

COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 23, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Candace Solesbee called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

ROLL CALL

City Recorder Mindy Roberts called the roll. The following were

PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: Mayor Candace Solesbee and Councilors Greg Ervin, Mike Fleck, Dana Merryday, Chalice Savage and Jon Stinnett

PRESENT VIA GOTOMEETING:

COUNCIL ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: City Manager Richard Meyers, Assistant to the City Manager Jake Boone, City Recorder Mindy Roberts, Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart and City Planner Eric Mongan

STAFF PRESENT VIA GOTOMEETING

CITY ATTORNEY:

MEDIA PRESENT:

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart presented Council with background information regarding the grant to fund rebuilding historic downtown from 8th Street to the bridge over the Coast Fork of the Willamette. He said the Main Street Refinement Plan was adopted by Council in 2015 and it will guide much of the project. He said Branch Engineering is ready to start the construction drawings and needs Council to provide direction in the design elements for street and sidewalk widths, bulb outs and trees.

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart introduced Damien Gilbert from Branch Engineering to explain the concepts and answer questions.

Damien Gilbert, Branch Engineering briefly covered the areas that guidance is needed and opened the meeting up for discussion and questions.

Councilor Fleck said he is concerned with the turning radius for school buses, fire trucks and truck traffic. He asked if someone drives over the bulb out, is it enforceable because it is a pedestrian safety area. He added that he would like to see some trees.

Damien Gilbert said technically someone could be sited for driving off the road.

City Manager said that would be a point of discretion. He said if a vehicle cannot make the turn and they drive over the bulb out, nothing would be done about it. He pointed out the example of the area at The Vintage Restaurant.

Councilor Fleck said that if Council moves forward with bulb outs, he would like the ones on Main Street to be a shorter width.

Public Works and Development Director pointed out that they could be made respectively smaller.

Councilor Stinnett asked if we know how many larger vehicles come through Main Street.

City Manager gave examples of the trucks that come through and the direction that they travel. He said the intent and hope is that the truck traffic would turn on River Road or Hwy 99.

Councilor Stinnett asked if there could be directional signage.

City Manager said State law has some limitations with designating truck routes, but he is unsure.

Damien Gilbert said this is an opportunity to get on Main Street what you want and design accordingly.

Councilor Savage expressed concern about bulb outs being a tripping hazard if they are curb height.

Damien Gilbert said there are different ways to design ADA access. He explained that the bulb outs are currently drawn as a standard ramp with flares and further explained the details of the design.

Councilor Savage asked what the standard width is of a log truck.

Damien Gilbert said he usually provides for 9 feet if they are not moving and added that 12 foot travel lanes are nice. He said the intent is to make this a walkable corridor. He added that this does not have to be all or nothing and he pointed out some of the options.

Councilor Savage asked what the width of 6th Street is.

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart replied that GIS mapping calculated it at 33 feet. He said there is 8 feet of parallel parking on each side and 8 ½ foot travel lanes.

Councilor Ervin asked is there is a flare up in the middle of the bulb out at the apex.

Damien Gilbert replied yes, between the two ramps it is about a 2-4 inch rise.

Public Works and Development Director further explained the bulb out design.

City Manager Richard Meyers highlighted on the drawing, the area that is being referred to.

Councilor Stinnett asked Damien Gilbert if he believes that 7 feet is enough for parking.

Damien Gilbert replied no, he said 8 feet is a better width.

Councilor Stinnett asked how many trees would there be if we placed them every 30 feet.

Public Works and Development Director replied that it would be six trees each side, per block. He added that when trees were previously planted it appeared to be five per side.

Councilor Fleck asked to clarify that we are only discussing changing the width of Main Street and not the side streets.

Damien Gilbert replied that is correct.

Councilor Merryday said in talking with Main Street business owners he received a variety of responses. He said everyone admitted that pedestrian safety is not good on Main Street and the most contentious items were the bulb outs. He added that there is also a fear from businesses being able to survive construction.

Councilor Merryday said he favors the sidewalks that have the sparkles in them and asked if that could be incorporated into the design. He also asked if the timing of the construction could be done during the slow season.

Councilor Ervin said he supports keeping the width of Main Street the same, using bulb outs only on the side streets, removing the existing trees and replacing them only in the bulb out areas on the side streets.

Councilor Savage said she has heard that people love the trees because they provide shade.

Mayor Solesbee said there are many opinions and we definitely need to compromise. She said she would like to see Main Street kept historic as possible, have minimal bulb outs only on Main Street and have two trees per block, each side. She asked if it is legal to remove the traffic lights and put in a 4-way stop.

Damien Gilbert explained that there is federal guidance as to when 4-way stops can be put in. He said the two main criteria used, is that the intersection warrants a traffic signal, but the funding is not yet available and secondly, that there is equal traffic volumes on the two crossing streets.

Mayor Solesbee said she also supports the 12 ½ foot sidewalk.

Councilor Fleck asked if the streateries will continued to be used and if they are too large to fit.

Public Works and Development Director said that they are built 8 feet wide and sit 6 inches on the curb.

City Manager said it comes to be a decision of the Council, to determine if you are going to widen the sidewalk are streateries needed.

Councilor Fleck said he prefers the 12 feet, two trees per block and bulb outs, as long as they are as small as possible.

Damien Gilbert explained that a lot of things can be done with bulb outs. He said what he has heard so far, is to do a smaller traditional bulb out.

Councilor Fleck asked if we would lose parking with the bulb outs.

Damien Gilbert said, not on Main Street. He said on the side street you may lose half a parking space.

Councilor Ervin expressed concern for narrowing Main Street, widening the sidewalks and placement and size of bulb outs. He said he supports keeping the same width, and placing bulb outs on the side street with trees.

Mayor Solesbee said we would lose one parking spot on the side streets because we have loading zones.

Councilor Ervin asked for clarification as to when a 4-way stop can be used.

Damien Gilbert explained the most commonly used scenarios.

Councilor Ervin said there are a lot of downtowns that have stop signs and asked if they are grandfathered in.

Damien Gilbert said interestingly you could put a traffic signal at every intersection, but you cannot do that with a stop sign. He said if you do not have people traveling through downtown as a way to get from Lorane to Hwy 99 and it truly becomes that people drive to Main Street to shop with equalized street volumes, you could probably put 4-way stops. He added that is putting the cart before the horse.

Councilor Ervin asked if we are reusing the existing traffic signals.

Public Works and Development Director said the intent is to use the existing ones provided they are structurally sound when they are refurbished.

Councilor Fleck said that he does not support switching to stop signs.

Councilor Stinnett said he supports 12 foot sidewalks, 8 foot parking spots, 12 foot traveling lanes and two trees per block with shrubberies in between. He asked if we will be getting curb cuts on side streets where they do not exist.

Damien Gilbert said they can be put anywhere especially if it is a loading zone.

Councilor Stinnett clarified that there are spots where you cannot get off the curb.

Public Works and Development Director asked if he is referring to the alley. He added that the project may not go that far, but hopes that it could be done in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Councilor Savage said she prefers four trees per block or two trees per block if we could also incorporate bushes.

Public Works and Development Director said at this point we were only talking about trees. He said if we move forward with trees, Staff is recommending that Council direct Staff to manage and maintain the trees on a yearly basis. He said if bushes are incorporated, they need to be in proper places so that they do not create visibility issues.

Councilor Merryday said the most important issue with trees, is that the right tree is in the right place, rather than following a formula.

Mayor Solesbee adjourned the worksession at 6:59 pm



Mindy Roberts, City Recorder



Greg Ervin, Council President