



City of McMinnville
Planning Department
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MINUTES

July 1, 2020
Landscape Review Committee
Regular Meeting

12:00 pm
Community Development Center
McMinnville, Oregon

Members Present: Sharon Gunter, John Hall, Tim McDaniel, Rob Stephenson, and Josh Kearns (joined late)

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Jamie Fleckenstein - Associate Planner

Guests Present: Zack Geary – City Councilor, Doug Egan, Mindy Judd, 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

- A. January 15, 2020
- B. February 19, 2020

Committee Member Gunter moved to approve the January 15 and February 19, 2020 minutes. The motion was seconded by Committee Member McDaniel and passed 4-0.

4. Action/Docket Item (repeat if necessary)

- A. L 11-20 – Landscape Plan Review - 2515 NE Orchard Avenue

Associate Planner Fleckenstein reviewed the landscape plan for a new industrial warehouse development at 2515 NE Orchard Avenue. The landscaping was focused along the Orchard Avenue frontage with a row of mature Douglas Fir trees alternating with Laurel trees. Curbs, gutters, and a sidewalk would be added as improvements to the street. The sidewalk would be curb tight in order to preserve the existing trees. Staff recommended getting an arborist report to verify that construction activities would not negatively affect the trees to the point they became unstable or unsafe. If construction did impact the trees and removal was recommended, replacement trees would be

required. There was also some landscaping on the corner of the property by the railroad tracks and adjacent to some parking.

Committee Member Kearns asked if the sidewalk would require root barrier. He was concerned about the existing trees lifting the new sidewalk.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said no, it was only required for new street trees. He thought putting in root barrier would damage the existing trees as he did not know if there would be room to put in a root barrier adjacent to the sidewalk without having to dig into the existing root system. If the existing trees died from the construction, the new trees would have root barriers. The ditch was lower than the grade of the sidewalk and there would be some fill for the drainage ditch.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said the plan met the requirements for the amount of landscaping required for industrial properties. There was a condition to replace the trees that were impacted by construction. Since this was an industrial site, there was emphasis on keeping the interior open and available for truck traffic. The landscaping on the perimeter was compatible with the use and surrounding industrial properties. The landscaping would provide screening and buffering from the street. There would be a drip irrigation system.

Chair Stephenson said he would be abstaining as he had drawn up this plan.

Committee Member McDaniel moved to approve L 11-20 with the conditions recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Kearns and passed 4-0-1 with Chair Stephenson abstaining.

B. L 5-20 – Landscape Plan Review - 1031/1039 NE Lafayette Avenue

Associate Planner Fleckenstein presented the revised landscape plan for 1031/1039 NE Lafayette Avenue. The Committee had reviewed a preliminary plan for this property and had responded with several conditions of approval and asked for a revised plan to come back to the Committee for final approval. The easternmost street tree closest to the driveway was removed, the planters along Lafayette Avenue were moved between the sidewalk and building, a privacy fence had been added on the back property line, and the vegetation in the planters had been changed so the height would not exceed 3 feet. The NE Gateway review process had been completed and the parking lot landscaping requirements had been waived. The street trees would be Snowgoose Cherry which was a suitable street tree and the spacing would be 30 feet apart.

Chae Pak, applicant, said the neighboring property to the southwest had a driveway that was close to his property and if a tree was put on the property line it would block their view of the street. He was not able to put three trees in that area due to maintaining the visibility triangle.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said there were standard conditions recommended for the application.

Committee Member Hall asked how the artificial turf would be installed.

Mr. Pak explained the process. They would have to create a border around the trees so they would have access to real soil.

Committee Member Gunter moved to approve L 5-20 with conditions. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Hall and passed 4-0.

C. L 16-20 – Landscape Plan Review - 1945 W 2nd Street

Associate Planner Fleckenstein discussed the landscape plan for a new dental clinic at 1945 W 2nd Street. The landscaping was focused on the southern portion of the property and 2nd Street frontage. There was a private fenced area behind the dental clinic that would be an enclosed space for employee and owner use. It also provided screening from the dental office and the residential homes to the west. On the east side of the property adjacent to the electric substation there would be evergreen screening along the property line between the substation and parking lot. There were residential properties surrounding the site and the emphasis of the landscaping along the street provided a residential atmosphere. The proposed trees were Leland Cypress which could grow tall. McMinnville Water & Light preferred to see landscaping that was 25 feet at mature height next to a substation. Staff recommended a condition to change the trees to a variety of Leland Cypress that would stay at or below the 25 feet. The landscaping along the street would provide screening and buffering for the parking lot. The trash enclosure was not visible from the right-of-way and did not need landscaping. There were many existing trees, however some would need to be removed for the development. Currently the plan did not show any street trees, however the Planning Department approved a curb tight sidewalk and there was space for street trees on the back side of the sidewalk. There were power lines in that area and the street trees would need to be appropriate for planting below the power lines.

Chair Stephenson thought the power lines were too low for trees. There were street trees, but they had been moved back closer to the building.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein cautioned the Committee about setting a precedent if they did not require the street trees due to the power lines. He thought the small species on the street tree list would not cause issues with the power lines.

Committee Member McDaniel liked the proposed design and that it was compatible with the neighborhood, however he agreed that they needed to comply with the code.

Doug Egan, applicant, said there was another project nearby that had trees planted out of the right-of-way. McMinnville Water & Light did not want trees planted under the power lines. For this property, it was the communication lines that were low and he did not know if any tree would work under them because they were so low.

Chair Stephenson said any tree that branched out would be hit by garbage trucks. They would need a tree that would be under 12 feet and would not branch out.

Mr. Egan thought any tree would have to be pruned in 10-15 years and they would lose the beautification they were trying to maintain for the longevity of the project.

Chair Stephenson would be abstaining because he drew these plans.

Committee Member Gunter asked if they had this circumstance before and what kind of tree had been put in. She did not want to put in trees that would have to be removed later.

Chair Stephenson said the street trees had to be continually pruned on Baker Creek Road.

Committee Member Kearns joined the meeting at 12:34 p.m. He asked when as a Committee they could use common sense over the code. He thought it was common sense not to plant anything underneath these lines.

Committee Member Hall asked how low the lines were.

Mr. Egan said they were about 12-13 feet from the ground.

Committee Member Hall thought this was a special case and would not set a precedent.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said there was no tree on the street tree list that had a mature height of less than 20 feet.

There was discussion regarding the pruning that would be needed and how the pruning done by McMinnville Water & Light was typically not done right and did not look good.

Committee Member Kearns thought it was the same situation as Colvin Court where they did not put in trees because of a sewer main underneath. They should not put in trees here because of the view as the trees would be off-set at the entrance and they would be small due to the power lines. It did not make sense.

Councilor Geary said regarding precedent and applying code, the reason for the Committee was to filter through the codes and apply the intent of the rules and reason to projects.

Mr. Egan liked having codes to follow, but in this particular case there should be a common sense approach which should be done on a case by case basis.

There was consensus to leave the plan as proposed and not require the street trees below the power lines.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said that would eliminate all of the conditions of approval dealing with street trees. The conditions that would remain would limit the height of the Cypress on the east property line and include a provision for an irrigation system.

Mr. Egan asked if he could use synthetic turf instead of rooted grass for the private fenced area.

Committee Member Kearns thought if it had the appearance of grass, it was considered grass.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein said the plan did not specify synthetic or natural. He thought either was acceptable.

Committee Member Hall thought it would be acceptable in the back, but in the front there should be natural turf. Committee Member Gunter agreed.

Committee Member Hall asked what "suitable watering facilities" meant. Associate Planner Fleckenstein asked if it was the applicant's intention to put in an automatic irrigation system.

Mr. Egan said yes, he planned to put one in.

Associate Planner Fleckenstein recommended removing "suitable watering facilities" from the condition of approval and add that it would be an automatic irrigation system.

Committee Member Kearns moved to approve L 16-20 with the revised conditions. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Gunter and passed 3-1-1 with Committee Member McDaniel opposed and Chair Stephenson abstaining.

D. L 18-20 – Street Tree Removal - 1909 NW Cottonwood Drive

Associate Planner Fleckenstein explained the street tree removal request. The tree to be removed was a Sycamore tree that was lifting the sidewalk and was diseased. The applicant would be required to replace the tree with a selection from the street tree list.

Committee Member Gunter moved to approve L 18-20. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Hall and passed 5-0.

5. Discussion Items

Chair Stephenson said at Compton Crest a lot of the Birch trees had been removed. He asked if they had permission for the removals. Associate Planner Fleckenstein would look into it.

6. Old/New Business

None

7. Committee/Commissioner Comments

Committee Member Hall found the staff report difficult to navigate and find the important information. There was a lot of redundancy and he suggested an executive summary for the Committee. Associate Planner Fleckenstein was willing to condense it and make it easier to read.

8. Staff Comments

Associate Planner Fleckenstein was still working with McMinnville Water & Light on getting addresses for the Committee to visit regarding trees below power lines. He suggested the Committee hold a Work Session to go through the landscape and tree code for areas that needed to be updated or changed.

There was consensus for staff to schedule a Work Session as proposed.

9. Adjournment

Chair Stephenson adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.