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Planning Department
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MINUTES

May 20, 2020
Landscape Review Committee
Regular Meeting

12:00 pm
ZOOM Meeting
McMinnville, Oregon

Members Present: John Hall, Sharon Gunter, Josh Kearns, and Rob Stephenson
Members Absent: Tim McDaniel
Staff Present: Jamie Fleckenstein - Associate Planner
Guests Present: Scott Hill – Mayor, Kellie Menke – City Councilor, Grace Allen and Chae Pak

1. Call to Order

Chair Stephenson called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Approval of Minutes

None

4. Action/Docket Item (repeat if necessary)

A. L 5-20 – Landscape Plan Review - 1031/1039 NE Lafayette Avenue – Granary Row

Associate Planner Fleckenstein described the Granary Row project. It was a new commercial development on Lafayette Avenue that would house four micro restaurants with public seating and dining space that was shared among the restaurants. It was in the NE Gateway District which was targeted to a pedestrian friendly environment. This was the first development under the Gateway District guidelines in this area and it would be the trendsetter for the neighborhood and spur other developments. The buildings were supposed to be close to the street to encourage the pedestrian interface. The landscaping in the front of the building was limited to the right-of-way due to the outdoor dining space and covered pergola to provide shelter for the outdoor space. There would be street trees and planters on Lafayette Avenue to provide screening and buffering. There would be a driveway along the side of the building that led to a multi-functional area that could be used as both a parking area and outdoor event space. The landscaping around the perimeter of the parking lot was against the north side of the building in raised concrete planters. Around the parking area would

be lawn with three trees along the property line and some planters similar to what was on Lafayette to screen the parking stalls. The planters would be movable to accommodate any outdoor events. Staff recommended approval with conditions. One condition had to do with removing the street tree located closest to the driveway access due to concerns about obstructing clear vision. Another condition was to move the planters that were immediately next to the curb on Lafayette back to be in line with the posts of the pergola. That raised an issue with the NE Gateway District standards that required landscaping between the front building line of the building and the public right-of-way. There was a condition that limited the height of the landscaping to 3 feet or less to maintain site visibility which met the Gateway District standards.

Chair Stephenson suggested if the planters were moved, they could put in a third street tree.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said there were overhead power lines where the street trees would be planted and the street trees needed to be 25 feet high or less. Because Lafayette was an arterial street, there was a high clearance requirement for street trees. There would need to be 18 feet of clearance above the arterial. Only a few street tree species would be suitable for this environment. There was a condition that identified the trees from the street tree list that would work for this area. There would also be a spacing requirement between the trees of 20 feet maximum and currently the spacing was proposed to be 30 feet apart. He thought three street trees would fit with the reduced spacing.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein discussed the landscaping in the back of the building. The property was surrounded by other developed commercial and residential properties. There were existing sight obscuring fences between this property and the residential properties to the north and south. There was no fence on the rear property line, but there was a row of dense evergreen vegetation. The landscaping was turf around the perimeter of the parking lot with the addition of three Pacific Dogwood trees. The plantings proposed for the planters were Panicum Virgatum, which was a tall ornamental grass. There was a condition that would limit the height of the planter and plant material to 42 inches so it would not obstruct vision in the parking lot. There was another condition to add a six foot high sight obscuring fence on the rear property line to provide screening and containment of the outdoor event space from the adjacent property. There was a trash and recycling enclosure that would not be visible from the right-of-way and did not require landscaping on three sides.

Committee Member Hall suggested using other planting materials other than turf in the narrower areas that were less than 4 feet in width. It needed to be a groundcover that would be less water intensive and easier to maintain.

Committee Member Kearns said they could use synthetic grass in those areas.

Chae Pak, applicant, agreed he could plant some other groundcover in those areas. He thought synthetic was a good option. It would be easier to maintain and would drain well.

Committee Member Gunter asked what the lifespan would be on the synthetic. Committee Member Kearns thought it would be 20-25 years.

Chair Stephenson suggested adding trees in the parking lot. Associate Planner Fleckenstein said the intent was for the interior landscape to be contained in the planter boxes because the space would be used for outdoor festivals and gatherings. The applicant was trying to avoid permanent planter areas with trees that might restrict the location of tents or vendor booths. It was meant to be a flexible space that could be configured however needed.

Committee Member Hall asked if the trees could be placed in a moveable planter box. Mr. Pak said he had done an analysis on that and due to being able to move it, they could not get a sizeable tree there. At some point they had to weigh the difference between how much space a planter box would be and being able to move and keep the trees healthy.

Committee Member Gunter suggested increasing the number of planter boxes and using them as a center divider between the two parking lot aisles. Mr. Pak said they had originally proposed that, but changed it so the planter boxes were shielding the parking area visibility from the right-of-way as the Gateway District required. The amount of planter boxes was the amount of storage area they had when they had to move the boxes. They would have to come up with some other idea for the moveable boxes if they planned to have more because there would not be any spacing left to move them for an event.

Chair Stephenson thought they could be moved onto the synthetic turf. Mr. Pak said the boxes were substantially heavy.

Committee Member Hall asked about the events they were planning to hold. Mr. Pak said in the summer they would do a beer garden where there would be vendors and music. Several operators and vendors were already interested in that. In the winter they were looking at putting tents up for an ale fest.

Chair Stephenson thought the applicant should come back with the final revised plan for approval.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said the NE Gateway District landscaping standards had strict standards for parking lot landscaping and defined a parking lot island as 5 feet wide with curbs and deciduous trees be spaced no more than 60 feet apart. The applicant was requesting a waiver to not provide the permanent landscaping within the parking lot. There was a condition of approval that if the design waiver was not granted through the NE Gateway design review process then the landscaping for the parking lot would need to be redesigned and resubmitted. Waiting to make a decision would allow the design process to be completed.

Committee Member Kearns moved to continue L 5-20. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Hall and passed 4-0.

There was discussion regarding the changes the applicant would be bringing back.

B. L 10-20 – Street Tree Removal - 1948 NW Penny Lane

Associate Planner Fleckenstein discussed the request for two street tree removals on NW Penny Lane. The applicant had clarified that the tree closest to the driveway and water meters was the one to be removed and thought the other tree could be root pruned. The tree to be removed was planted five feet from the driveway and five feet from two water meters. It was starting to raise and buckle the sidewalk panels. Staff recommended approval of the removal without a replacement due to the lack of proper clearance from the water meters and driveway. There was a condition that any root pruning of the other tree would need to be done by an arborist and if the arborist thought the root pruning would damage the tree or disturb more than 10% of the tree's root system that tree would also be approved for removal.

Committee Member Kearns moved to approve L 10-20 with the conditions recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Chair Stephenson and passed 4-0.

C. L 12-20 – Street Tree Removal - 2446 SW Barbara Street

Chair Stephenson left the meeting at 12:47 p.m.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein reviewed the tree removal request on SW Barbara Street. The tree was standing dead and needed to be removed and replaced.

Committee Member Gunter asked what caused the tree to die. Associated Planner Fleckenstein did not know. Other trees in the area seemed to be doing well.

Committee Member Kearns moved to approve L 12-20. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Gunter and passed 3-0.

5. Discussion Items

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said at the last meeting they had discussed revising the landscape code and requirements for submittals. It would be built into the upcoming work plan for the Committee.

6. Old/New Business

None

7. Committee Comments

None

8. Staff Comments

Associate Planner Fleckenstein discussed next month's meeting agenda items.

9. Adjournment

Vice Chair Gunter adjourned the meeting at 12:53 p.m.