

The Streetscape Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Saturday July 30, 2016

Meeting Date: Saturday July 30, 2016 8:30 to 11:30. Walking Tour of Streetscapes of the City, West Broad Street, Washington Street, South Maple Ave and Park Avenue

The meeting was given public notice and several citizens joined the walk

The session began as planned at the corner of Haycock and West Broad Street at the City entrance. As we walked the Streetscape to Broad and Washington Streets, North Washington Street and also visited Pearson's Square on South Maple Avenue and rode the distance of Park Avenue. The following various issues and conditions were noted on the walk:

1. At the City entrance at Broad and Haycock (until recently clearly a VDOT area of responsibility) it was noted that the crosswalks are worn and faded and there is no pedestrian refuge area on either crosswalk (Broad or Haycock).
2. The Metro bus stop location there is located so that the front door opens at the bus stop sign and back doors open into the planting bed, clearly eliminating plant life.
3. Some sign was removed leaving the stub as a trip point in the sidewalk.
4. Some adjacent untrimmed shrubs have grown into the sidewalk walk path (at Giant) reducing the useable width of the walking path.
5. Some adjacent landscape area were removed and not replanted (at CITGO).
6. Some streets do not have crosswalks for all four way. Birch Street has one crosswalk across Broad not two.
7. In some locations the building setback pre-existed the streetscape and is not sufficient to include a full Streetscape treatment (Don Beyer and Preston Signs buildings)
8. The loss of operational irrigation systems means the loss of plantings.
9. Some curb cuts are not aligned with crosswalks. On a standard intersection, should we have 4 curb cuts at 45 degrees, or 8 curb cuts, OR 4 wide ones?
10. Existing benches can be too long to place at 90 degree to street without obstructing the walk path.
11. Greenspace on the building side of the walk provides a roomier area to walk (Jiff Lube).
12. Transformers at the sidewalk edge are just plain ugly. (Car Wash) This is a negative impact on the business environment. The placement of all utility boxes (including transformers and communications nodes) should be controlled by code and not have staff under the dictates of the utility. There are several extremely bad placements of utility boxes in the City.
13. In areas with constant water (around the car wash) it appears the concrete breakdown faster.
14. In water freeze thaw areas the understructure fails leaving bricks uneven and trip points.
15. Proper streetscape has cars yielding to the sidewalk not the sidewalk giving way to drive apron. (Jiffy Lube example of the good,)
16. Some drive aprons are far too wide.
17. Low pedestal signs are easily seen under the tree canopy.

18. Dark debris collects on sidewalks and becomes slime and slick when wet. They require power washing periodically.
19. Transitions from new to old sidewalk areas are abrupt. We need a graceful transition plan.
20. There are school speed limit and camera posts and some walk/Don't Walk sign posts that are stainless steel – not matching the streetscape standard and detracting from the overall appearance.
21. Poles and guy-wires are obstructions in the old sidewalks.
22. Irrigation system back-flow preventers are above ground, with housing that is way too large, placed poorly on the leading edge of the planters, and they should be camouflaged with a medium green. Underground would be best.
23. The Flower Building provides an example of shifting the walk path shifting away from the building for increased safety where the autos exit the building with reduced sightlines for the motorists.
24. Bike racks are mounted so they partially block the walk path. Some are mounted so if used, the bike would substantially block the walk path. This causes night hazards for walkers.
25. The Hilton Garden Inn provides an example of short planter and missing trees due to Fire Marshall desire for a very wide clear zone around standpipes.
26. Example of poorly placed amenities on the leading edge of the planter, blocking view of the planter for most motorist.
27. The Hilton Garden Inn and Harris Teeter provide examples of bricks extended to the curb which provides a cleaner appearance – and simpler to install.
28. The Kensington Building provides an example of a very poorly placed fire hydrant located in the very center of the walk path of the sidewalk.
29. The Kensington Building side width only meets the required 20 feet if you count the elevated planters. The Building is 20 foot setback near the corner, but the sidewalk is not 20 feet wide.
30. The Broadway provides multiple examples of intrusions of railings and downspouts into the limited walk path provide walking hazards.
31. The Broadway entrances are not at grade so steps are required. The railing intrude into the walk path.
32. There are many intrusions into the walk path conflict.
33. Trash can are three colors – shiny black, grey and green. We need one color and the green seems to be more subtle.
34. Side streets in the block connecting to Broad Street have no fixed standards and are streetscape with several designs and is in need of a standard.
35. Irrigation housings are too big, visually prominent when stainless steel or aluminum (without paint), and above ground. They are an eye sore.
36. Frequently the irrigation housing, trash can and utility style bike racks are mounted on the leading edge of the planter – where they are most seen by motorist. If placed on the trailing edge of the planter they would not be as noticeable and the streetscape would be have a better appearance.
37. Some crosswalks along Broad Street are unmarked.
38. Remaining overhead utilities are unsightly.
39. Planters without the bull nose inconsistent and exhibit the issue of the mulch washing out onto the sidewalk.

40. Some irrigation controls are placed underground with green top covers that are not noticeable and provide a good look.
41. Underground utilities with access lids in the sidewalk should have a cover that blends with the sidewalk. Many white utility covers can spoil the appearance of the brick pavers.
42. In cases where the bricks pavers went all of the way to the curb, it provides a cleaner pleasing appearance.
43. North Lee Street in front on Moby Dick provides one side street model of tree pits open to the curb and flat planter borders
44. There are some areas that need maintenance for replacing missing bricks or ones that are dislodged.
45. Some outdoor dining restricts the walk path significantly.
46. There are several areas of missing streetscape, short areas that were not completed with redevelopment. Completing those few short sections would enhance the appearance and the experience the pedestrian.
47. 47. We need a standard approach to ADA curb cuts. Many varieties and appearances are visually confusing.
48. Green on the property side of the walk provides a more spacious feel and place for building owners to enhance their property appearance with plantings. The Read Building and Jiffy Lube are good examples of this.
49. Where irrigation systems are working well the plants and trees are thriving.
50. Some block have lots of trash and recycling receptacles – others don't.
51. Stepping stones in planters allows bus riders to exit the back door of busses.
52. Low signs, high trees work. Exxon, Famous Dave's and Wells Fargo are good examples.
53. Trash compactors have been placed to address waste basket overflow – but utilitarian and not a style that appears to fit the streetscape.
54. Clusters of Newspaper dispensers provide a cluttered shabby appearance.
55. The Harris Teeter has a wide sidewalk. The 6 foot Victor Stanley Bench still is too wide to place perpendicular to road. It sticks out into the walk path beyond the planter.
56. The planters at Harris Teeter are placed 8 inches (one brick) from the back of the curb.
57. Some outdoor seating have permanent metal fences mounting in the sidewalk – restricting the walk path.
58. If the City Seal on lamp poles costs more – we could do without those and save funds. They are not noticed by most people.
59. The main cross roads at the Broad and Washington intersection has both old and new signal mast – detracting from the overall appearance of the city.
60. North Washington Street has a different streetscape design and materials fragmenting the overall cohesiveness of the City.
61. The raingarden pits on North Washington Street could be designed better to fit space and area. Two of the pits have issues with plant maintenance.
62. The art nouveau benches are a good style and color and having them facing each other is a design that works.
63. There is a large stormwater intake top that have a visible impact on the planting area and the overall appearance. Broad Street used the narrow depth stormwater intake boxes that work well and hardly noticeable.

64. There is a water faucet available in the North Washington St area that is good for watering plants.
65. South Maple Avenue (Pearson's Square) streetscape demonstrates the results without bullnose or tree mini-fence. The vast majority of the plantings have died due to dogs and salt, The mulch washes out due to lack of an edge guard.
66. If apartments allow dogs, there reasonably must also be dog walking areas that are not the streetscape planters. Apparently we have no such requirement now.
67. With parking, some space is needed for people to exit cars without stepping into planting bed.
68. The irrigation system is being replaced at Pearson Square by the City. The one install was for starter beds not mature plant watering.
69. Park Avenue currently is a mixture of sidewalk alignments. How there are areas of brick pavers sidewalks with a narrow nature zone next to the curb – and with trees on the building side.