

Meeting called to order by Heather Richards, Planning Director.

Meeting Agenda

- Introduction & Plan for the Day
- Introduction of Tree Issue
- Street Tree Discussion
- Review of Functional Alternatives
  - A.) Discussion of top choices from last meeting
  - B.) Debate on which choices are favored going forward and poll
  - C.) Selection of a preferred functional alternative and plan going forward

Attendees

Scott Hill, Mayor  
Jeff Towery, City Manager  
Heather Richards, Planning Director  
Anne Pagano, Public Works Director  
Adam Tate, Associate Planner  
Josh Adleman, Engineering  
Ben Weber, SERA Project Manager  
Matthew Arnold, SERA  
Stephen Goetz, Arborist  
Elise Chelak, SERA  
Dave Rucklos, McMinnville Downtown Association  
Heather Miller, McMinnville Downtown Association  
Jamie Conff, SERA  
John Dietz, Mac Water & Light  
Walt Gowell, City of McMinnville  
Danielle Chisholm Niehus  
Scott Cunningham  
Kellie Menke  
Alan Fox  
Carson Benner, Economic Vitality Council  
Gerry, MDA Board Member

(There may be a couple I missed here)

Ben Weber and Heather gave a wrap up of the work completed so far.

Ben Weber presented an introduction slide of drainage problems and sidewalk cracking downtown then handed off to Josh Adleman and John Dietz to talk about the needed below ground infrastructure improvements.

Josh Adleman shared a map of the storm water and sanitary sewers and mentioned that at least two of the sanitary sewers will need replacement and that the stormwater infrastructure needs a complete overhaul which would be appropriate with all of the other changes coming with this project.

He also showed a map of the utilities in proximity to the sidewalks and street trees. Most of the infrastructure is under the street itself but a significant portion is under the sidewalks. John Dietz mentioned that they may want/need to replace a water line under third street as part of the project.

Chuck Hillestead asked if it would be possible to move underground infrastructure to the alleyways, but John Dietz said it would be hard because all of the service routes are currently at the front of the buildings and moving them to the rear would be very expensive. (It would be a good long-term solution though.)

Ben Weber and Matt Arnold of SERA shared slides of a complete street reconstruction they did for the city of Sisters, Oregon and talked through some of the details of that project, and how they were able to keep the downtown businesses there open even during the project and that it was completed in around 5 months' time.

### **Ben Weber introduced Arborist Stephen Goetz, who goes by Steve**

Steve gave his tree report on the condition of the Red Maple street trees that line Third Street. He showed slides of the trees and some of the problems downtown with sidewalk cracking, trees cramped by small tree wells, and drainage issues.

Red Maples are a good species for street trees here, but they have grown larger than anyone ever thought they would. Most of the trees are in decent to good health and not yet at the end of life. 95% of their roots are in the top 8 inches of soil.

Steve mentioned that Norway Maples or Tupelo's could be good replacement trees as well. Steve emphasized that the bigger we can make the tree wells, the more room we can provide the roots, the better. This will ensure healthier trees and less sidewalk disruption and cracking in the future. These fits well with the idea of expanded sidewalks that the PAC favors and means we can design in larger tree wells to help avoid some problems in the future.

There was talk among the group and questions on how large any replacement trees could be. Steve mentioned that we could look for and secure larger trees of 2.5, 3, possibly even 4-inch caliper trees, but they are getting harder to find and more expensive and require larger tree wells to accommodate the root balls. For existing trees some pruning can be done above ground, but any trimming of roots can be dangerous and destabilize the tree.

Heather mentioned that we currently require 2-inch caliper trees for new developments, but that most developers claim they can only find 1.5-inch caliper trees (which are quite small)

Carson Benner made a great point that we could buy trees from a nursery now and by the time we do the project they will have grown larger. Steve said that is possible and exactly what he recommends. He said a 3-inch caliper tree has a 48-inch root ball and weighs 800 lbs. and we can make that work just fine.

The group really liked this idea as replacing the current trees with tiny saplings would cause public outrage but replacing them with larger 3-inch caliper trees would go over much better with residents.

Heather made a great point about the tree well size. She said the current tree wells are 4 feet by 4 feet and the current trees were planted in the 1970's. So, we need to know the new tree well size as early as possible to build that into our designs.

The group also asked about saving some trees or staggering tree replacement with some existing trees.

Ben Weber noted that it is best to under promise and over deliver on this front. To say that we are going to do a full tree replacement plan, and if we are able to save some existing trees, we will be the heroes instead of the villains. If we promise to save some trees and then aren't able to do so it will look really bad. But the group was quite nervous about presenting that option to the wider public.

There was a question on how to best prevent sidewalk heave and cracking.

Steve said that on some projects in Portland they reinforced the sidewalk with rebar and made it 6-inches deep and that did a good job of preventing any heave or cracking from the nearby tree roots. It is more expensive, but doable and better in the long run. He said that root barriers aren't necessarily the best solution as they bunch the roots and shorten the functional lifespan of the trees.

Another good suggestion came courtesy of Kenneth Diener who said we should look at historic photos of Third Street and revive some features like the Arch we used in the past.

### **Ben Weber introduced the 6 Functional Alternatives**

And then other members of his SERA team talked about them in more detail in regards to sidewalk width, curb extensions and parking efficiency.

Concept 2A – Expanded curb extensions, preserve parking

Concept 2B – Expanded curb extensions, reduce parking

Concept 4A – Wider Sidewalks/one sided parking

Concept 4B – Wider Sidewalks/one-way option

Heather highlighted that the 4B concept would require the support and analysis of transportation engineers.

Many business owners expressed a concern with the one-way option. Planning staff also said it would be the worst solution.

There was A Lot of talking about parking and the various merits of each concept in relation to parking. Also, some talk of a zero curb radius, but that didn't gain too much traction.

There was talk of narrowing the travel lanes in order to free up more space for wider sidewalks and as a traffic calming measure. 12 foot down to 11 or 10 feet for the travel lanes. Possibly narrow the parking lanes from 8 to 7.5 feet as well.

**Heather suggested we take a poll to determine the group's top choice(s).**

**Poll Results**

**2A – 18%**

**2B – 18%**

**4A – 59%**

**4B – 6%**

Then there was some group discussion on the poll results. Group determined that a parking study is needed to access viability of angle/chevron parking on the side streets if they need to accommodate any parking losses along Third Street incurred by design changes.

The next PAC Meeting will be Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Parking Study Results, recap decisions from this meeting and move forward.