



City of Santa Barbara
Community Development

Memorandum

DATE: 10/4/07

TO: Street Tree Advisory Committee

FROM: Jeannette Candau, Redevelopment Specialist

SUBJECT: Casas las Granadas

Background

At the January 5, 2006 meeting of the STAC, a request put forward by City Public Works to remove four street trees in front of the Casas las Granadas affordable housing project at 21 E Anapamu St. was reviewed. The consideration was brought before STAC as a result of over two years of extensive public improvements in the area: the Granada Theatre Renovation, the Granada Garage Parking Structure and Office Building, and Casas las Granadas. These capital improvements included an alteration of the sidewalk to accommodate a pedestrian signaled crosswalk and, through improved use, increased pedestrian traffic along the 00 block of E Anapamu. At the time of review, four fruitless pear street trees were located in the middle of the pedestrian right-of-way in the mid-block of E Anapamu. The City felt that the locations of the trees jeopardized ADA compliance and created a safety issue.

At that time the Committee members and staff determined that the trees would interfere with the new sidewalk configuration, and should be removed with the provision that four (4) 24 inch box Pyrus calleryana 'Aristocrat' be planted as replacements.

Plaza Granada Conceptual Design

The installation of Plaza Granada will signal completion of the extensive capital improvements in the area. RDA staff would like to introduce to the Committee a conceptual landscape design proposed by County Landscape & Design for the open space in front of Casas las Granadas. The proposed development of this small urban plaza of approximately 3,000 ft², supports the unique opportunity to develop an innovative and sustainable landscape design within our historical downtown.

Sustainable and fossil fuel minimizing elements of the design include:

- Using recycled, salvaged or renewable building materials
- Installing locally sourced, native plants
- Installing plants that are pest and disease resistant and properly sized to reduce long-term maintenance
- Catching local run-off in an on-site swale feature for groundwater recharge

The proposed design approach for this area has also received the expressed participation of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and the Arts Advisory Committee. By incorporating literal and interpretive elements into the design, aesthetic and educational elements will draw people into the plaza and keep them engaged as they pass through the space. Public art, interesting details, and educational signage will all contribute to a feeling of discovery. Further, these elements of interest inform the passerby about conserving natural resources and reducing pollution and waste generation, thereby supporting the City's goal to be a leader in creating a sustainable community. Attached is a conceptual design for the space submitted by County Landscape & Design.

Discussion

Staff would like the Committee to consider the location and role of the *Pyrus calleryana* that are to be replaced with respect to this proposed design, the scale of the space that is being developed and the overarching City sustainability goals. We would suggest that, given the relatively small space and close adjacency to the street that Plaza Granada presents, locating the replacement trees within the Plaza would

- provide sufficient canopy
- serve overall design goals
- preserve pedestrian safety

Further, the use of native oak species, as opposed to flowering pear, as suggested by the proposed design would

- mirror the mature oaks across Anapamu Street in the library landscape
- support sustainability goals through the use of drought tolerant, long-living specimens

This project is still in its early conceptual stages. The RDA design contract with County Landscape & Design was presented to the RDA Board on 10/2/07, and is currently being finalized. It is our intent to inform you of this work and our ideas at the earliest opportunity. Your assistance and direction are greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please call me at extension 2624.

Jeannette Candau
Redevelopment Specialist