

**City of Santa Barbara**

Community Development, Housing and Redevelopment Division

Memorandum

DATE: October 22, 2008

TO: Park and Recreation Commission

FROM: Jeannette Candau, Redevelopment Specialist

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE WEST BEACH PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

The Redevelopment Agency Board appropriated a total of \$3,125,000 to the West Beach Pedestrian Improvement Project (Project) to improve the pedestrian connectivity from Stearns Wharf to the Harbor. The RDA requests that the Commission review and provide comments regarding Project elements that may affect the Parks and Recreation Department, specifically proposed landscape design elements located in and adjacent to Cabrillo Boulevard.

Primary elements of the design include:

- The area between Los Baños and the Wading Pool is proposed to receive several treatments including expanding the walkway and reducing the wading pool turf area by 3 feet, reconfiguring the benches and planter bed at Cabrillo Boulevard to allow better access and visibility, and creating a small picnic area with tables at the Southwest corner of the Wading Pool
- The entire sidewalk on the ocean-side of Cabrillo, between Castillo Street and State Street, will be replaced with new, similar to the new East Cabrillo sidewalk
- The two new pedestrian refuge islands and all existing palm tree wells along the south side of Cabrillo will be irrigated and planted with low-growing, hardy, landscaping;
- Installation of enhanced pedestrian crossings across Cabrillo Boulevard at Chapala Street, Ambassador Park, Bath Street, and Castillo Street;
- Construction of plazas along the Cabrillo promenade with new landscaping and public art at Chapala Street, Ambassador Park, Bath Street, and Los Baños;
- Improved pedestrian amenities along Cabrillo Boulevard including new trash / recycle units throughout the Project Area, replaced benches and bike racks at Los Baños, and new relocated picnic tables from the ficus tree area, and;
- Flagpoles with commemorative flags within the Waterfront Parking lot along Cabrillo Boulevard and the exiting pedestrian path between Los Baños and Marina 4;
- Improved lighting and signage.

Background

The Project was last reviewed by the Park and Recreation Commission in March 28, 2007. Since that time the Project has received considerable design review and has evolved as a result.

The Street Tree Advisory Committee (STAC) reviewed the Project in September 2007 and commented upon the proposed relocation of four palm trees along Cabrillo Boulevard, the removal of mature myoporum from the Sea Landing area, and the removal of 3 ficus trees from the area adjacent to the West Beach wading pool. Per the STAC comments, the Project was revised and removal of the myoporum and the ficus was withdrawn from the proposal. (Anticipated public objection to the removal of the ficus due to nesting habitat loss also contributed to not removing ficus).

The Project was submitted to the Development Application Review Team (DART) in June 2007. Through the DART process, City departments engaged the Project and advised its design and scope to better meet guidelines. In response to Park and Recreation staff input, the amount of proposed new landscaping was reduced from 12,336 square feet to 1,172 square feet of new and 1,612 square feet of existing landscaping to be enhanced. The Project was deemed complete by DART in April 2008.

The Project received favorable comments from the Harbor Commission on June 21, 2007. The Transportation and Circulation Committee approvingly reviewed the Project on April 27, 2008 as did the Arts Advisory Committee (AAC) on May 22, 2008.

On August 8, 2007 and April 30, 2008 the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) reviewed the Project, provided comments, and granted a continuance to preliminary review. The RDA received direction from the HLC to increase the Project's landscaping component in order to enhance the overall pedestrian experience of the area. It recommended that shade trees be incorporated at the plazas, and that the pedestrian refuge islands at the Cabrillo pedestrian crossings be landscaped.

The project was presented to the Planning Commission (PC) on May 8, 2008, and a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) was approved for the Project. In addition to other comments, the PC advised that increased landscaping be included in the Project, and that any trees added to the design be selected carefully to provide a high enough canopy to maintain view corridors to the ocean. Additionally, the PC expressed concern about the area beneath the ficus trees, including the picnic benches located there. The PC and Parks and Recreation Staff have recommended relocation of the picnic tables and that an alternative to a hardscape surface material be used in that location.

The Santa Barbara Audubon Society (SBAS) appealed the Planning Commission's decision citing that elements of the plan developed sandy beach habitat and were in conflict with the City's Local Coastal Plan and General Plan. However, an agreement between SBAS and the RDA was reached, and as a result this element of the Project is being withdrawn.

The STAC reviewed the current application on October 2, 2008, which included the replacement of two Mexican palms located across from Ambassador Park with Canary Island palms, and provided favorable comments.

The HLC provided preliminary review to the current application on October 15, 2008. It recommended that additional plantings be added to the north-side of the Cabrillo intersections, that study is given to converting a portion of the turf area at the wading pool to drought tolerant landscaping, and that study be given to the inclusion of additional, appropriate shade-tree species, Monterey cypress in particular.

Discussion

The Project currently includes 3,908 square feet of new landscaping. Proposed new landscaping would be irrigated (as specified by Parks and Recreation Staff through the DART process) and located within the newly constructed plazas and existing street tree wells along the ocean-side of Cabrillo Boulevard. The department/division designated to maintain the new streetscape enhancements along Cabrillo Boulevard has not been determined. The plant pallet for this Project will be based upon that reviewed by the Park and Recreation Commission and approved by the HLC for the East Cabrillo Sidewalk Project (Attachment A).

Recommendation

Review and comment upon the proposed landscape elements of the West Beach Pedestrian Improvement Project.



City of Santa Barbara
Community Development

Memorandum

DATE: April 1, 2008

TO: Michael Berman, West Beach Pedestrian Improvement Project
Case Planner

FROM: Jeannette Candau, Redevelopment Specialist

SUBJECT: East Cabrillo Sidewalk Project Plant Palette

As requested by the Parks & Recreation Department in the Advisory Comments portion of our DART letter, below is the planting palette used in the East Cabrillo (East Beach) Sidewalk Project. The planting list for the West Beach Pedestrian Improvement Project will be based upon this East Beach plant list.

HLC-Approved Plant List for East Cabrillo Sidewalk Project

Aloe 'Blue Elf'
Aloe ciliaris
Aloe maculata
Aloe striata
Arctois 'Sun Spot Orange'
Convolvulus sabatius 'Moroccan Beauty'
Drosanthemum florbundum
Drosanthemum hispidum
Dymondia margaretae 'Silver Carpet'
Epilobium canum 'Catalina'
Erigeron glaucus 'Bountiful'
Gazania rigens - Daybreak Mix
Limonium perezii
Oscularia deltoides
Pandorea jasminoides 'Alba'
Pandorea jasminoides 'Rosea'
Pandorea pandorana 'Golden Showers'
Santolina pinnata neapolitana 'Lemon Queen'
Trachelospermum asiaticum