

**VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020, 6:00 PM
FRANKLIN VILLAGE HALL
32325 FRANKLIN ROAD, FRANKLIN, MICHIGAN 48025**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Pam Hansen, at 6:00 PM at the Franklin Village Hall, Franklin, Michigan.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Fred Gallasch, Pam Hansen, Bill Lamott, Mira Stakhiv, Brian Gordon (arrived at 6:08 PM)
Absent: Ed Saenz, Mike Seltzer
Also Present: Roger Fraser, Interim Village Administrator
Eileen Pulker, Village Clerk
Robert White, Illuminart
Tad Krear, Land Design Studio
Eric James, Land Design Studio (Landscape Design)

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Stakhiv, seconded by Lamott to adopt the agenda, as presented.

Ayes: Gallasch, Hansen, Lamott, Stakhiv
Nays: None
Absent: Gordon, Saenz, Seltzer
Motion carried.

IV. PUBLIC REQUESTS AND COMMENTS

No public comments were made at this time.

V. DISCUSS FRANKLIN ROAD STREETScape PLAN.

Krear led the discussion on this topic and began by noting that this was the 7th meeting about the Streetscape Plan. He stated that tonight there were two (2) agenda items: Landscape Design and Lighting.

James presented a preview of what the final landscape plan would look like. Taking into the historic nature of the architecture and the community of Franklin, he wanted to tailor the plant palate in the landscape to be complimentary and enhance the architecture and the streetscape and bring the sense of community and continuity through the downtown.

Using a slide presentation, James began by showing landscape examples from the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. and Frankenmuth, Michigan. He cautioned residents to keep in mind that everything would be scaled down for the Franklin Streetscape, in terms of price, sidewalk widths, color, texture, and maintenance. He envisioned something more informal, something more pedestrian in scale, and something more diverse in color and more textural than the examples he presented. He chose plants based on three (3) criteria issues: tolerant to roadside conditions (salt spray, pollution running off the roads), safety (about 90% of the chosen plants would stay 3 ft. and below at its mature size), and tolerant of the natural conditions (deer, rabbits,

with no irrigation system they need to be drought tolerant and survive in wet conditions). He elaborated on the ideal soil and soil mixtures which would be beneficial to the plants and stressed that the landscape design would be easily maintainable. There were questions about the ingredients of the soil additives, i.e. chemicals. James knew that some of the materials were not toxic or dangerous to the soil but would do more research on them to verify that they would not negatively affect the ground water. Hansen was curious of the life span of the additives. James stated that he was unsure. More research was needed; however, he was certain that they would last through the important three (3) year establishment period of the plants.

A variety of trees and perennial shrub species were proposed. The proposed twenty-nine (29) shade trees were: fruitless variety of Horse Chestnuts which have beautiful fall colors; Elm varieties which were good street canopy trees growing high and out as they mature; Maples (sugar and red) which were also colorful in the fall and create a canopy. Of those, there might be seven (7) ornamental trees: crabapple varieties and lilac trees, which would be put on the western side of the street underneath the overhead powerlines. Gallasch raised the question about the number of proposed trees considering the number of already existing trees along Franklin Road.

James pointed out there were three (3) important areas which he felt needed to be distinctive and highlighted: 1. The intersection of 14 Mile Road and Franklin Road has the “Welcome to Franklin” sign and constituted the northern most boundary of the Village downtown. On the west side he wanted to create a special entrance into the Village by utilizing the proposed sidewalk and pedestrian space with texture and color. 2. Considering the “dead rock” area on the east side of Franklin, south of 14 Mile (in front of the Van Every House), it was currently proposed for the stones to be removed and the area graded. He considered this area to be the big “Welcome to Downtown” statement. The shrubs and grasses there would be interspersed with flowering plant material creating a variety of colors, and texture. Maintenance for this area was discussed. Gallasch suggested that James provide a Maintenance List and Schedule. James agreed and said he would consult with Jerry Johnson, Johnson Landscaping. The grading details of the hill with a horseshoe retaining wall around a tree were discussed. 3. The landscaping at the crosswalks needed to have robust plantings. He provided ideas for several crosswalks, including the one near the Franklin Grill, using the similar plant palate as seen at the dead rock/hillside area but broken up and subdivided by the sidewalks and the road itself.

All of the plant material seen at the crosswalks would be used and repeated in patterns up and down the streetscape. The subject of deer resistant plants was discussed. Some of the hardscape of gravel would be replaced with pockets of grass and landscape.

James showed a slide with colored pictures of the plant palate of all the different shrubs, grasses, perennial plants, and bulbs currently being proposed for the project. The idea was to take this palate, split it in a tangible way to where a continuous aesthetic and a continuous look would be created and repeated in various plant beds, but not used in every single one. Gordon confirmed this would be more of a random factor rather than a fully planned, manicured “English Garden-type arrangement look”. James stated there would be informal arrangements, taking into consideration the height and texture of the plants and when they bloom. The beds would have a “garden-like look” as opposed to a commercial approach of masses and repetitions. He further explained the process of deciding the number and size of the plants to go in each location.

Mulch was a topic of discussion and Hansen was interested in which of the plants were native to Michigan. James estimated that about 75% of them were and identified them.

Gallasch would like the Village to document the different stages of this project with before/during/and after photographs. This would be beneficial for the history of the Village.

In some areas, property owners may be contacted about planting trees on their property in order to achieve the canopy effect. Hansen requested color elevations of the areas along Franklin Road to better visualize the plans. Gordon was interested in the budgeting for all the landscaping. Krear stated that it was within the budget, with the exception of the hillside. It was noted that signs and lighting were also needed to be taken into consideration.

The approximate locations of the 29 trees had been identified on the current plan; however, the types of trees had not been finalized.

Each Council member expressed their positive thoughts and opinions about the plan.

Responding to Lamott's inquiry about plant bed edges, James noted that so far there was very little edging needed; the edges would either be roadway or sidewalk. In the instances where edging was needed they would be natural. Referencing the decision of planting flowering trees, Stakhiv stated that from her experience at the Library, she thought they were very pretty; however, very messy. James noted the potential problems with mature Oak trees, including some salt issues, some varieties tend to be more expensive than other trees, and in general they did better in natural environments.

Krear stated there was a meeting set up with the business and/or property owners on the west side of Franklin Road to discuss the downtown parking issue and share some of the details which had been discussed at previous meetings. Gallasch confirmed that notes of the meeting would be taken.

Stakhiv requested that pictures of the final plans be put up in the Library as had been done with the preliminary plans. The ones currently displayed have been very popular and created many positive discussions.

Lighting

Robert White, Illuminart, introduced himself and presented a preliminary lighting study of the crosswalks. There were two (2) goals for this meeting: prove the validity of the concepts that Tad Krear had put together and arrive at an agreement to provide the Village with attractive, economical, and highest quality lighting design solutions.

One of White's slides in his presentation was an example of the area for a new proposed crosswalk stretching across Franklin Road from the Post Office to the Village Green. In a chart with the light pole on the west side of the road, he calculated and graphed the illuminous intensity of light levels at the ground level distances (horizontal) and intensity of calculations on the Post Office building across the street (vertical).

Slides showed the different types and designs of light fixtures, pointing out how the lighting was focused (sideways, up or down), the lighting calculations, the lighting quality, and the amount of area covered. White explained the appropriateness of each element for Franklin's environment.

Lamott provided a picture of a light which had been part of the historic Franklin School. White explained this light had been well-designed as the light source was designed to mainly travel downward and a little off to the side. This was very appropriate for the Village back in the day.

As the project progressed and the design phase developed, lighting on buildings would be taken into consideration as it contributed to the overall downtown lighting concept, which was "less is more".

The height and materials of the pole itself were discussed. Several weeks ago, after driving through the Village, he took an estimated height measurement of a pole outside the Broughton House. He felt that 14 feet was an optimal height measured from the base to the bottom of the light fixture. The material options included wood and/or a combination of composites of metals, including steel and aluminum. The long term durability and maintenance of a pole also needed to be considered. Gallasch inquired if any of the poles had crash worthiness or safety features built into it if a car ran into it. White said they can be designed to include such features. Maintenance and prices of the poles were discussed. Depending on pricing, White preferred steel. Pricing, paint finishes and warranties would be factors in the decision. In case a light got damaged, the idea of purchasing an extra light was considered.

Gallasch requested that White and Krear provide Council with several recommendations for poles and lights and what they thought would look best in the Village. Functionality and durability should be considered in their choices which should be brought back to Council for consideration.

Hansen had questions about possibly adding power sources in the bases of the poles and Wi-Fi technology to the poles, as well as, the costs for such additions. Regarding the style of poles, Krear supported White's approach that the simpler and understated the better. Lamott paraphrased the guidelines from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) by saying that since the Village had never had lights it ought to choose a modern contemporary style. Further, the guidelines cautioned choosing something historic, as it would create a false sense of history. Therefore, something plain and simple would be appropriate. Lamott would like to send a picture of the chosen pole and fixture to SHPO for its approval.

Lisa Dunn, Déjà Vu owner, asked for a more detailed explanation of the charts designating the different light calculations shown in some of the slides of the actual downtown areas. When considering the locations of the lights at the crosswalks and intersections, White stated that lighting on the buildings would be taken into account. In Phase Two (2) of his work, because some of the building lights were so low, he might have some recommendations for the property owners.

White continued stating that safety was the goal of the lights at the crosswalks. Gordon was curious if the infrastructure would be such that additional light poles could be installed at a future

date? White answered in the affirmative. Gallasch even suggested that junction points be installed in the ground where, in the future, the Village might want to put an additional light.

A resident suggested an illuminated crosswalk be considered at Woodlore and Franklin Road.

White estimated a cost of the fixture to be \$500-\$800, the pole \$300-\$400, plus the installation. It would be around \$5,000 per light.

This project had three (3) parts: Address the crosswalks lighting quickly because it was scheduled, develop a lighting Ordinance, and Review the buildings to come up with suggestions as to how to control the lighting.

White confirmed he had the direction from the Council that he needed in order to proceed. Also, he had brought an example of one of the light fixtures to show the Council. After the meeting White took it out to one of the porches and lit it up.

Mason Miller of Main Street Franklin posed the question of whether the lighting was for the walkability around the downtown or was it for the safety of crossing Franklin Road. Stakhiv explained that the addition of the six (6) lights and the lights on the businesses should have a big impact on the downtown and accomplish both goals. Krear responded by saying they had heard from the earlier committee that it didn't want a cadence of lights marching downtown, as that was not Franklin. The purpose was to be very reserved and try to get the best light levels as possible with the least amount of lights.

David Goldberg, Willowgreen Ct., felt the objective was for downtown walkability. Because he perceived there would still be blocks without lighting, he suggested the installation of low bollard lighting along the downtown sidewalks from the Post Office to the Cider Mill.

Mason Miller wanted to know if a resident would feel safe walking around the community. Hansen's understanding was that the starting point for a walkable and safe downtown began with the putting up of light poles. However, multiple sources of lighting might also help in accomplishing this.

Krear said they would evaluate what it has, i.e. the height of the poles, and do an analysis of the areas of light and gaps of darkness.

Motion by Stakhiv, seconded by Gordon to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Gallasch, Gordon, Hansen, Lamott, Stakhiv

Nays: None

Absent: Saenz, Seltzer

Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Beke, Recording Secretary

Eileen H. Pulker, Clerk

Pamela Hansen, President