



City of McMinnville
Planning Department
231 NE Fifth Street
McMinnville, OR 97128
(503) 434-7311

www.mcminnvilleoregon.gov

MINUTES

September 15, 2021
Landscape Review Committee
Regular Meeting

12:00 pm
ZOOM Meeting
McMinnville, Oregon

Members Present: John Hall, Patty Sorensen, and Rob Stephenson
Members Absent: Carlton Davidson and Josh Kearns
Staff Present: Heather Richards – Planning Director and Amy Dixon – Contract Planner
Guests Present: Zack Geary – City Councilor, Amy Hollaran-Steiner, and Loree Grenz

1. Call to Order

Chair John Hall called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Action Item

- Approval of Minutes – January 27, 2021

Chair Hall moved to approve the January 27, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Rob Stephenson and passed unanimously.

- **L 13-21 – Street Tree Removal Request - 598 NE Jade Street**

Contract Planner Amy Dixon presented the street tree removal request for 598 NE Jade Street. Staff recommended approval of replacing the tree.

Loree Grenz, property owner, confirmed the tree next to the one being removed was also a red sunset maple tree, the trees would not be planted too close together, and she planned to put down a root barrier and follow other recommended conditions.

Planner Dixon confirmed for Committee Member Patty Sorensen that Public Works had not mentioned any issues with the water meter near the tree.

Ms. Grenz confirmed the small tree by the driveway was a new flowering cherry tree which replaced a tree that had been damaged in an ice storm.

The Committee discussed planting another red sunset maple in that spot would be consistent with the surrounding trees included in an adjacent street with a tree plan.

Chair Hall moved to approve the decision document and approve the Application subject to the conditions specified in the document. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Stephenson and passed unanimously.

Committee Member Sorensen commented that her name was misspelled in various ways throughout the meeting materials and asked that her name be spelled correctly in the future to avoid confusion.

Planning Director Richards confirmed for City Councilor Zack Geary that Planning Staff completed landscape inspections to ensure projects were completed.

- **L 14-21 – Landscape Plan Review - 631 NE 1st Street**

Planner Dixon presented on the Landscape Plan Review for 631 NE 1st Street. The matter had been referred to public agencies for comment, but no comments were received regarding the Application.

Chair Hall noted the submitted plans contained architectural information, but not enough information on the landscaping. He suggested notifying the Applicant to resubmit the Application with the landscaping drawn to scale, the plants to be placed drawn to scale, and all items clearly denoted.

Planner Dixon confirmed the building was drawn to scale on the plan, and that the landscaping was also drawn to scale. The Code did not specify the information to be included on plants other than identification, the current size of plants, and expected mature plant size. City Code changes were in process to tighten those requirements, but she affirmed the plan met the current requirements for submittal.

The Committee discussed that the plan was difficult to understand and they would like to see a more precise and detailed plan. The Applicant could agree to resubmit their plan or the Committee could go through McMinnville Code Sections 17.57.050 and 17.57.060 to find Code authority to require the resubmission. If the decision was to require resubmission the matter would be continued to a future meeting to review the amended plan.

Amy Halloraw-Steiner, the Applicant, noted that her husband had worked with Staff to create the plan and was concerned that they had been told the design would be fine to submit at that point. If resubmission was required, she would require a specific format and requirements for submissions.

Planning Director Richards explained the difference between what was required by the Code and what was being requested. Nothing in the Code required a more refined plan, however, the Landscape Review Committee (LRC) would like to see a more refined version of the plan and they could request a resubmission.

Chair Hall affirmed Staff had gotten the minimum requirements wrong. He would have to review Code Sections 17.57.050 and 17.57.060 to state exactly why the submission was lacking.

Committee Members listed the specific details they wanted in applications, including professional plans and details about plant sizes, plant types, and the placement of plants. They also discussed that while they could not require more than what was currently written in the Code, there was previous precedence of turning away Applications for similar reasons. Staff provided guidance on Code requirements and suggested they could require a resubmission based on the findings that the Application was incomplete. However, the Applicant had submitted a written plan along with the drawings that did include the sizes of plants at planting, and the expected mature sizes of plants, which were included in the meeting packet. Additionally, the landscaping percentage required on the lot was 7%, and the Applicant would be providing 11%.

Planning Director Richards suggested if the Committee would like to require certain specific information that they could include their specific requirements in the proposed amendments to the City Code which was currently being revised. They could choose to request all the information to appear on one page as a complete landscape plan.

Committee Members discussed that the specific varieties of the plants were not included and that the reference to groundcover was too vague. The Committee agreed the Application still lacked information because it did not include specific varieties of plants. They discussed the differences between varieties of plants that go by the same name but have drastic differences and consequences as far as growth habits.

The Applicant was happy to provide species of plants, noted them verbally to the Committee, and welcomed any species recommendations from the Committee.

Planner Dixon had recommended an additional tree in the back of the property which has not been finalized. Committee Member Sorensen didn't think the property layout would allow for an additional tree. Chair Hall recommended selecting 3 or 4 types of plants and submitting the plan for where they will be planted.

Planning Director Richards recommended approving the decision document with an amendment that the Applicant would provide more specificity about the varieties of the plants they have indicated on their landscape plan, the Chairperson would approve the plant varieties, and the Committee could address possibly amending the plan for an additional tree.

Committee Member Sorensen was concerned that there was no hose bib in the front of the property, especially with the intended future placement of planter boxes. She recommended moving another hose bib forward to provide access to water the planter boxes.

The Applicant requested more specificity be provided as to requirements for Application submission as the Code is being amended.

Chair Hall moved to approve the decision document as amended to have more detail about which plants are going to be planted. He agreed to work with the Applicant to confirm specific varieties of plants identified on the landscape plan. The decision document would also be approved as amended to remove the additional tree in the back of the property. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Sorensen and passed unanimously.

4. Discussion Items

- **Development Code Revisions**

Staff discussed upcoming review items, the potential scheduling for a special meeting to discuss the proposed Code amendments, the reason for the amendments, and State requirements for clear and objective standards.

Committee Members and Staff discussed the need for Code amendments, making the following key comments:

- There were times when if the LRC had been involved they could have made recommendations to make an easier maintenance plan for the City. However, Staff was shut down when advocating for more collaboration.
- Committee Member Stephenson and Councilor Geary volunteered to temporarily help review tree removal Applications and recommend replacement trees for some Downtown projects while the Planning Department had a staffing vacancy.
- The trees Downtown had outgrown the iron grates around them, so the grates were no longer needed. Funding was approved for Downtown tree maintenance so Planning Staff would meet with Public Works to discuss their intentions for tree maintenance as well as other issues on site and what they could use the maintenance funds to accomplish.

Planning Director Richards noted Chuck Darnell's resignation and pointed out that the Planning Department is short-staffed, and that they will continue to serve as they are able. She noted they had a candidate in mind to become a new Staff Member in the Planning Department and detailed his background credentials.

5. Committee/Commissioner Comments

None

6. Staff Comments

None

7. Adjournment

Chair Hall adjourned the meeting at 1:19 pm.