

Meeting Minutes  
Oak Park Avenue Streetscape Steering Committee - 4  
Tuesday, August 15, 2023 – 8:30 AM  
Public Works Center

1. Call to Order

Staff Liaison Lauren Wojcik called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

Roll Call

Present: Anan Abu-Taleb, Kim Henry, Tracey Royal, Monika Robinson,  
Meg Svec, Frank Russo, Darien Marion-Burton

Absent: Laura Kitsos, Jim Solnes, Mike Fox, Emily Lloyd, Sandra Medina

Staff: Village Engineer Bill McKenna, Staff Liaison/Civil Engineer Lauren Wojcik, John Helfrich (Terra Engineering), Jamil Bou-Saab (Terra Engineering), Manisha Kaul (Design Workshop), Sara Egan (Design Workshop), John Harris (a5)

2. Agenda Approval

Member Abu-Taleb made a motion to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Member Russo. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

3. Approval of the Draft May 24, 2023 Oak Park Avenue Streetscape Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Member Abu-Taleb made a motion to approve the Draft May 24, 2023 Oak Park Avenue Streetscape Steering Committee Meeting Minutes. It was seconded by Member Russo. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

4. Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

5. New Business

5a) OPTIONS FOR OAK PARK AVENUE RENOVATIONS

John Helfrich provided background information on the full scope of the project and summarized the public open house event. He mentioned that the boards and feedback from the open house were posted on the *Engage Oak Park* website to solicit additional feedback.

- i. Sara Egan gave an overview of the key insights from the public outreach process. She highlighted the concern for use of trendy elements, fossil fuels, and lighting that is not dark sky compliant. She mentioned that there was confirmed direction in favor of rain gardens, murals, green walls, overhead art, relocating love locks, and keeping a consistency of materials similar to other downtown districts (with some variations). Vertical light elements and projection art were removed from the design based on public comment and feedback.
- ii. Sara Egan asked for reactions and preferences from the steering committee on the two options presented for the curb extensions on South Blvd near Citrine. She first presented option one for Citrine, which included bar top seating, a marble Obelisk, a mural, trees suspended in the paving, and polished granite for planters. In option two for Citrine, she presented festoon overhead lighting over the outdoor dining area, a stained-glass monument with a fire component, and a granite plinth that would create a larger gathering space.

Q: Are the opinions of the steering committee and public the end-all-be-all? Even if the public suggests to remove an element from the design, can the designers include those elements anyway? I think that it is important to have the professional designers determine the elements that will promote longevity for the improvements.

A: Yes, the steering committee can elect to have certain elements that may have been removed in the past reinstated into the design. There is a large effort in trying to balance the sometimes-conflicting public comments. Ultimately the steering committee is the entity that will be making the recommendations to the design team, along with backup from staff. Designer Manisha Kaul added that there is still room to add elements and evolve the design that everyone can support, as they are still in the schematic design phase.

- iii. Village Engineer, Bill Mckenna began a discussion about the idea of the proposed fire element. He mentioned that village staff is not supportive of the implementation of a fire element within the streetscape project. He mentioned that the village fire department has safety concerns, and that village staff has maintenance concerns. Bill Mckenna asked the steering committee that they thought of his comments. The steering committee expressed that they agree with the village's concerns about safety and maintenance.
  - a. In contrast to the discussion of a fire element, steering committee member Meg Svec asked if there has been any consideration of a water feature. Village engineer, Bill Mckenna explained that there are less safety concerns with water feature compared to a fire element, but there still are maintenance concerns. The steering committee and design team went into depth discussing the different types of water features that could be incorporated into the project.
  - b. Steering committee member Monika Robinson mentioned that within the Aging in Place Commission, there has been discussion of an inter-generational art project.

She explained that the commission sees an opportunity to add an element of this nature incorporated within the streetscape project.

- iv. The committee discussed the following topics related to the schematic design for the improvements near Citrine:
  - Permanence and maintenance of the outdoor dining furniture near Citrine
  - Addition of planters between Citrine and South Blvd
  - Separation of the Citrine dining area and the public space, specifically in regards to customers dining at Citrine
  
- v. The committee discussed the following topics related to the viaduct between North and South Blvd on Oak Park Avenue:
  - Connecting North and South of the viaduct through continuing materials, patterns, or lighting
  - A stained glass and green wall design that would continue span under the viaduct
  - Creating a space under the viaduct that will enhance public safety

Sara Egan discussed the different options of Hunter Court West. Option one included festoon lighting, bollards, rotating art sculptures, and relocated love locks. Option two included granite bollards, rain garden, a small quartet platform, and a colorful overhead glass installation.

Sara Egan discussed the different options of Hunter Court East. Option one included festoon lighting, a gradient paver change, and a plant/fence separation element. Option two included panel dividers, overhead festoon lights, and an up lit crosswalk.

At the crosswalk between Hunter Court West and East, two options were presented. Option one included linear festoon lighting, light bollards, up lit oak trees in planters, and seat walls. Option two included playful festoon lighting, a rain garden, up lit oak tree planters, and seat walls.

Manisha Kaul introduced the “low, medium, high” iterations for potential materials within the streetscape. She discussed the importance of material consistency (with some variations) throughout the downtown districts in Oak Park. She explained that possibility to tie in common materials used in Oak Park such as granite, and bluestone, while also introducing unique materials to the space.

- vi. Sara Egan discussed the key points of the “low, medium, high” material iterations:
  - Option “low”
    - Mainly asphalt roadways, with brick/paver intersections
    - Potential use of exposed aggregate concrete and colored concrete for the ADA walkways/amenity and crosswalk, respectively

- Energy generation, *Pavegen*, pavers located in a singular, specified area as an interactive element to draw attention to sustainability throughout the Village.
- Option “medium”
  - Asphalt roadways with a brick or paver festival block
  - Creating color differentiation for parking spaces with use of permeable pavers
  - Bluestone or Endicott clay pavers for the amenity zones, and a recycled glass terrazzo in the gathering areas
  - Pavers in the roadway for the area north of North Blvd and south of Lake Street.
- Option “high”
  - All brick or paver roadways from Pleasant street to Lake street
  - Bluestone for the ADA walkways and amenity zones, pavers for crosswalks, cobbled pavers for the intersections, and black granite for the gathering areas

Sara Egan explained the importance and impact of different aesthetic materials. She commented on the use of ecofriendly and cost-effective material. Village Engineer Bill Mckenna added that the steering committee should be comfortable with iterations of each of the “low/medium/high” options that Design Workshop has presented, as the potential for the different options will be influenced by costs.

## 6. Old Business

None

## 7. Adjourn

With no further business, Member Russo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Member Abu-Taleb. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 AM.

Submitted by:

Jay Ahn

Administrative Intern