

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
ST. CHARLES CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION
May 4, 2016**

Members Present: Chair English, Vice Chair Schuetz, Kane, Pietryla and Potts

Members Absent: Dechene, Hauser

City Staff Present: Matthew O'Rourke – Economic Development Division Manager
Karla McCleary – Recording Secretary

Others Present: Heena and Shailesh Patel – Shell Gas Station
Amber Grove McKee – Old St. Charles
Diane Parker – Old St. Charles Property Manager
Rob Mondy – Owner of Abby's Breakfast & Lunch

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was convened by Chair English at 7:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Pietryla and seconded by Kane to approve the Agenda with the addition of 11 N. 2nd Street Corridor Grant Discussion listed as Item B on the Agenda. Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Work Plan (Discussion Only) Property Suggestions listed as Item C on the Agenda.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Dechene and Hauser

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of minutes from March 2, 2016

A motion was made by Kane and seconded by Vice Chair Schuetz to approve the March 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes of the Corridor Improvement Commission.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Dechene and Hauser

Motion Carried.

4. Corridor Grant (Discussion Only)

A. Corridor Improvement Grant - 307 W. Main Street (Shell Gas Station - Update)

O'Rourke prepared a packet for each Commission member containing landscape plans, cost estimates and examples of various concrete pots regarding the Corridor Improvement Award for St. Charles Shell Gas Station. The medium size pots that they will be using are 30 inches in diameter and 24 inches tall. Patel asked if it would be a problem if they made a slight change with the design of the pot they selected. O'Rourke replied that it would not be a problem if the design is relatively the same and the cost is the same - once the Agreement is in place, the cost cannot change. Patel said the pots will be placed in the front, at the edge of the awning and they will be white or cement-gray in color.

Regarding plantings along the gravel wall by The Finery - O'Rourke said they need to see what plants they select if it is to be part of the grant. Patel said that she would send O'Rourke that information the following day. She confirmed that they will be removing the gravel and replacing it with soil. Chair English said the plants by The Finery have to be perennials and that it would be ok to plant annuals in the pots. O'Rourke suggested working with Plandscape and replicate what will be planted in other areas on their property. Potts added that there will be salt spray and to be sure that the plants selected are salt tolerant. She also suggested they incorporate something with some height to it – like a shrub or something. Patel said she will do as much as she can with the money she receives.

Chair English suggested approving the grant, and stipulate that they cannot exceed a certain amount. O'Rourke said the City's share of the cost estimates that have been submitted would round up to approximately \$2,400 and then with an additional \$600 made available for the area by The Finery – the cost estimate would be \$3,000.

Chair English asked if there were any questions about the plantings suggested for the front corner. Potts said everything looked fine – the plants suggested are pretty hardy and will tolerate the space – remember to keep the plantings low because of the sign. She expressed caution with regards to the amount of salt spray around the *Junipers* – they should watch that. Patel said they will have a one year maintenance agreement with Plandscape and that they will be able to assist with that. O'Rourke said the maintenance agreement is not eligible as part of the grant. Vice Chair Schuetz asked if there will be mulch under the plantings and Potts said the landscape plan looks like it calls for top dressing (mulch). Before removing the grass that is currently in place, Potts suggested spraying the grass with Round-up to kill the grass before removal to keep it from returning.

O'Rourke explained that he will be presenting this grant for approval before City Council on Monday, May 9th at 7:00pm in Council Chambers. He asked the Patel's to be present for that meeting to address any questions that may come up. O'Rourke advised Patel to wait one more week before signing a landscape agreement with Plandscape until approval has been received. Patel to speak with Russ Colby about a Façade Grant and if improvements she will be making to her parking lot will qualify for this grant.

A motion was made by Potts and seconded by Vice Chair Schuetz to recommend approval of a Corridor Improvement Grant, not to exceed \$3,000, for St. Charles Shell Gas Station.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Dechene and Hauser

Motion Carried.

B. Corridor Improvement Grant - 11 N. 2nd Street (Discussion Only)

O'Rourke introduced Amber Grove McKee and explained that she wanted to present some preliminary landscape ideas for the property located at 11 N. 2nd Street. Also in attendance to present these ideas was Diane Parker, Property Manager for Old St. Charles. O'Rourke asked they attend this meeting to hear recommendations on plant species and to determine if the Commission is comfortable in looking at landscaping for all four sides of this property. Generally, landscape grants are proposed for the property that is located between the road and the building. In this situation, they are surrounded on all four sides by public property.

Item 1 - Parker said they would trim the *Dogwood* tree on the west side of the site

Item 2 – (7) *Golden Hostas* will be planted beneath the *Dogwood* tree. Vice Chair Schuetz asked how the *Hostas* will do there and Parker said that they would be fine – some *Hostas* can tolerate more sun than others.

Item 3 – (2) *Capitata Yews* would be planted on both sides of the garbage receptacle

Item 4 – (7) *Summer Beauty Allium* these will be planted in the same area

Item 5 – (1) large *Alpine Currant* will be added by the window and bike rack on the south side of the building. *Summer Beauty Allium* will be added in this area as well

Items 6, 7 & 9 – remove most of the yews that are overcrowding the sidewalk and replace them with 3 *Green Mountain Boxwoods* to be relocated from Abby's. A few of the *Yews* will remain and a bench will be added. Parker said she has successfully relocated *Boxwood* at her home that had been in the same location for 25 years. Vice Chair Schuetz asked if they are in the sun or shade – Parker said both. Chair English cautioned that some *Boxwood* send off an unpleasant odor at certain times of the year – Parker stated that she is aware that they can do that. Potts expressed concern with *Boxwoods* being relocated to an area with only a small strip of soil – not sure if that will be enough space – however, Parker and Potts agreed to give it a try

Item 8 – keeping (2) *Boxwoods* by Abby's

Item 10 - large urns will be in place at Antique Market I as well as Izel Salon & Spa. Parker to add America-In-Bloom color scheme flowers to the urns. Those colors are purple, magenta, yellow and white

Item 11 – removing old rose bush – planting *Karl Forester* weed grass, (1) *Alpine Current* and (2) *Capitata Yews*

On the East side – trim *Burning Bush* and fill in with *Summer Beauty Alliums* and *Karl Forester* grasses

Items 12, 13 & 14 – on the north side of building plantings include – (5) *Banana Boat Sedge*, *Pachysandra*, *Little Henry Itea*, *Summer Beauty Allium*, *Golden Hostas* and *Karl Forester* grass

Mondi said the City parkway on the north side of the building, about a year ago, was terribly eroded from water running off of the gutters from the building. Dirt and grass seed was added and now it is eroding once again. Church, bar and festival crowds wear on this grass area

consistently. Mondy said they would like to put in steps with natural stone and add flowers in the America-In-Bloom color scheme. In addition, change one existing parking spot to a handicap spot – that would keep it more open and allow for foot traffic to pass through more easily and stay off of the parkway area. This is a very visible spot that needs some improvement aesthetically. Parker added that they have talked about putting in 4 ft. planting beds to go along with the steps – and add colorful perennials to make this area more attractive. Approximate cost would be \$2,900. Potts stated that Stonehouse on Cedar had a similar situation and they put in steps with boulders and that has worked well. O’Rourke said when the Corridor Commission recommended some amendments a few years ago, improvements in right-of-ways was approved - so from a finance standpoint, the City can assist – however, this needs to be presented to Public Works for their input. A drawing or photo of what is being considered– to show O’Rourke’s counter-parts at Public Works – would be helpful. Also, include a photo of what it looks like now. Parker said she will email or bring in photographs and give them to O’Rourke.

Chair English asked Potts if she had any questions or comments about any of the selections on the landscape plan for around the building. Potts asked if there is any place that is close to the street where salt from the roadway could be an issue. Parker stated that all the areas are close to the building. Vice Chair Schuetz said he liked the landscape plan as presented.

O’Rourke explained that from a staff perspective, they have about another month before they can recommend on this – they could recommend at this meeting but it is too late to get it on the following weeks Agenda. The next meeting is the 2nd Monday in June. Parker said she wanted to move the *Boxwoods* as soon as possible. Potts said she could do that in the summer – she would just have to be more diligent with watering. O’Rourke added that part of this agreement includes signing a five year maintenance agreement – everything that gets approved will need to be maintained for five years – so if it dies, it will have to be replaced. Vice Chair Schuetz and Potts agreed that it would be best if Parker purchased new *Boxwoods* instead of trying to relocate them. Parker decided that she would purchase a total of 5 new *Boxwoods*.

Potts suggested three different *Hydrangeas* to consider for planting on the north side of the building.

McKee asked about a Four Season Grant and O’Rourke explained that it is the same program except there is no match requirement and there is one landscape grant allowed per property. McKee could apply for a Four Season Grant regarding another property that they have in St. Charles.

Chair English suggested recommending approval at this meeting with the cost not to exceed \$2,000. This does not include the proposed parkway changes that were discussed at this meeting.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Schuetz and seconded by Kane to recommend approval of a Corridor Improvement Grant that includes landscaping of all four sides, with a cost not to exceed \$2,000, for Old St. Charles.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Dechene and Hauser

Motion Carried.

C. Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Work Plan (Discussion Only) Property Suggestions

13th Avenue and Main Street – where the Pit Stop is located- funds have been rolled forward – business under new ownership

Action Auto – next door to Pit Stop

Former Cyderella’s location

Former White Stag location that is now a fireplace shop

O’Rourke reminded everyone that this is I-Dot’s road and that they are limited to what they can do. Vice Chair Schuetz asked if they could cover walls with ivy – specifically the walls by Lundeen’s, the old Post Office and Super 8 on E. Main Street. O’Rourke said they may be able to do that.

Potts suggested the Kanute Realty property as a candidate for landscape improvements. Also, Reber Foley – who has received a \$1,000 Four Season Grant already to landscape one corner –and the improvements look nice – maybe provide him with a little extra to continue to bring the grasses up and help block the wall that is there.

Kane mentioned how nice the landscape at the CVS corner in Geneva looks and Vice Chair Schuetz mentioned the small space on Main Street next to Za Za’s – there are a few flowers planted there and it always looks great.

Chair English suggested offering a \$1,000 grant to Melia Linardos – property owner of the old Post Office and former Lundeen’s site located across from the Library at Main and 6th Avenue – to replace the *Daylilies* that are there with grasses and sedges that would cascade over the wall. O’Rourke said he will reach out to her and/or the Coleman Land Company since they are the leasing agent for that property - to ask if there is interest.

Pietryla would like to approach Kevin’s Auto and ask them to consider having some planters added to their landscape - similar to what the Shell Gas Station will be having on their property.

O’Rourke added that he has reached out to Bob Karas – one of the owners of the new Alexander’s Restaurant that will be opening in the former Gabby’s location – and he said he is interested – O’Rourke will keep working with him on this. Also, O’Rourke would like to see some improvements made at the Foxboro Plaza.

5. Additional Business from Corridor Commission Members, Public or Staff

Potts said Warwick Publishing is excited about adding foundation plantings along the front of their building. With the grant that they received in July of 2015, they had to do a lot of parking lot plantings because of the new parking lot they had installed - now they have ripped out the sidewalk in the front of the building and have added dirt – in preparation for the foundation plantings to be added down the road.

6. Public Comments

There were none.

7. Announcements

There were none.

8. Upcoming Meeting Dates

A. June 1, 2016

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Vice Chair Schuetz and seconded by Pietryla to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Dechene and Hauser