



CITY OF ASHLAND



Ashland Tree Commission
Minutes

September 3, 2020 – ELECTRONIC MEETING

Call to Order

Commission Chair Chris John called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm via Zoom conference call.

Commissioners Present:	Council Liaison
Christopher John	Stephen Jensen
Asa Cates	
Russell Neff	Park Liaison
Eric Simpson	Peter Baughman
Cat Gould	
	Staff Present:
Commissioners Not In Attendance:	Aaron Anderson: Associate Planner
All Present	Derek Severson: Senior Planner

Members of the public in attendance

Amy Gunter – Applicant’s representative for 270 N. Laurel

Randy Wallace – Owner and applicant for 270 N. Laurel

Approval of Minutes

Cates/Simpson m/s to approve the minutes of March 5, 2020 Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion passed

Election of Officers

Pursuant to AMC 2.10.050 “At its first meeting following the appointment or reappointment of members each year, the advisory commission or board shall elect a chair and a vice-chair who shall hold office at the pleasure of the advisory body.”

- There was no formal motion and vote. All Commissioners visually or verbally acknowledged that they were willing to postpone this item until the next meeting.

Public Forum

There was no one wishing to speak.

Liaison reports

Council Liaison

- Councilor Jensen provided a brief update on council activities

Parks & Recreation Liaison

- Bauhman stated that many projects on hold due to budget cuts and staff reductions. He went on to say that the Japanese garden will be breaking ground later this year.

Community Development Liaison

- Anderson reported on the 21 applications that have been processed since the March Meeting. A more comprehensive report to be provided in the near future. Anderson went on to say that the Tree of the Year was the Oak on Church and the Commissioners will work on the online tree map.

Councilor Jensen left the meeting after the Liaison reports.

TYPE I REVIEWS

PLANNING ACTION: PA-A-2020-00123

SUBJECT PROPERTY: 270 North Laurel Street

OWNER/APPLICANT: RW Signature Properties, LLC / Rogue Planning & Development Services, LLC (*agent*)

DESCRIPTION: A request for a Modification of PA-T1-2020-00104 which granted Site Design Review approval to convert the existing four two-bedroom apartment units located at 270 North Laurel Street into six apartments including four 492 square foot one-bedroom apartments, one 780 square foot two-bedroom apartment, and one 984 square foot two-bedroom apartment. The original application included requests for Tree Removal Permits to remove two trees: a 14-inch Maple and a 10-inch Pine, and the original approval required that the Maple not be removed but instead be assessed by a certified arborist, preserved and protected. The Modification here is limited to requesting that the tree – determined by the arborist to be 28-inches in diameter at breast height - be removed after the arborist's assessment determined that the impacts of the proposal within the tree protection zone (*including construction of a new entry, landing and walkway; construction of a new patio; installation of a new French drain system; and placement of a new electric transformer/vault and trenching for conduit*) are such that the tree cannot be preserved. **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION:** High Density Multi-Family Residential; **ZONING:** R-3; **ASSESSOR'S MAP:** 39 1E 04CC; **TAX LOT #'s:** 503.

Staff presented the application, and written remarks received both in favor and against as well as the applicant rebuttal. Cates suggested that they at least try to keep the tree and Severson explained that the current application is just for removal, and not proposing a protection plan. There was extensive discussion about the amount of disturbance in the root zone the tree can withstand and still be resilient. Gould made the observation about the benefits to the building in terms of energy from the shade provided. Cates and John both observed that if the electrical vault is located only three feet from the tree it may cause stability issues.

John/Cates M/S PA-A-2020-00123 that every effort should be made to preserve the tree and should the project arborist determine that its removal is necessary it is approved, further recommending that the mitigation plantings be at least 1 ¾" caliper. **Motion passes 3-1 John, Simpson, Cates in favor, Gould opposed**

There were no Type II Reviews to discuss.

There were no Street Tree Removals to discuss.

Discussion Items

- Invasive Trees (**Gould**) – Discussion about potentially amending the definition of “tree” to exclude “tree of heaven” from definition of tree. There was not an agreement on this discussion.
- Wildlife best practices (**Gould**) – Gould revisited this topic and wanted to know if it had reached a resolution. Anderson pointed out that it was discussed a decision was never made. Gould agreed to put together language for a proposed condition of approval that could be attached to tree removal requests.
- Tree inventory Grant (**John**) – ODF Grant for “iTree” street tree inventory.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 7:27p.m.

*Next Meeting is **October 8, 2020***

Respectfully submitted by Regan Trapp