

Reserve Committee Meeting

10/11/2015

The following members of the FHCA Reserve Committee and its Berm and Entryway refurbishment sub-committees met at Bob and Judy Pastusek's house from 4-6 PM on Sunday, 11 October 2015 to review the status and required next actions for the on-going Berm and Queen St Entryway projects:

Bob Pastusek-Reserve Committee Chair
Bud Wood-Entryway Sub-Committee Chair
Bob Hunter-Entryway Sub-Committee member
Mal MacKinnon-Berm Sub-Committee Chair
Jack Dunlap-Berm Sub-Committee member
Nell Pinol-Berm Sub-Committee member

One committee member asked why this meeting was being called, and specifically the reason for doing it on a Sunday afternoon with only a few days' notice. We explained that the meeting was needed to collectively review the status of separate projects being worked by each of the above individuals--as they are closely inter-related; while the timing was set by the need to agree on two near term actions (see below) and to prepare a project status report for the 12 October FHCA Board meeting. Lack of availability of key committee members during the previous month precluded this meeting from being held earlier.

With respect to the Entryway Upgrade Project, engineering plans for new serpentine entryway walls, developed by Moody Landscape Architecture and originally delivered to the FHCA in August, have been revised as directed by the above Committee and completed to "ready for permitting and bidding" status. A major change to Moody's original plan was to re-design the walls with level tops that reduced in height toward the rising surface elevation going up Queen St, vice the constant-height walls originally proposed. Specifications provided by Moody include de-construction of the existing walls, construction of new foundations and walls within the footprint of the existing walls, installation of irrigation and lighting, and a detailed planting plan for the entryway.

A committee member asked about the expected strength and durability of the new walls. The Committee understands that while no structure is forever-permanent, the foundations proposed, and the environment within which these walls are being constructed (to include removal of the very large trees that undermined the current walls), should yield a 40-plus year life.

Committee members cursorily reviewed the planting plan for the entryway and determined that additional review of the specific entryway planting plan (L104) was warranted. Jack Dunlap and Nell Pinol agreed to undertake this review with additional neighborhood homeowners as required, and provide proposed changes, in writing, not later than 15 November 2015. The Committee accepts that any changes will need to be incorporated into the detailed specifications prepared for competitive bidding, and that this review/change could potentially impact the entryway construction schedule.

The new entryway walls will require an easement to construct part of the new west wall on property belonging to Mr Zhengzhu Liu at 1700 S 23rd St. The Committee has reviewed the preliminary plans with Mr Liu and reached a tentative agreement for him to grant this easement. The Committee will meet with Mr Liu during the coming week to seek formal signature of this easement based on the final "for bid" construction documents received from Moody Landscape Architects on 23 September.

Bud Wood outlined the requirement for an Arlington County "Site Amendment Plan," prior to issue of specific building permits, for the new entryway wall. A draft of this revision, based on on-site review

with the County planners in September, will be provided to Arlington County by 19 October. The Committee intends to seek site plan and preliminary permitting approvals directly, rather than having the winning bidder obtain these, to minimize risk and cost.

At present, Arlington County approvals are holding up offering this project for competitive bid. Upon grant of a site plan amendment, update of the planting specifications by Moody Architecture will be required before offering this project for bid. The Committee has identified five respected firms in the local area that are interested in bidding on this project, and has prepared an offer letter that will be sent as soon as possible with the revised specifications.

We are still planning on completing entryway construction during the winter of 2015-2016, and to have the area graded, irrigated and lighted for planting in the spring of 2016. An exceptionally harsh winter could delay this schedule, but this is an otherwise slow period for landscape installers, and we expect competitive bids for completion during the winter.

With respect to the Berm Refurbishment, we have established a series of projects that must be completed sequentially that will delay completion of Berm replanting (specifically large trees) until the fall of 2016.

A review of the surface, sub-surface infrastructure and drainage conditions on and around the Berm dictate that the area be re-graded to improve surface drainage behind the Rolfe St houses before any replanting is undertaken. The Committee contracted with Greg Budnik of GJB Engineering to survey the site and prepare detailed re-grading plans for this area. Specifically, Budnik was tasked to re-establish a lowered "swale" area behind the Rolfe St houses backing onto the Berm, and to lower the "pass through" areas of the berm that funnel excess rainwater impacting this area through "cut outs" and onto Army Navy Drive during heavy rains.

Greg Budnik completed this grading plan to a level suitable for bidding in September and submitted an invoice for this, and associated on-site consulting work, on 6 October. The Committee recommends this invoice be paid during October.

In the process, we identified two major surface-water drains into the County storm-water culverts underlying the Berm that are not functioning as designed. County planners who control the right-of-way and access into the culvert drain system have reviewed our request to clean and re-set these drains; and we have submitted the required plumbing and right-of-way access permits to repair the northern-most of these drains. Upon County approval, the Committee agreed to hire Grow, Inc (the FHCA's current grounds maintenance contractor) to dig out the northern vertical culvert drain so as to examine the existing drain and assess the installation of a larger replacement drain. GJB Engineering has provided detailed drawings and specifications for this work, using off-the-shelf materials, rather than the more traditional poured concrete structure. Given successful replacement of this drain, and concurrence with this work by the County, we plan to restore the southern drain in a like fashion.

As soon as the drain(s) are restored and inspected, the Committee expects to submit the Berm-area re-grading plan developed by GJB for competitive bid, and to complete this during the winter of 2015-2016 as working conditions permit. There are some land disturbance and permitting limitations that will affect the speed with which this work can be completed. We expect to re-sod those areas where topsoil is removed to higher elevations on the berm, and will cover the exposed berm with mulch to minimize erosion pending re-planting and permanent stabilization in the spring.

As soon as the re-grading is complete, we intend to offer a contract for installation, in two stages, of a commercial-grade sprinkler that will irrigate the entire area encompassed by Rolfe, 23rd St, 28th St and Army Navy Drive. The first stage will consist of a "backbone" along the length of the grassy area behind

the Rolfe St houses from 23rd St to 28th St, with multiple stubs for zone valves and controllers. The second stage, consisting of lateral zones, to support specific grass areas, trees, and plantings, will be installed as surface stabilization and Berm plantings are installed during 2016.

Berm Committee members have identified errors in the "as currently planted" drawing by Moody (L004) that would materially affect the plans for re-grading and new planting. At the 11 October meeting, Jack Dunlap and Nell Pinol agreed to continue their review of the Moody Architecture-developed tree removal and three detailed planting plans (L105/L106/L107), to seek concurrence of homeowners living near the Berm, and to make written recommendations for changes to Moody's "as is" drawing and three "new planting" plans not later than 15 November 2015. The Committee accepts that any changes will need to be incorporated into the detailed specifications submitted for competitive bidding, but that these changes are unlikely to impact the Berm refurbishment schedule because of the precedential work required before we start planting.

Also, it now appears that the Moody "as is" drawing is materially deficient in that it cannot be used as the baseline for tree removal and new plantings. The Committee therefore recommends that Moody's most recent invoice not be paid until the deficiencies identified by the Dunlap/Pinol review are corrected in the "as is" plan. Should changes to the three Berm planting plans be needed, the Committee expects to negotiate with Moody to incorporate these changes in their detailed "for bid" planting and irrigation specifications.

As with the Entryway project, Arlington County permitting and work authorization within their drain culvert easement area, which essentially encompasses the entirety of the Berm, is driving the execution timing of this project. Given the required time-phasing and our inability to plant major trees in the fall of 2015 as originally intended, we expect to proceed with re-grading and installation of the sprinkler "backbone" as soon as we have a County permitting go ahead, and to be ready to install appropriate mid- and lower-level plantings in the spring, along with specific sprinkler zones to support them.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert R Pastusek
Reserve Committee Chairman
11 Oct 2015