



City of McMinnville  
Planning Department  
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# MINUTES

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April 20, 2022  
Landscape Review Committee  
Regular Meeting

12:00 pm  
Hybrid Meeting  
McMinnville, Oregon

**Members Present:** John Hall, Patty Sorensen, Rob Stephenson, Carlton Davidson, and Josh Kearns

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Monica Bilodeau – Senior Planner

**Others Present:** Zack Geary – City Councilor

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## 1. Call to Order

Chair John Hall called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

## 2. Citizen Comments

None

## 3. Discussion Items

None

## 4. Action Items

- **L 31-21 – Oak Ridge Meadows North of Baker Creek Road and the multi-phased Oak Ridge residential development, and south of Baker Creek (Tax Lot 1300, Section 17, T. 4 S., R 4 W., W.M. and Tax Lot 602, Section 7, T. 4 S., R 4 W., W.M.)**

Senior Planner Monica Bilodeau presented the landscape review for the Oak Ridge Meadows project.

Laura Antonson, the Architect for the project, began with reviewing the street tree plan which was included in the meeting packet. The decision document from the Planning Department referenced several trees that were incorrect. The current plan indicated the correct trees which were allowed by the City, as well as details on root barriers and irrigation tubes which would be installed. There had been adjustments made in the tree plan which left several gaps between trees due to providing adequate distance from utilities. Some of the trees planned were smaller varieties.

Committee Members expressed concerns about branches being knocked off by passing vehicles and the selection of trees that could seed heavily. Ms. Antonson reminded the Committee that they would be working with plants in small planters and that several of the recommended species would not do well in that setting. The Committee discussed several possible trees to recommend and noted the downfalls of some of the tree varieties.

The Committee and the Applicant discussed whether it was necessary to select only trees on the City's list of approved trees. There were trees that were not on the approved list for the City but could be conditionally approved. The Committee discussed several trees that could be conditionally approved and considered whether they would thrive in the given small space.

Ms. Antonson stated that the groundcover beneath the trees would be determined by the property owners and noted the irrigation tubes would be installed around trees as required by the City. The homeowners would be responsible for watering the trees. The Committee recommended that the HOA prohibit gravel or large chunks of rock as a groundcover below the trees and the City require the contractor to have an irrigation sleeve installed below the sidewalk to facilitate watering the trees.

It was noted that homeowners are required to care for the street trees, which belong to the City. However, homeowners are not informed about the care requirements, which leads to neglect. A suggestion was made to create a brochure to inform homeowners on the care of trees.

The Committee discussed the size of the planter beds, which was determined by the Planning and Engineering Departments. Trees of any size would suffer in such small beds. They discussed in depth which varieties would deal best with the conditions available and recommended several tree varieties to the architect to replace trees on the list that could cause issues.

Senior Planner Bilodeau mentioned that McMinnville Water & Light had concerns over the placement of some trees. Trees that conflicted with utilities would need to be relocated or eliminated from the plan. It was difficult to determine in some cases what the conflict was in the plan. She also explained that the park would be a private park maintained by surrounding property owners. The play equipment for the park had already been approved and the landscaping for the park was minimal.

Committee Member Davidson moved to approve the plans based on the conditions identified in the decision document. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Sorensen and passed unanimously.

Senior Planner Bilodeau explained that there had been a condition included that street trees would be continually maintained by the developer for a period of two years.

Committee Member Sorensen expressed concern that the lower area of the subdivision had been flooded previously and hoped efforts to mitigate flooding would take place.

## **5. Committee Member Comments**

Committee Member Davidson commented that the City Code needed to be amended and asked if a work session could be held to discuss the items in the Code that were causing issues. Senior Planner Bilodeau responded that a work session could be held when she had some of the materials prepared to accept feedback and direction from the Committee regarding edits to the Code. She emphasized the need to allow public access to the meetings and to dial in topics to discuss prior to the meeting.

Councilor Zack Geary stated he had researched several previous projects and developments that had not had their landscape plan reviewed by the Committee. Senior Planner Bilodeau clarified that if a project did not trigger the need to get a building permit the landscape plan was not reviewed. Only projects which involved remodeling parking lots or exterior features could be put through the process of review.

The Committee and Staff discussed that certain projects have pushed the boundaries of what they could do without going through a review process, especially if the project was complex or nuanced. Some of the landscape plans for projects were bundled with the land use and development review processes and did not pass through the Committee. Committee Members agreed that the City misses out on an opportunity to take advantage of the combined experience and talent of the Landscape Review Committee when they are bypassed during decision-making and that the Committee should be included when sending out project information for comments by public agencies. Senior Planner Bilodeau noted that the process of involving Committees could be solidified during Code revisions and considered how the process could be simplified to provide an efficient process for developers.

The Committee discussed that having a clearer process that applied to large or small projects would ensure the quality standards of projects would be met, City funds would be saved, and the aesthetics of projects would be improved. The Committee hoped that improvements could be added to the Code during revision.

## **6. Staff Comments**

None

## **7. Adjournment**

Chair Hall adjourned the meeting at 1:17 pm.