective immediately and continuing until March 31, 2022; and Lance Schneier to a four-year term on the Planning & Zoning Commission beginning April 1, 2020 and continuing through March 31, 2024.

There was no public testimony offered.

There was no further discussion.

Vote on the Resolution: Mr. Reiner, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes.

OTHER

- Art in Public Places Program – Site Selection

Mr. McDaniel asked that this item be postponed to the March 16, 2020 Council meeting.

Mr. Reiner moved to postpone this item to the March 16, 2020 Regular Council meeting.

Ms. Alutto seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Peterson, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Ms. Fox, yes.

- South High Street – Community Development Committee Update

Mr. Earman stated that in follow-up to the Committee meetings after some tree removals on South High Street due to AEP trimming work and decay of trees, he is present to provide an overview. Staff is seeking Council's approval of the Committee recommendations in order to move forward on a variety of items. He shared the following information:

- In removal of decayed trees in this area, there is a desire to enhance the streetscape. A variety of issues have been encountered, including existing overhead utility lines; buried utility lines; compacted soils; light poles; soil volume issues, etc. There are sight triangle considerations for traffic as well.
- Productive meetings were held with the Committee, including a site visit downtown to discuss some of these items. What was decided upon was to have three phases – first to take care of the treescape itself on South High Street; second to address some of the landscape issues and enhancement possibilities for the same location; and third, an update to the City Code to help with future streetscapes and landscapes throughout urban and suburban areas of the City.
- For the treescape plan, the question was whether to wait for the utility lines to be relocated or plant larger trees now, knowing there will be need to move the utility poles in the near future. The thought was to begin immediately with the understanding the utility poles would be relocated before they became an issue.
- Discussion took place of preferred species to have the type of crown height and distance from existing buildings with a uniformed look and feel up and down the streetscape, including two possible species – the Tulip Tree and the Hardy Rubber Tree. Both of these were selected as preferred trees, but a specific tree has not yet been determined based upon potential inventories and quality of those inventories available.
- There are existing trees on the northwest segment of South High Street that remain. There are several items noted as issues, but nothing is in need of removal immediately. It was decided that trees would be removed only as needed and as time dictated them to be a hazard or safety concern.
- The Committee discussed soil volume issues up and down the existing street. The analysis conducted indicated there were about 600 cubic feet per tree deficient of the types of soil needed to accommodate the types of trees. There is a 1,000 cubic feet preference, and to date there is approximately 400 cubic feet per tree available.
- The best way to do this was to go underneath the existing pavement and install Silva Cells as a structural base to accommodate these trees and provide the structure for the roadway to be replaced on top of that to attain the 1,000 cubic feet level. Engineering will need to review this and determine where this can occur, and the spacing of the trees to maximize the opportunities up and down the street.

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- There is some preliminary work and costs associated with that. The estimated cost to install this type of system is about \$20,000 per tree. It involves extensive work.
- Staff anticipates a minimum of 20 trees could be placed along South High Street on the east side, up to perhaps 40 total throughout. That will be determined with the site analysis for each tree as the plan progresses.
 - Phase 2 is landscape enhancement. The current landscape on both east and west sides of South High Street is inconsistent, with a variety of types. There was discussion of existing stonewall that is currently downtown and the possibility of adding more on the corridor.
 - Another issue identified was water displacement for downspouts. There are some areas creating erosion issues. Identifying some downspout diversion concepts, some of which would be underneath the sidewalk itself and others could be basins to capture the water and allow to run off less offensively to the landscape.
 - The idea of a landscape design assistant from City staff to provide some assistance with design for each of the homeowners and/or businesses along South High to create a more consistent and complementary look and feel.
 - Discussion of entering the Façade Grant program for this type of work was also a preference of the Committee.
 - Phase 3 is City Code updates for long-term plans for urban streets. Currently, there are no preferred species indicated for urban areas. Staff provided a list of preferred tree species for varying size of canopies, less than 40 feet in diameter and greater than 40 feet in diameter. The Committee directed their preferred trees in these categories. The selection of trees for urban areas would not always be limited to only these species and would be at the discretion of the City Forester.
 - The City Code update for the current street trees should address the ambiguity in the diversity level of species on each individual street that exists in the Code. He read into the record the current Code language and the Committee's preferred language for this update.

He suggested that Committee members provide their comments.

Mr. Reiner, Chair, stated that there was discussion of a wide range of topics at these meetings. There is still Engineering work to be done, as Mr. Earman has indicated.

Staff is requesting Council authorization to proceed with the implementation of the South High Street improvements and staff will return with more information on costs.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that \$20,000 per tree sounds like a big number for 40 trees on South High Street. However, the façade grant improvements have been done in recent years at significant costs, and nothing will improve the façade and feel of that street more than a good street tree canopy. The money will be well spent.

Vice Mayor De Rosa commented that this will be staggered, with some trees needing to be replaced and others not.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the existing trees would not be cut down until they come into conflict with the trees installed.

Mr. Reiner stated there are two projects – the west side where the trees are gone and on the east side, there are some large existing trees providing some service. There is still some work to be done in terms of what should be removed and the best way to move forward.

Ms. Alutto asked if the costs can be capital expenses.

Mr. Earman agreed.

Ms. Alutto asked about the Sweetgum trees. Are these the trees that drop spiky pods?

Mr. Reiner responded there are new species introduced that have been sterilized and do not do this.

Ms. Fox supports the idea of landscape assistance. There are people who do want to plant in their yards and having landscape design assistance would be very helpful. She added in regard to LED lighting that this is now installed in the decorative lanterns and it changes the whole character of the street. She requested the City consider changing these out to the previous lighting. In addition, the parking garage is very lit up at night and is glaring.

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Perhaps this could be modified. Also, street clutter and signage not used should be cleaned up.

Mayor Amorose Groomes noted that sandwich board signs were discussed in relation to the façade grant program. There was a desire to have more creative sandwich board signs. This should address the clutter issue.

There was no public testimony offered.

Mr. Reiner moved to proceed with implementation of the South High Street streetscape improvements.

Ms. Alutto seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes.

STAFF COMMENTS

There were no staff comments.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Fox, PZC representative stated that:

1. The Commission recommended approval of the final development plan for the Columbus Oncology comprehensive oncology center of 32,000 square feet on Perimeter Drive. This building will house a one-stop cancer treatment center. They are adding a healing garden for infusion therapy patients to be able to view during treatment.
2. A Master Sign Plan for Bridge Park Block D was reviewed. This involved four buildings. The plan for three buildings was approved with some discussion about projecting signs. The front building houses the North Market and the sign plan for that was unique. It will be further reviewed, but there is a 64-square foot vinyl applique of a rooster on the front of the building. There is a red rooster on one end and a projecting sign with the North Market rooster and some grass on canopies. There are also some banners suggested, and PZC asked them to bring forward something more creative.

Ms. De Rosa, Administrative Committee:

1. Noted that the annual Council retreat will take place on Thursday evening, February 20 and Friday, February 21. An agenda will be circulated this week as well as a "homework" assignment.
2. Thanked the residents who applied for service on boards and commissions. There will be openings on the Records Commission and the Dublin Arts Council Board on April 1.

Ms. Alutto, Finance Committee stated the Committee would meet on Tuesday, February 18.

Ms. Fox, Public Services Committee stated the Committee would meet on Tuesday, February 18, following the Finance Committee. The agenda items include vacant properties and the update of the property maintenance code. Mr. Jones, Code Enforcement will provide information on the challenges faced with enforcement issues.

Vice Mayor De Rosa, COTA Board member stated as Council approaches their retreat, there has been a tipping point in the thinking about local ride sharing. Dublin has had its SHARE partnership in place, and COTA and the community at large looks at that as a model in providing great information. However, Grove City Council has approved funding to expand their service; Westerville will implement a service this year; and COTA has many requests from other communities looking to do that. She believes this model now has some gravity, and as the retreat discussion takes place, there is opportunity to talk more about this. In the last six months, this has gone from a concept to many pilots and much demand.

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Friday, January 17, 2020

Minutes of Meeting

Mr. Reiner called the meeting of the Community Development Committee to order at 3:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Committee members present: Mr. Reiner, Chair; Mr. Keeler and Mayor Amorose Groomes.

Staff members present: Mr. Earman, Mr. Goodall and Mr. Hiatt.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved to approve the Community Development Committee minutes of November 6, 2019 and December 12, 2019.

Mr. Keeler seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Keeler, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes.

South High Street Streetscape

Mr. Earman provided a brief review of previous discussions regarding South High for Mr. Keeler's benefit as a new committee member. He shared a presentation illustrating the site limitations and current conditions on South High Street, noting such issues as: compacted soils, salt, signage, light poles, narrow tree lawn, low soil volume, site triangles at intersections, sidewalk root heaving, stairs, historical relics and underground utility lines. Staff members, including Engineering, Horticulture and Forestry, plus this Committee visited the site to obtain an understanding onsite of the issues. Mr. Earman characterized the South High Street site visit follow-up as having three phases.

- Phase 1: Treescape (South High Street specifically)
- Phase 2: Landscape Enhancements (South High Street specifically)
- Phase 3: Citywide Streetscapes (Urban vs. Suburban)

Phase 1: Treescape Plan: This phase begins in the immediate future and would be phased depending upon timing of the removal of overhead utility lines. It was understood by the Committee that we were looking at doing this phase sooner than later. Initiating a larger tree canopy at the outset would not be an issue in conflict with those utility lines. That is the approach being taken. There was a request to identify three or four preferred species and seek direction from this Committee about specific species. There is a desire to have an existing tree assessment, which will be conducted by a third party. This consultant will be on board shortly. There are some existing trees that are experiencing issues. But removal of those trees now would be a problem for the residents and business owners. This assessment will lay out what needs to be done. A soil volume analysis has been completed and options with quantity needed and estimated costs have been identified.

There are four species recommended in Phase 1: Basswood, Tulip Tree, Hardy Rubber Tree and Sweetgum.

Mr. Keeler asked if any of the four species blooms.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the Tulip Tree has tulip-shaped blooms, but is not considered ornamental. (Mr. Goodall showed Mr. Keeler pictures of the various trees on his iPad.)

Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Goodall commented that Hardy Rubber is his preferred choice of these species.

Mr. Reiner summarized that the desire is to have a tree big enough to unify the street. The trees should have big enough heads to tie the downtown together and soften the appearance. He asked if Dublin's Code requires that all trees planted in the City must be from our hardiness zone or above.

Mr. Goodall responded affirmatively.

Mr. Reiner emphasized the same hardiness zone is a critical factor in survival of the trees.

Mr. Goodall commented that the trees purchased by the City are from our hardiness zone or higher – many purchases come from the New York area.

Mr. Reiner asked about the rate of growth for the species identified. Tulip trees are fast growing and the Hardy Rubber trees are also fast growing.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated her preferred species would be Tulip trees and Hardy Rubber trees. She recommended seeing what is available in the market – is anyone growing them with a clear trunk height of 7 feet?

Mr. Goodall responded that one would be hard pressed to find that tree anywhere.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated it is worth a field trip and she would be willing to accompany staff to select these trees.

Mr. Reiner asked about London Plane trees – is the scale too large?

Mr. Goodall responded affirmatively, as the site does not accommodate that particular tree.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that in Bridge Park, they planted a lot of Sycamores and London Planes.

Mr. Goodall added they can withstand a lot of stress, which is why they are able to be placed in an area such as Bridge Park.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that if we pick different trees for different streets, we have used the London Plane tree and Sycamores in Bridge Park. Therefore, we should pick a different tree for this street so that all streets do not have the same tree. She stated we need a vistigit tree particularly on the east side of the street where the buildings are very close. Her first choice would be the Tuliptree.

Mr. Goodall agreed.

Mr. Reiner stated he would support that, but believes the Hardy rubber tree would be unusual and it is staff's first choice. Tuliptrees are a little lighter in their canopy.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated she likes the way the Tuliptrees defoliate – they drop all of their leaves in a short period of time, keeping a clean streetscape. The best option would be to see what is available in the market.

Mr. Reiner stated it makes sense to plant a small-sized tree that will grow into a larger one

because by the time the overhead wires come down, there will be nice heads on the trees. We should have the smaller trees planted and let them grow for a couple of years until the overhead wires come down.

Mr. Goodall stated his concerns with that approach are making sure the lines are actually moved within a couple of years. The other point brought up by his long-term staff members was that the intent when the existing trees were planted was that the lines would be moved, however that did not happen.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated this item will be included in the CIP to ensure it does occur. She added that she will be interested in seeing what trees are available in the market, as there is not huge availability of larger ones. She assumes that three-inch caliper trees will be what is available. Some three-inch caliper trees can be 12-feet in height, while some are 20 feet in height. It depends upon the growing environment. It is important to see the trees.

Mr. Reiner noted that a 2.5 inch tree may be fine for starting out. It depends on what is available.

Mayor Amorose Groomes suggested looking at the Hardy Rubber tree and the Tuliptree to see what is available, visit them, and select from there. The most important factor, however, is the soil volume availability and how to address that most effectively.

Discussion followed about options to be considered for improving the soil volume availability.

In summary, the list of preferred species was narrowed to Hardy Rubber and the Tuliptree.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated this acceptable, provided they are available in the market. If not, we will have to look at another species.

Mr. Goodall noted he is confident he can find the preferred species; the issue will be with sizes, especially with the soil conditions in that area currently.

Mr. Earman summarized that staff will draft a report, based on the Committee direction, and allow the Committee to make that recommendation to the Council as a whole for a vote. Then the plan will be implemented.

Mr. Reiner suggested that the timing is important – the bid should be sent out in the next 30 days because of the lack of work for landscape companies.

Mr. Earman responded staff will draft a report and recommendation, but the monies have not been appropriated. For these reasons, it must go to Council as a whole.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated it is a good time to do excavation work, as well. The excavation and soil amendment work could be done prior to the time the trees arrive. She would like to see the plant pits prepared before the trees are purchased.

Mr. Reiner stated that the winter is the perfect time to plant, as not as much water is needed because the trees are rooted in and settled naturally.

Mr. Earman stated that staff will do research on the availability of the Hardy Rubber tree and the Tuliptree.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the desire is for taller trees with a nice head in order to take the clear trunk height up.

Mr. Earman reported that one of the requests of the Committee related to the tree condition on the east side. Staff did some analysis in August of 2019 and removed three trees, based on safety concerns. There are 19 trees remaining of various species and a variety of issues exists with each of those trees. Staff is looking at a lifespan of 5-15 years for the various trees. The third party assessment is due back that will provide more information.

Mr. Keeler asked if there are photos of any of those trees.

Mr. Reiner asked staff to share the slide depicting these trees.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that when we lay out the new cadence of trees, if some trees can remain for three-four years, that should be done. But she is willing to support removal of the ones that would interrupt the cadence of the new streetscape.

Mr. Keeler noted that if the pictures of the trees and safety issues are well documented, it is easier to support a decision to remove the ones that are in poor condition.

Mr. Reiner added that he agrees about the older trees – they should be saved if possible. Sugar maples cannot be used for a replacement tree as they cannot withstand the stress in that environment.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that all the trees to be installed will be of the same species – the Basswood and Tuliptree. She would leave the trees in place that do not interrupt the cadence, but remove them in a few years as the others mature. She would be willing to support sacrificing some trees that interrupt the cadence for the long-term gain.

Mr. Earman stated this will all be included in his report, with suggestions for removal of specific trees if needed.

Mr. Earman stated that for options to achieve the desired soil volume, staff did not include the option of excavating underneath the road. They can consult with Engineering about that option.

The soil volume analysis indicates that the current soil quantity per tree is approximately 400 cubic feet. The desire is for something close to 1,000 cubic feet. Some borings were conducted in 2002 from an Engineering soil report. It indicates some granular base fill material, medium dense to dense sand and gravel, and appeared to be relatively strong and non-organic. There are varying degrees of depth from 2.3 feet to 16 feet to bedrock. There is significant limestone in this area. Staff has come up with the desired soil of a mixed native clay with organic hummus and sand etc. that are equally balanced like a silty loam. The chart he displayed provides the way forward.

Mr. Hiatt stated that the circle shows 385 cubic feet for the existing soil quantity per tree. The left shows the canopy diameter of about 18 feet and a 6 to 8-inch trunk – diameter at breast height. Following this chart, further up is taller canopy that requires a certain amount of soil. To have a tree over a 40-foot wide canopy, 1,500 cubic feet of soil is needed.

Mr. Reiner clarified that this is not the canopy needed for the subject area.

Mr. Hiatt stated that 1,000 cubic feet of soil accommodates a 16-inch caliper trunk with a 32-foot diameter canopy, which is a nice size.

Mr. Earman stated that staff considered curb bump-outs and how they could be staggered. However, 21 parking spaces are being eliminated that are prime spots and so staff is not advocating that. The curb bump-outs would add about \$6,000 per tree in cost but would also

require additional expense not identified. There is a Silva Cell -- suspended pavement -- type of system that is very expensive and very destructive to what exists. There are utility lines that would have to run parallel to these in any case, and if a utility issue occurred it would be necessary to dig up the tree and the Silva Cell to access the utility lines. The option the Committee preferred was excavation under the street and he will review that with Engineering.

Mr. Reiner asked about horizontal excavation. There is a greenspace there that could be dug up.

Mr. Earman stated he will report back on the excavation option.

Mayor Amorose Grooms stated she would be interested in this information and the cost.

Mr. Reiner stated that the asphalt could be excavated, put in the material that allows the tree to grow under the street, and then reinstall the curbs. Or the bump-outs could be done.

Mayor Amorose Grooms stated she would support making the soil amendments under the asphalt and reinstalling the curbs. This work could be done over the winter, and the tree planted later.

Mr. Earman stated he is hopeful for a compromise between the structural soils that are necessary versus the amended type of soils. Staff will check on this.

Mayor Amorose Grooms stated there are products similar to Silva Cell of a tighter graded network. The soil is placed on top and essentially holds the roadway up. There are grates that are set on top of Silva Cells to stabilize it.

Mr. Reiner stated he is interested in seeing the cost of this.

Mayor Amorose Grooms commented she does not believe the cost would be significant for 21 parking spots.

Phase 2: Landscape Enhancements (South High Street specifically) – Mr. Earman stated this is anticipated to be included in the operating budget and/or capital budget for 2021 to complement the work being done. There was a discussion about this onsite. There is a stonewall in place and consideration is being given to extending that.

Mr. Keeler asked if photos are available.

Mr. Earman stated he does not have photos, but he could accompany Mr. Keeler to visit the site. It is just south of the frog sculpture.

Mr. Keeler stated that the \$750 per linear foot stands out to him – that is roughly half of what AEP would charge to bury high voltage lines. One demands a huge trench and lots of engineering. This is simply a stone wall. Is this the typical cost?

Mr. Earman responded it is the current cost of this work.

Mayor Amorose Grooms added that it is based on prevailing wage.

Mr. Reiner stated that for reference, his company installs these for \$65 per face foot.

Mayor Amorose Grooms stated she assumes this would have a dry laid appearance but would be mortared.

Mr. Earman responded affirmatively, adding it would not be capped with vertical stone so that it could serve as a seating opportunity for parades, etc.

Mayor Amorose Grooms believes this type of wall is a desirable enhancement for the District.

Mr. Earman stated that staff can put an entire plan together if that is the desire of the

Committee.

Mr. Earman noted that the Committee had discussed some issues relating to downspouts. They are bare and drain into mulch beds, creating an erosion problem and a silt build-up on the sidewalks, etc. Burying these downspouts and running them to the street could be not only expensive, but could be problematic in the long term, given the need to tear up the sidewalk to repair them.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked about the possibility of a rain barrel project.

Mr. Earman stated that a rain barrel project or a river rock type of system collecting that water is possible.

Mayor Amorose Groomes added there are some nice rain barrels available.

Mr. Reiner stated that the water could be diverted to the street, given the short distance to the street from the buildings.

Mr. Earman stated that staff will consider some options for downspouts and include those in the design package for the upcoming budget cycles.

He noted that there is a desire to offer some landscape design assistance for the businesses and/or residents in Historic Dublin to help them understand how their design and selection could be complementary to all in the Historic District. The diversification of the landscape is important because of the breakup of the buildings. But new ideas could be offered to them and this would be much appreciated.

Mayor AG noted that all of the façade grant monies were not granted this year. Perhaps adding this beautification grant program to the façade program would be desirable, and perhaps the funding is available within the façade grant monies not expended.

Mr. Earman stated that if it is the desire of the Committee and Council to combine these two into one program, there could be design advice provided and a matching grant program available.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the former Cup Cakery building on N. High Street has a new roof and the appearance is much nicer. She is pleased with the way that building is coming along. She believes the façade grant program is helping and does not require a lot of investment from the City.

Mr. Earman agreed, and stated this could be extended to the landscaping as well, if the Committee and Council so desire.

Mr. Reiner asked if the façade program is overseen by Parks.

Mr. Earman stated it is not, but all departments contribute to the review process for the façade grant program.

Mr. Earman noted that the other option discussed was a maintenance easement, whereby the City would actually maintain the entire strip of property of those who are willing to participate. This is not his preference, but it is an option. He is seeking feedback on this option.

Mr. Reiner stated he would prefer to have the other options considered first.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she would not support having a maintenance easement, but prefers to explore the other options.

Mr. Reiner stated he does not support the City maintaining these private spaces. He agrees that

a unified maintenance approach works well, but other cities have tried such assessment programs to do this maintenance. He believes the property owners should maintain their own properties.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that if it got to this option, perhaps the City grant provided each year to the HDBA could potentially help the HDBA to find a contractor for this work. A portion of the City's grant money could be leveraged, should their members not want to maintain their own frontages.

Phase 3: Citywide Streetscapes (Urban vs. Suburban) – Mr. Earman stated this involves a long-term plan for all urban streets and some that may be part of the suburban areas. There was a request for staff to:

- Make a recommendation of desired species of less than and more than 40 feet diameter canopy trees as options.
- Soil volume requirements and type have been discussed.
- The 7-foot height in pruning is for protecting the eyes of pedestrians.
- Updating the street tree code to clarify diversity and uniformity.

He shared a list of the canopy trees and asked for feedback. The existing street tree code includes three groups of trees – small, medium and large trees. That is the citywide street tree code. This is for the urban street setting where there are limitations. This would probably need to be added to the existing Code to complement what already exists.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the focus should be on just urban street trees. She does not believe the Code differentiates between urban and suburban settings.

Mr. Earman stated it does not. However, there are street tree provisions in the Bridge Street District Code. They will work with Planning on this Code amendment. He shared the current list. Mr. Earman noted staff can add more to the list if desired for the report to Council.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that there are problems with listing specific trees in Code because things change over time. She cautioned about placing specific trees in the Code, preferring to leave that up to the Forester's determination. A list is fine, but it should not be in the Code.

For the greater than 40 feet list, Mr. Reiner asked why the list does not include Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, and Black Oak.

Mr. Goodall responded that there are a lot of existing Red Oaks throughout the City. They constitute the majority of the street trees. There is a desire to diversify from that. There is some ongoing threat of potential diseases to those so not planting more is a proactive approach.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked about locust trees.

Mr. Goodall responded that Black Locusts do not do well in this area. The Honey Locust is still a good choice, but has been heavily used throughout the City. The intent with the lists is to provide options of trees that have not been used extensively.

Mayor Amorose Groomes suggested that the locust trees be tried in the Bridge Street District.

Mr. Goodall responded that the issue with the locust trees is scale and heaving with the sidewalks, requiring their removal. They are hardy and long lasting, but have significant maintenance issues.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that Bridge Street District would be a good location for these,

as the sidewalks likely would not heave. It would be worth an experiment on a cross street. Mr. Goodall responded he does not object to this suggestion.

Mr. Earman stated that the locusts will be added to the list.

Soil Volume

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that a general rule of thumb should be to achieve 1,000 cubic feet of soil volume.

Mr. Earman agreed.

Soil Type

Mr. Earman stated that this has been discussed including the reasons for using the type of soil recommended (mixed native clay with organic hummus and sand etc. that are equally balanced) unless there are structural concerns identified.

Updated Street Tree Code

Mr. Earman stated that the current language indicates that: "Along an individual street, uniform street tree plantings are desirable; however, overuse of a few species is inevitable without a conscious effort to vary plant species and family. Diversity is achieved in Dublin by varying species selected for each street." This language is contradictory. What is now proposed is: "Along an individual street, uniform street trees are desirable; a conscious effort to varying plant species and family citywide shall be achieved while maintaining the uniformity for each individual street. Diversity is achieved by varying species from one street to the next."

Mayor Amorose Groomes commented about the history of this. In most urban areas, there were Oak Street, Elm Street, Sycamore Street, Maple Street, etc. and that specific tree was planted on the entirety of that street. Diversity was accomplished through the various streets. The error made was that every street in Dublin was planted with ash trees of various species. The Emerald Ash borer caused the loss of ash trees throughout the U.S. On Emerald Parkway east of Riverside Drive, there are 15 types of trees planted – the City diversified the trees every 400 feet. Now, the desire is to return to diversifying by street – inter-street – not intra-street.

Mr. Reiner stated that the street tree was originally envisioned as a unifying element for streets with houses of varying designs. It is important to have one species planted on one street.

More discussion followed about the Emerald Parkway tree plantings and what could have been done better.

7 Feet Height Tree Pruning Preference

Mr. Earman stated that this would depend upon the size of the tree planted and the amount of canopy that can be removed. This would look at removing up to a maximum of 25 percent of that canopy at any one growing season to achieve that desired height. Staff would try to select taller trees in order to achieve that off the mark.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that as the canopy is raised, the trees will naturally grow taller. When we get close to completing this review, whatever tree is selected for South High Street will probably replace the Ginkgos on N. High because the Ginkgo grows so slowly. It will likely take 20 years to achieve a clear trunk height of 7 feet on those Ginkgos.

Mr. Goodall asked if the Committee would be opposed to doing some reduction pruning on those Gingkos to keep them inside the tree well. A lot of those will take a while to grow, as the Mayor has indicated. Tightening up the width of that canopy is usually the recommended option as opposed to removing all of the branches 7 feet up.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated she would recommending beginning with removing branches 5 feet up on these. Some of the lateral branches start as low as 32 inches. Her real preference would likely be to just replace these trees. The trees under discussion are in front of the library, and Mayor Amorose Groomes encouraged the Committee members to visit that site.

Discussion followed.

Mr. Earman asked for clarification about what to include in the report to Council – replacing the Gingkos or pruning them?

Mayor Amorose Groomes responded that these trees should be left out of the report at this time, pending further review.

Mr. Earman commented that Mr. Keeler is new to this Committee, and much of the discussion pre-dates his service. He offered to meet with him regarding any questions he may have.

Mr. Keeler acknowledged that he has learned tonight that the other two Committee/Council members are very knowledgeable about trees!

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.


Deputy Clerk of Council