

Streetscape Taskforce Minutes

Tuesday, August 16, 2016 7:00 pm – 9:45 PM



Attendance

Taskforce Member	Present
Bill Ackerman	Yes
Rachelle Barimany	Yes
Kathy Philpott Costa	No
Barb Cram	Yes
Kwafo Djan	Yes
Diane Duggan	Yes
Steve Knight	No
Anne Norloff	Yes
Mike Novotny	Yes
Andrew Painter	Yes
Ruth Rodgers	Yes
Tim Stevens	Yes
Dan Sze	Yes
Dennis Szymanski	Yes
Dave Tarter	Yes
Keith Thurston	Yes
Bob Young	Yes
Cory Firestone Weiss	No

Staff Member	Present
Carly Aubrey	Yes
Paul Stoddard	Yes

Agenda

1. Administration

ACTION approve minutes July 12, 2016

2. Recap Walking Tour

3. Discuss Tree Pits and Plantings, presentation by city Arborist

Postponed on account of scheduling. The Arborist will be out of town.

4. Presentation of Draft Materials including cross sections, furniture, and tree plantings

5. Additional Materials

Vibrant and Functional Streetscapes

Draft Guidelines courtesy of Andrew Painter

Draft Cross Sections courtesy of Mike Novotny

Walkability Survey courtesy of the CACT

Herndon, VA, streetscape guidelines

Richmond, VA, sidewalk cafes guidelines

6. Group Review of Draft Materials

7. Closing comments and confirm agenda for next meeting

1. Administration

The group approved the July 12, 2016 minutes unanimously.

2. Recap Walking Tour

Keith Thurston presented takeaways from the Taskforce's July 30, 2016 walking tour. The presentation highlighted areas of consistency and non-consistency in materials, color, spacing, etc.

4. Presentation of Draft Materials

Staff presented draft materials to the Taskforce. The presentation set the context for the planning effort including direction from City Council as specified in the City Charter and the timeline for making recommendations. The presentation also described how the draft materials blend ideas from (1) the Taskforce Charter, (2) Taskforce Input, (3) Existing Policies, and (4) Best Practices.

2. Recap Walking Tour (revisited) and Cross Sections

Mike Novotny presented takeaways from the Taskforce's July 30, 2016 walking tour. The presentation highlighted spacing of existing street elements, items of concern, and ideas for consideration. Mr. Novotny also presented draft cross sections in Google Sketchup.

During the presentation, the Taskforce discussed the following topics.

Fire Safety Equipment

- Who has the final say on location of elements?
- How can placement issues be coordinated with the Fire Marshal

Institutionalizing Guidelines

- How can the streetscape guidelines be institutionalized so that they are followed at all levels of the process?
- Can a committee be created to review site plans for consistency with adopted guidelines?

Sidewalk Dining

- Does the City have a process for reviewing/permitting sidewalk dining areas?
- How can spacing/sizing standards for sidewalk dining be implemented?

Cross Sections

- What's the right form/look for the City? Should it be double rows of trees and deep building setbacks like the Broaddale Shopping Center? Should it be curbside trees and shallower setbacks like more recent projects?
- Can different areas of the City have different looks, such as the schools area vs downtown?
- The group discussed whether additional plantings could be added on the building space, such as hanging baskets or smaller planters.

Pedestrian Clear Width

- What is the right amount of clear width? Is it 8 feet, 10 feet, other?
- Regardless of guidelines, utilities, railing, and other encroachments always seem to pop up, so do the guidelines need to call for 10 feet in order to ensure 8 feet?

Tree Spacing

- What tree spacing provides a mix of consistent canopy and space for other amenities between trees?
- The group agreed on spacing of 24' to 30' pending further review of the fit of other elements

Tree Planter Edging, Shape, Sizing, and Location

- The group discussed edging of tree planters and what edging styles protect trees and what styles maximize pedestrian access and efficient use of space.
 - A concern raised about bullnose planters is that it uses 8 inches, 4 on each side for the edging itself.
- The shape of the planters was discussed and whether oval or rectangle was a better fit for the City.
 - In favor of rectangular shape was a more modern look. In favor of oval was consistency with existing design and character.
- The group discussed the appropriate size of tree planters. Issues involved included provided sufficient areas to support large canopy trees, dimensions provided by the City Arborist, and provided sufficient space for other amenities.
- The group agreed that the planters should be moved closer to the curb to make more use of the available sidewalk space.

Light Pole Medallions

- The group discussed the decorative medallions at the base of the street lamps, including the cost and time involved.
- The group agreed that an alternative, standard light available through Dominion with the same style except for the medallion should be used to save cost and time.

Building Setbacks

- The group discussed whether a 20' setback is sufficient and whether the defining of the setback in the ordinance needed to be updated to discuss building face versus sidewalk area.
- The group also discussed whether the streetscape guidelines should call for building articulation at some spacing to break up the street wall and allow for deeper sidewalk dining areas.

Bench Sizing

- Consistent with existing guidelines, developers provide 6 foot benches. In some cases, this means the benches extend beyond the planting areas and obstruct the pedestrian space. The group agreed that alternative bench lengths should be explored.

Maintenance

- The group discussed the appropriate group to handle maintenance of streetscape, whether it be City government or adjacent property and business owners.

ADA Ramps and Access

- The group agreed that ADA ramps at intersection should align with the crosswalks.
- The group agreed that ADA facilities at building entrances should not obstruct the pedestrian space in the sidewalk

Automobile Curb Cuts

- The group discussed minimizing the size of automobile curb cuts and driveway entrance and keeping driveways at sidewalk level to prioritize the pedestrian environment

Street Cans

- A question was raised about whether the City should switch from separate trash and recycling cans to double cans.
- A question was also raised about why the City has so many trash and recycling cans.
- The topic of street can color and whether they should be grey, green, or black was raised.

7. Closing comments and confirm agenda for next meeting

The group agreed to the draft meeting schedule prepared by the co-chairs.