



Citizens Streets Advisory Commission

Tuesday, December 20, 2005

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Street Department Conference Room, 901 North Nelson

Commission Members present:

Dallas Hawkins
Max Kuney
Stanley Stirling
Donna Jilbert
Chuck Kearney

Guests:

Dennis Anderson, Citizen
Richard Rush, Citizen
Michael Lynch, Citizen
Howard Pettibone, Citizen

City Staff present:

Roger Flint, Director, Public Works & Utilities
Tom Arnold, Director, Engineering Services
Scott Egger, Director, Street Department
Ken Brown, Principal Engineer, Engineering Services
Steve Hansen, Senior Engineer, Engineering Services
Karen Terpak, Associate Engineer, Engineering Services
Staci Lehman, Public Information Coordinator, Engineering Services
Taylor Bressler, Director, Parks & Recreation Department
Jeff Perry, Arborist, Parks & Recreation Department

MINUTES

I. Introductions

All meeting attendees introduced themselves, including citizens from the Manito/Cannon Hill and Cliff/Cannon neighborhoods who attended the meeting to voice opinions on a proposed project that would include removing trees on Bernard Street.

II. Review & Approval of Minutes of the November meeting

The meeting minutes were accepted with one correction: on page 2, under the heading of 'LID Lost Costs,' the phrase, '...when costs exceed 110% of unanticipated costs' was corrected to read '...when costs exceed 110% of *anticipated* costs.'

III. Update on Street Projects (if any)

Tom Arnold said that the Third Avenue Westside Transmission Main project was put out to bid and the bid of Red Diamond Construction of Spokane Valley was accepted.

VII. Street Standards Update

Mr. Stirling gave an update on proposed Street Standards including the proposal to decrease some street widths by allowing 20 foot alleys. Mr. Hawkins asked if there are any

provisions in the Street Standards for trees. Mr. Stirling said that trees should be cross-addressed and he will check into it. Mr. Hawkins asked for copies of the Street Standards for CSAC members after they are finalized.

III. Bernard Street Trees

Mr. Arnold welcomed citizens from the Manito/Cannon Hill and Cliff/Cannon neighborhoods to the meeting to give their input on the Bernard Street project. He stressed that bike paths, pedestrian amenities, street trees and the renewal of urban forests is very important to the City. He pointed out that the impact of the Clear Zone policy is much smaller than perceived on this project.

Associate Engineer Karen Terpak gave a Power Point presentation (attached) on the Bernard Street project, included information such as that 9,000 vehicles use Bernard Street daily, the planting strips on Bernard are 18 to 24 inches wide, the trees are growing through utility lines and pushing out curblines, and showed how the project meets both Urban Forestry Removal guidelines and the Comprehensive Plan.

City Arborist Jeff Perry presented his evaluation of the trees slated for removal. Mr. Perry said that, of the 22 trees proposed for removal, 12 could be saved if treated with due care during construction. All of those trees are on the west side of the street. It is Mr. Perry's opinion that there isn't a single tree on the east side worth saving due to disease, damage from past prunings and other factors.

Mr. Perry said that if construction crews can preserve a zone of ten feet around the trunks and not use heavy equipment in that area, there is a good chance the 12 trees could be saved. If heavy equipment is used within that area, you run the risk of damaging the roots, which could cause stability problems. Some of the trees are already unhealthy and if their roots are damaged could become unsafe.

Mr. Perry estimated that to accommodate trees the size of the elms slated for removal, the planting strip would have to be eight to ten feet wide. Stanley Stirling asked if the trees in question were not removed, would they be topped by Avista to prevent growth through utility lines. Mr. Perry said that there have been talks with Avista to move utility lines to the other side of the street.

Ms. Terpak asked if the trees, if *not* removed, would continue to grow and deteriorate sidewalks and curbs. Mr. Perry said the trees are mature so their rate of growth is slow and most likely wouldn't cause as much damage as in the past. Mr. Perry also said that past prunings have left the trees growing slowly.

Dallas Hawkins asked how the City would change its' construction methods in order to preserve a ten foot area around the tree trunks. Roger Flint said it would be difficult to get adequate compaction and a good base under the road if work was done by hand in the vicinity of the trees.

Max Kuney said that, in his opinion as a construction company owner, he would be worried about building an inconsistent product if work was done by hand and he doesn't believe inspectors would approve the work.

Mr. Stirling asked if tree roots grow as shallow as 12 to 18 inches, which is how deep crews would dig for the Bernard Street project. Mr. Perry said they *do* grow that shallow.

Richard Rush, a citizen of the Manito/Cannon Hill neighborhood said that millions of dollars were spent to write the City's Comprehensive Plan, which prioritizes pedestrians and trees, and that those priorities are *not* driving the Bernard Street project. Mr. Hawkins replied that the CSAC's job is to make the best use of money to replace streets, not bike paths, trees etc. Mr. Flint said the project is a maintenance activity, not new construction, and therefore does not require amenities such as bike paths and street trees.

Mr. Rush said that, with the street being 40 feet wide, people often pass on the right. Mr. Hawkins and Principal Engineer Ken Brown both said they would look into having the street striped differently in order to cut down on illegal passing.

Mr. Rush said he is concerned that if the City does the Bernard Street project as planned, it will run into opposition when it comes to renewing the street bond in ten years. Mr. Flint said there is a \$300 million backlog in street repair and the City can move on to another neighborhood requiring road work if there is a major delay in this project.

Another citizen, Dennis Anderson, said that if the Comprehensive Plan excludes maintenance, pedestrian amenities and street trees could be excluded in all projects simply by labeling them 'maintenance projects.' Mr. Flint said that Bond money is considered 'maintenance' money and therefore any project paid for by Bond money is a maintenance project, which doesn't require the inclusion of sidewalks and trees.

Chuck Kearney said that all of the comments were aimed at getting money, but the pot of money the CSAC has to allocate can only be spent on streets. Mr. Rush said that's not exactly accurate, because the bond also pays the salary of the Public Information Coordinator position.

Howard Pettibone asked if the parking strips could be reduced on either side. Mr. Hawkins said that would require new designs, which the Commission isn't prepared to pay for at this time. Ms. Terpak said that she has talked to the people who own the properties adjacent to the trees to be removed and they are all in support of removal. If the trees are not removed at this time and they die or fall down after construction, it becomes the property owner's responsibility to removed them.

Michael Lynch said he came to the CSAC meeting because at the last public meeting there wasn't an open discussion as the majority of attendees were against the project. He said there *are* people who support the project, himself included.

Mr. Hawkins concluded the discussion and asked Commission members and citizens to get further comments/questions to either him or Staci Lehman in the next couple weeks. He asked to put the issue on the January agenda and invited the citizens to return at that time.

V. Utility Match Checklist Approval

The Utility Match Checklist was addressed again as there was not a quorum at the last meeting. Mr. Hawkins said he believes the Commission can rely on the expertise of City staff to make decisions in these cases. Mr. Schueman suggested leaving it to the discretion of City staff but also reviewing the checklist once per year to see if it is still pertinent. The item was set aside with the agreement of reviewing it each year to see where the Utility Match Program stands.

VI. LID Program lost costs

This item was also carried over from November due to lack of a quorum. Mr. Stirling pointed out that historic lost costs were extremely small. Mr. Brown said that the City evaluates the risk to the best of its ability but sometimes there is no avoiding losses. Mr. Kuney moved to approve the request of Engineering Services for 2% of Street Bond money to cover lost costs. Donna Jilbert seconded. No one was opposed. Mr. Flint asked to put the LID program lost costs down for an annual review as well.

IX. Adjournment