



Community Development
 Planning Division
 501 SW Madison Avenue
 Corvallis, OR 97333

DRAFT
CITY OF CORVALLIS
DOWNTOWN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
May 11, 2016

Present

Liz White, Chair
 Shelly Signs, Vice Chair
 Robin Jones
 Ken Pastega
 Brigetta Olson
 Mary Gallagher

Staff Present

Sarah Johnson, Senior Planner
 Rian Amiton, Associate Planner
 Claire Pate, Recorder (in absentia)

Visitors

Excused

Joan Truckenbrod
 Elizabeth Foster
 Joe Elwood
 John Morris
 Roen Hogg, Council Liaison

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

	Agenda Item	Summary of Recommendations/Actions
I.	Call to Order	
II.	Approval of March 9 and April 13, 2016, Meeting Minutes	Both approved as drafted.
III.	Public Comment	None
IV.	Discussion of Downtown Streetscape and Potential Project – Jon Pywell, Urban Forester	
V.	Spring/Summer Timeline	Information only.
VI.	Board Member & Staff Updates	Information only.
VII.	Other business	Information only.
VIII.	Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 6:20pm. The next regular meeting will be held on July 13, 2016, at 5:30 p.m., at the Madison Avenue Meeting Room

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Chair White called the regular meeting of the Corvallis Downtown Advisory Board to order at 5:38 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MARCH 9 AND APRIL 13, 2016, MEETING MINUTES.

March 9, 2016:

Motion: Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as drafted, which passed unanimously.

April 13, 2016:

Motion: Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as drafted, which passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT. None

IV. DISCUSSION: DOWNTOWN STREETScape AND POTENTIAL PROJECT – JON PYWELL, URBAN FORESTER.

Planner Johnson introduced Jon Pywell, the City's Urban Forester. She said that they had been discussing some potential programs that they wished to share with both the DAB and the Civic Beautification and Urban Forestry Advisory Board (CBUF). They had done some walking along the downtown blocks and discussed the streetscape in general and condition of landscaping and trees; along with some design alternatives incorporating bicycle parking, etc. He has already talked with CBUF and is hoping that there will be support from this Board along with CBUF to form a joint sub-committee to work on a downtown streetscape-related program.

Forester Pywell said that right now the project is very conceptual. As all are aware, the downtown blocks have problems with street furniture, bicycle parking, tree pit maintenance and space for the trees, awnings, etc. There is the Downtown Streetscape Plan from 1988, with some its components still highly relevant; however, there are other components that have been superseded with other code changes. The large new development projects, such as the hotel and the museum, would be a great opportunity to consider and incorporate new design options for street tree plantings, bicycle racks and street furniture in general.

His interest in this was triggered by walking down 2nd Street south of Madison – in the area of New Morning Bakery, Sedlak's etc. There is a mishmash of objects that are arranged on the sidewalk, with no real cohesive design. Certainly, there is a need for most of the furniture in that location; but if it could be looked at in a holistic manner it could be put together in a way that makes sense and that provides safety for the trees, pedestrians and bicycles.

One of the issues is that with diagonal parking – which adds more parking spaces - there is quite a bit of overhang from car bumpers with resultant tree-vehicle conflicts. Additionally, there is a lot of foot traffic in that area. There is a tendency for people to walk in straight lines regardless of what is in front of them, including walking right through tree pits. This can be a tripping hazard and a liability for the City. They have addressed this issue in some of the City's neighborhoods by creating tree guards, which consist of vertical fencing on three sides of the pit. It is more of a visual barrier than anything else but allows plantings in the tree pit without pedestrians walking through them. This ties in with the fact that along 2nd Street there are some very large European hornbeam trees, which are beautiful and entirely an appropriate tree species for downtown. Their tree pits, however, need to be expanded. He has been working with Public Works on a case-by-case basis to increase the sizes. He would like to take advantage of the opportunity to identify adjacent property owners who might help with long-term maintenance of the expanded tree pits and determine the need for bike racks in those areas. This would be followed by a request for proposals to local artists and designers to come up with a tree guard design that could also be used for parking bikes. There are pre-made ones available, but it would be a nice opportunity to engage the public in designing one for our community.

Another piece of the project is that there are a lot of landscaped beds downtown – some of which are Parks and Recreation's responsibility and some privately maintained. There have been cutbacks in Parks and Recreation staff, with only one full-time landscape person available along with one seasonal landscape assistant. CBUF is interested in identifying areas that are highly used by the public and have issues with planting schemes, and identify some partners in the downtown that can help with some of the simpler maintenance. This would be accompanied with designing a planting palette that will be easier to maintain. A subcommittee of CBUF and DAB could be used to help identify such locations and locate willing downtown partners to get involved.

Parks and Recreation has an availability of volunteers to do the initial plantings – it is the follow-up day-to-day care and notification to the City when there is a problem that needs others to buy-in and take on. The museum development will offer a good opportunity as well to come up with some creative streetscape ideas and use this as a pilot location. The intent would be to work their way up 2nd Street before tackling 3rd or 4th Streets.

Chair White asked members to consider getting involved and to contact Planner Johnson if they wished to serve on a downtown streetscape subcommittee with CBUF members.

Planner Johnson said that they would also need to review the Downtown Streetscape Plan, along with pertinent language in the Land Development Code, to see if there are policies that need to be addressed. The project would either need to be in compliance or the documents would need to be updated in order to accommodate it. This would also be an opportunity to revisit success of the bike corral, among other things.

V. SPRING/SUMMER TIMELINE.

Planner Johnson said that the subcommittee for the parking study is coordinating with the Downtown Parking Committee and staff. Staff has been overwhelmed with work, so it has been hard to get it coordinated. With the potential establishment of a Downtown Streetscape subcommittee, she thought they should talk about the impact of more meetings. The June meeting will be the last meeting for some Board members if they choose not to continue. Brigetta Olson has decided not to serve for another term. Both Robin Jones and Joan Truckenbrod have indicated they will stay. She has not heard back from Cloud Davidson.

She asked how often the members would like to meet as a full Board, recognizing that there will be two sub-committees also meeting. Unfortunately, she will not be able to staff the meeting scheduled on June 8, 2016, because of the Planning Commission special meetings related to the Comprehensive Plan amendments. There was general consensus to meet June 8, and Planner Johnson would check with other staff for their availability. There might not be a need to meet in July or August which could be decided at the next meeting. She said that the Parking Subcommittee would probably be working fairly consistently over the summer, but would probably not have anything significant to report until Fall. In terms of the newly-proposed subcommittee, staff will first have to see if there are policies or codes that need to be addressed before they can start work on the project.

VI. BOARD MEMBER AND STAFF UPDATES.

- Planner Amiton gave a brief update on some downtown projects/new business remodeling that are underway and/or completed.
- An update was given on both the museum and hotel projects. June 2017 is the projected date for the first five floors of the hotel, with the final two stories finished in 2018.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- none

VIII. ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20pm. The next meeting of the Downtown Commission will be held on July 13, 2016, at 5:30pm in the MAMR.