

Council Communication

October 18, 2016, Business Meeting

Continued discussion of Lithia Way/Pioneer Street beautification project

FROM:

Dave Kanner, city administrator, dave.kanner@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

This is a continuation of the discussion of the proposed beautification project for the corner of Lithia Way and Pioneer Street that was begun at the October 4, 2016, business meeting. However, the mayor and staff will not be prepared to present a recommendation at this meeting and will seek a Council motion to postpone this item again.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

In 2015, landscape architect Kerry KenCairn presented plans for a beautification project at the southeast corner of Lithia Way and Pioneer Street. The project, which had been identified in the Downtown Beautification Plan created by ad hoc Downtown Beautification Committee in 2014, called for the removal of three trees due to poor health and the replacement of two of the trees, along with construction of concrete retaining walls, pavers around the public art, handrail for the walkway and stairs along with ground based plantings in the beds.

KenCairn, at the request of Council, subsequently provided a conceptual alternate design and narrative that kept two of the three trees in place while still providing for pavers around the public art, a new tree grate for the maple planted in the sidewalk area, a small curb/concrete seat wall to retain soil and handrail for the walkway and stairs. Council after discussion requested a second opinion peer review of the design and tree health by a different landscape architect.

That review was provided by Laurie Sager and Associates landscape architects. Laurie Sager performed the peer review of the original design and concurred that the removal and replacement of trees is necessary to support the original design parameters.

A discussion of and decision on this beautification project was placed on the Council's October 4, 2016, business meeting agenda. In response to objections to tree removal raised by the tree commission, the mayor proposed convening a technical working group to review the plans and make a recommendation to the Council. In response to the Mayor's request, the Council voted to postpone action on this project to October 18, 2016. However, it was not possible to find a date that worked for all requested attendees of the working group prior to the October 18 meeting.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

KenCairn Landscape Architects estimated the Lithia Way and Pioneer project will cost \$50,490.75, including a 15% construction contingency. Money budgeted and available from transient occupancy tax funds that are set aside for downtown beautification projects can be used to fund the construction phase of the Lithia Way and Pioneer corner project.



STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:

Staff recommends postponing this item to a date certain. At the time of the writing of this communication, it has not been determined when the technical working group can meet.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

I move to postpone consideration of the Lithia Way/Pioneer Street beautification project to December 20, 2016, or sooner, if the city administrator determines the item is ready for consideration at an earlier meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

