

**City of Madras
Planning Commission Work Session
Official Minutes
June 17, 2009**

WORKSESSION

a. Draft Streetscape Design Report – Francesca Patricolo

Francesca Patricolo, RARE Program explained that the City of Madras wanted to encourage the people driving through town to get out of their cars. She said one way to do that was to improve our streetscapes which would also improve our local economy. She explained that she had held several stakeholder meetings and from those meetings, this draft report was created.

She provided a brief history of how she accumulated this information and talked about the short and long term goals. She noted the final document would be presented to them formally at their July 15th meeting

She said the results listed on page 12 were in no way prioritized but it showed that the community wanted: more trees, shrubs and vegetation; crosswalks with special pavers; wider sidewalks with street furnishings (benches, water fountains); and the least item they felt needed was diagonal parking. She noted that was a good thing, because the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) had discouraged diagonal parking until the future by pass was constructed.

Commissioner Cousens asked if a by pass was really going to happen and questioned if anyone had consulted the City of Redmond regarding their downtown issues after their by pass opened.

Director Snead stated that there was a lot to be learned and that he planned on contacting them.

Ms. Patricolo noted that #1 on the short term goal was to clean up the pedestrian areas of downtown and that #2 was to extend the time frame for seasonal tree lights, however there was an ongoing cost associated with this goal.

Commissioner Hurley questioned if solar panels were an option and suggested applying for a grant to cover initial start up cost.

A discussion took place on the tree lights. Ms. Patricolo said the Commission could recommend adding “green” technology to address the tree lights.

Commissioner Cousens said she would like to see a “green” solution, long term goal placed on the list.

Commissioner Hurley noted that he would like to see all City lights using this technology not just the tree lights.

More discussion took place and it was noted that grants are easier to be obtained when they are listed on a plan. Consensus was to add a long term goal that would address green technologies for electrical facilities to the streetscape.

Ms. Patricolo spoke about #3 regarding the safety for pedestrian areas by using commercial crosswalks and safe routes to school.

Director Snead mentioned that the “safe routes to school” program was currently being addressed by the City and the School District. He noted that families with lower incomes tended to live on the West side of town which required school children to cross both Highways. That makes this goal very important.

Ms. Patricolo continued on and noted that #4 was a recommendation for uniformity in the style and type of street furnishings; however the type of style had yet to be determined.

#5 was the “need” to add and improve the City’s current emblem design. She noted this could be incorporated with the streetscape design and style;

#6 was to add and improve the informational signs about local attractions and resources. She said that the City had already started on a “design” for these signs and suggested this theme be used for all future informational signs;

#7 was to develop an art and history projects plan. She explained that art can attract tourist to get “off the beaten track” and discover Madras. It was suggested the Madras Public Art Commission participate and develop a plan.

Director Snead noted that this plan will also preserve historical and cultural features.

#8 was to create a bicycle-pedestrian plan. Ms. Patricolo noted that currently the bike lane through town merges in an out of traffic and a dedicated bike lane is needed;

#9 addressed street design standards. These standards are not adopted by ordinance and need to be adopted so that new development can follow the approved criteria;

#10 also addressed street design standards in the subdivision ordinance. The Subdivision Ordinance needs approved standards to refer to when setting requirements for new subdivisions;

#11 speaks to alternative funding sources for capital improvement projects. Ms. Patricolo noted that this is a long term goal, but could be started immediately in order to actively pursue the long-term goals of the community.

Ms. Patricolo moved onto the long term goals on page 20. She noted that #1 was flower boxes; #2 was special pavers; #3 Improve bicycle and pedestrian routes; #4 street furnishings; #5 Underground overhead utilities; #6 replace existing street sign poles with decorative poles and street sign markers; #7 construct bulb out sidewalks only in areas where freight trucks do not access; #8 median planting strips; #9 art and history project plan and #10 create a downtown parking plan.

She requested the Commissioners provide feedback which would be incorporated into the document and presented it for final approval on July 15th.

Commissioner Cousens requested adding a “green” plan to the short term goal and long term goal to execute the plan.

Consensus was to identify funding options/opportunities for the short term goals and the second part would be to apply for them.

Commissioner Cousens noted in larger Cities, business owners who use green technology in development receive benefits which are used as incentives.

Commissioner Kowaleski pointed out that Mr. Prince’s request of a dark sky ordinance fit right in to this discussion.

Ms. Patricolo asked if there was anything in the report the Commission did not like.

Commissioner Hurley noted that traffic will become more and more congested as the City grows and stated the existing traffic lights are not driver friendly. He noted that the bulbed sidewalks are not truck friendly.

Ms. Patricolo noted that the City is in the process of “intelligently designing” where the bulbed out sidewalks will be placed for those same reasons.

Commissioner Kowaleski noted that Madras is and will always be a farming community and pointed out that farm trucks with trailers full of cattle, cannot maneuver well with those bulbed out sidewalks.

A discussion took place and consensus was that the timing of the traffic lights on D Street and the highways needed to be evaluated because traffic sits too long at times. It was noted that right turn lanes on streets controlled with a traffic light, could potentially keep traffic from backing up which lead to a discussion on a parking plan. It was suggested removing the bulb at 4th Street and create a turn lane.

Director Snead noted that some of this discussion would be involved in updating the transportation system plan.

Ms. Patricolo agreed and noted she was unable to address that scope.

Commissioner Tack addressed materials/scheme on the street design and suggested using items such as benches that are made locally or at least made in Oregon. She also suggested including fire hydrants, signage and the city emblem in the “scheme” of the design.

Councilor Brown suggested checking with the Department of Corrections for the benches and other items they may make.

Consensus was to buy items made in Oregon, if economically feasible; artisan made items would be nice but not a priority. Uniformity was necessary for all items of color and should include fire hydrants. Durability and consistency/uniformity was very important.

Also discussed was a new emblem. It was agreed that a new emblem was needed to represent the City.

Ms. Patricolo requested the Commissioner's to review the document and if they had any suggestions please contact her.

The Work Session ended at 8:20 p.m.

Tammy McHaney, Community Development Specialist