

## LANDSCAPE REVIEW BOARD COMMISSION

### MINUTES

February 22, 2010

A regular meeting of the Landscape Review Board Commission was held in the Ester Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Borough Administrative Offices, 809 Pioneer Road, Fairbanks, Alaska.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deborah Horner  
Cyndie Warbelow-Tack  
Richard Carl Heieren  
Gordon Schlosser

OTHERS PRESENT: Bernardo Hernandez, Director  
Melissa Kellner, Planner II  
Mark Mussman, Planner III  
Jim Lee, Deputy Director  
Todd Boyce, Senior Planner  
Cynthia Klepaski, Asst. Attorney  
Tom Gibbons, Fred Meyer Representative  
Pat McArdle, GVEA Representative  
Bruce Creager, Barghausen Representative  
Arthur Seidel, Barghausen Landscape Representative

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

A. ROLL CALL

B. MESSAGES

1. Staff's Comments

- Mr. Hernandez had everyone introduce themselves.
- Ms. Kellner announced that we need to elect a Chair Person for the Landscape Review Board. We will move forward without a chair person today.

2. Citizen's Comments

None

C. \*MINUTES

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION:** Moved and seconded that Agenda be approved.

**VOTE:** No objections

### MEETING AGENDA APPROVED WITHOUT OBJECTION

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. None

## F. NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Fred Meyer West's proposed landscape plan.

- Mr. Mussman gave his staff report. Based upon staff analysis, the Department of Community Planning recommended approval of the proposed ordinance with various conditions. The applicant shall submit a final landscape plan and the Landscape Review Board will do a site visit to determine the compliance with the final plan. The applicant will submit an as-built. The Landscape Review Board must determine the amount of an appropriate financial guarantee to insure that the landscaping is complete. Applicant must replace any trees that become damaged or destroyed – replace with an evergreen tree in the buffer area. The applicant should follow the guidelines provided by the utility provider. Staff recommends that the Landscape Review Board should meet to accept the financial guarantee from the applicant and meet again to look at the as-built plan and schedule a site visit. Upon final approval, the Landscape Review Board should release the financial guarantee.
- Mr. Heieren asked if the screening would be addressed as a variance.
- Mr. Mussman replied that the code does allow for methods of site conditions that present conditions that make full compliance impossible or impracticable.
- Mr. Hernandez said it was not a variance just another method that you could approve.
- Mr. Heieren asked if neighboring landowners were notified about this meeting.
- Mr. Mussman replied no but they have been notified regarding the Planning Commission meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Mr. Hernandez said that the neighbors were notified for a community meeting that Fred Meyer held.
- Mr. Gibbons said that Staff supplied them with a mailing list of neighbors within a 1000 foot of the site and they sent out notices for the community meeting.
- Mr. Heieren asked if the fence is owned by Fred Meyer.
- Mr. Mussman replied that it is a Fred Meyer fence. The code states a definition that for buffer landscaping, that a chain link fence is not a decorative fence. This existing fence is a chain link fence with slats. This is something that the Landscape Review Board can determine if it would be acceptable as a decorative fence – therefore two rows of trees can be reduced to one row of trees. The only strict requirement in this buffer area is that there aren't enough evergreen trees so you could grant compliance to the approval to this part of the Landscape Plan.
- Mr. Schlosser asked how Fred Meyer was interpreting interior parking on the plan.
- Mr. Mussman said staff reviewed parking with the information that Fred Meyer supplied them – we will let the Fred Meyer representative address this question.
- Mr. Creager gave a presentation and referred to a map of the site.
- Mr. Creager answered the question raised about interior parking – the parking lot area is 419,000 sq ft. The parking lot is defined by the paved maneuvering areas associated with the parking. He showed on the site map the parking lot and landscape for the parking lot area. Their request is for an alternative compliance method to be approved by the Landscaping Review Board to beef up the interior parking lot planters in compensation for the lack of buffering around the perimeter of the parking lot.

He explained the challenge on the residential side with 15 feet GVEA easement, 20 ft public utility easement which has a water main that runs on the property line, sub surface utilities, and overhead power lines. The request for the Landscape Review Board is an alternative plan of landscaping with the existing fence but with the easements it might be impossible to plant an addition row of evergreen trees required. The proposed evergreen trees to be planted would fill in the gaps where necessary with 54 evergreens off set and keep as much as possible outside the easement. Where the outdoor storage conex area is located – Fred Meyer will plant a double row of evergreen trees to meet the requirements.

- Ms. Warbelow-Tack addressed the chain link fence. She would rather see a different fence for aesthetics. She asked for clarification on the walkway landscaping – is it going to be at ground level or built up.
- It was addressed as a raised walkway – curb height with two breaks in the walkway.
- Ms. Warbelow-Tack addressed the guardrail on the property and did not like the looks of the guardrail.
- It was addressed that Fred Meyer is not installing a guard rail but is doubling up on the trees.
- Ms. Warbelow-Tack addressed the plants at Fred Meyers store now and said that it didn't give her a feeling of a lot of plants around. The evergreen trees are so crowded that they can never grow like they are suppose to – she would rather see trees spread out so they can grow to their full potential. Looking at the variety list of suggested trees and shrubs – she would rather see more lilacs and shrubs that would spread out versus a stick of a tree. She would question a few items on the variety list that might be better choices.
- Ms. Horner has questions about the central area in the parking lot with snow removal – snow removal is hard on landscaping. Is there a plan for raising the landscaping bed to a height where there is some chance of trees surviving?
- Ms. Warbelow-Tack addressed raising the landscaping bed – the problem with that is it makes it harder for trees to survive because the insulation is not there – that's why there are guardrails but they should use nice looking guardrails for protection of the trees. She likes the maintenance requirement in the proposed landscaping plan – if you plant too many trees it's hard to maintain them – shrubs can give you a nice visual screen. The tree count is good but when she sees the area, it isn't nicely landscaped because of clumps of spruce that were left in place.
- Mr. Schlosser described that he liked the interior planter on the walkway. He would like to see the other walkway with shrubs or trees. He asked about the width of the planter boxes.
- A reply was made that they are five feet. If any fences were being added – maybe they could do partial decorative fences. It was asked about the height of a decorative fence.
- Mr. Mussman looked up what the height of a decorative fence should be – 7 feet.
- Mr. Schlosser stated that he has never seen borders / planters counted as part of the interior landscape theme. The interior landscape always had to be within the parking area. He would like to see the landscaping beefed up around Airport Way. That's the major emphasis on landscaping as well as breaking up the parking lot and directing people through use of planters of where to park. He doesn't think that Fred Meyers will be able to get any new trees or shrubs in the planter bed along Airport Way. Those trees are mature trees and a backhoe would do major damage to the existing root system of the trees.

He would like to see more planted spines in the parking lot. In his opinion, there is only one planter bed in the interior.

- It was stated that 60 parking stalls were taken out for construction of the walkway and the result of the expansion.
- Mr. Heieren asked Fred Meyers to talk about the meeting they had with the neighbors. He asked if any of the lighting around the back part of the building is going to be changed.
- It was stated that they had cut sheet information on the lighting submitted as part of their conditional use.
- Mr. Hernandez stated that as part of the conditional use – Fred Meyers was required to have a community meeting with the neighbors. FNSB Staff gave them a mailing list of the neighbors within 1000 ft of the property line.
- One resident in the Fred Meyer area complained of smells from the cooking area. There was a noise issue. Those concerns will be addressed with the upgrades - with the mechanical problems. There was a problem with the diesel generator being fired off at certain times. Problems with ravens in the compactor facilities – they requested screening of the compactor and loading dock areas. The compact areas are going to be heated and closed facility. They are looking at putting in plaques for signs with Alaskan pictures on them in the parking lot.
- Mr. Mussman said that the owner of Lot 8 of the residential subdivision submitted some negative comments regarding back-up noise indicators, trash compactor, diesel generator exhaust, and cooking exhaust fans.
- Mr. McArdle asks about the north side along Airport Way – were the trees going to be planted in the electric easement.
- It was stated “yes” – the 30 foot electric easement that over laps into the parking field.
- Mr. McArdle asked what kind of trees are going to be planted.
- It was stated that they have not been selected but there is a list to select from.
- Mr. McArdle stated that there is a ditch there so it complicates things – it is not a very good site for planting conifers, birch, or larch. On the south side – no plans on planting conifers in the easement.
- It was stated that they are going to be 4 ft from the paving which takes them out of the easement – the first row. The double row that is required is all evergreen – the second row is a foot into the easement.
- Mr. McArdle said they could probably live with that.
- Mr. Heieren asked which fence is Fred Meyer’s – south west corner – there is a double fence.
- Fred Meyers owns both fences.
- Mr. Heieren asked if they would entertain sections of decorative fences – the fence with slats is not approved as a decorative fence with the City of Fairbanks.
- Ms. Klepaski stated if you wanted to go with this plan – you have to come up with reasons why it’s going to be different specific to this property.
- Mr. McArdle said the current fence is in the easement but there is room to work in the easement. Some of the home owners have hooked their fence onto Fred Meyer’s fence.
- Ms. Warbelow-Tack disagrees with only running partial decorative fencing – it would not be fair to all neighbors.
- Mr. Heieren thought that the partial decorative fencing could be where there is traffic lighting or equipment backing up but not removing the existing fence.
- Mr. Heieren wanted to make sure Fred Meyer complies with vegetation under the power line and staying 15 feet from poles.

- Mr. Heieren moved to include the condition that vegetation be planted 15' from poles and that the plantings be GVEA-approved shrubs/trees.
- Ms. Klepaski stated that it is already a condition in Staff's report.
- Mr. Schlosser moved and Ms. Warbelow-Tack seconded that a landscaped pedestrian walkway running east-west at the northern University Ave entrance shall be required. Approved unanimously.
- Ms. Warbelow-Tack moved and Mr. Schlosser seconded that a decorative fence at least 7 feet in height shall be constructed along the southern boundary and no new trees shall be required to be planted along the southern boundary. Approved 3-1 (Heieren opposed)
- Fred Meyer's representatives were concerned about property owners that have tied into the existing fence.
- It was stated that you would not have to re-tie into the neighbors fence.
- It was moved to approve Fred Meyer's preliminary landscape plan. Approved 3-1 (Heieren opposed)

G. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.