

BANCROFT ST PROJECT – OLD WEST END DESIGN REVIEW TEAM PRELIMINARY STREET TREE AND GATEWAY PLAN COMMENTS

January 22, 2014

I must apologize to you all as a recent change in my cancer surgery reconstruction process on my scalp has lead my surgeon to suddenly schedule the surgery for my final closure tonight at 7:30 pm and I must be at the hospital by 5:15 pm. Up until yesterday at 4:00 I was fully prepared to come to this meeting but some things we have no control over and this is one of them for me.

I have turned some drawings over to Dave, Doug and Stephanie to bring to the meeting tonight and they can explain them to you but I also thought it might be helpful if I also offered a few comments ahead of time so you might better understand my thinking.

STREET TREES: If you recall the email I sent to Tammy Michalak on October 22, 2013, in response to several questions she had regarding street trees, I indicated that Stephanie Miller, the State's Regional Urban Forester, walked the entire project limits with several of us to give her professional assessment of the existing trees.

There are 44 trees total from Ashland to Glenwood, with 19 trees on the north side and 25 trees on the south. The vast majority of the trees are Norway Maples. Stephanie's recommendation is that all of the trees on the north side should be removed and replaced with multiple species that will not become taller than around 30' to avoid future heavy pruning from Edison because of the Primary Overhead Electric all along that side. She concluded that 10 possibly 11 trees on the south side "are in fair enough condition and good enough form to salvage for a temporary canopy."

Yesterday we had an in-house design team meeting with the Forestry Division to discuss the tree strategy I was proposing. They are willing to go along with efforts to save the 10 trees that Stephanie believes are worth the effort but, for the most part, their experience with total street reconstruction is that it will be difficult for those trees to survive. Engineering Services is willing to do everything possible during construction to help in their survival however if things are discovered during construction that Forestry believes will create an unsafe condition or more of the root system or existing canopy is severely damaged during construction, a decision may need to be made to remove a tree that we previously felt was worth saving.

The Plan you will see this evening shows Medium Size Trees on the north side, taking into consideration the necessary visibility setbacks from each intersection, existing drives, walks, bus stops and other conditions that prohibit a tree location. The trees are spaced at 25' on centers as shown.

On the south side where we do not have the Primary Overhead Electrical I have shown Large Canopy Shade Trees, again taking into consideration the intersection setbacks, existing drives, walks, bus stops and other conditions. The trees are spaced on 35' centers as shown.

Its important to note that each tree location is subject to change based on the final field conditions after all street, sidewalk, curb, bus stops, utilities, street lighting, traffic signs and any other elements that may become part of the final construction. The spacing of the trees may also change, resulting in a change in the number of trees as decisions are made about what species will be planted.

In order to prevent a losses such as we have sustain with the American Elms and more recently the Ash Trees it is recommended that we not plant too much of the same tree species along the street. The Plan notes that, on the north side, we will have one specie of Medium Size Trees on the north side, from Glenwood to Scottwood, another species from Scottwood to Collingwood and another specie from Collingwood to Ashland. On the south side we will have one specie of Large Canopy Shade tree from Ashland to Collingwood, another specie from Collingwood to Scottwood, and another specie from Scottwood to Glenwood.

Stephanie Miller suggested several Medium Size and Large Canopy Shade Trees for our consideration and we discussed several possibilities at yesterdays meeting. The Forestry Division is now going to review the plan and come back to us with some recommendations based on their experience in situations such as Bancroft and based on availability from the various sources that the City purchases plant material from.

GATEWAY CONCEPTS: You will note I have included some concepts for a major Gateway treatment at the west end of Bancroft and a more minor treatment at the east end.

My thoughts are to create a simple but elegant statement that identifies that you are entering and leaving a special part of the City and one that utilizes elements that reflect the architectural character of many structures in the Old West End.

The main feature for the west Gateway are two 14' high by 4' square, brick piers with a cast stone capital where "Old West End" might be simply engraved on all four faces, surrounded by a field of recycled brick taken from the reconstructed Bancroft. Recycled brick is also shown as accents on several other corners of Glenwood and surrounding the location for a possible Toledo Museum of Art sign at the southwest corner of Glenwood and Bancroft directing visitors down Glenwood to the Museum.

Other elements of the west Gateway Concept are to reach out and begin to capture the I-75 interchange with a field of Fountain Grass containing Bald Cypress trees on regular 20' centers located in the triangular lawn area formed by the west and the newly located east bound exit lanes from I-75. This will require approval from ODOT.

Another thought I had was to explore a partnership among the City of Toledo, ODOT, the Old West End Assoc. and the Toledo Museum of Art to develop and maintain a simple, but elegant, landscape design for the entire interchange which is the major access to the Old West End and the Toledo Museum of Art from northbound I-75. Examples of such improvements exist in other communities around Ohio and maybe we could accomplish such an improvement at this location.

Once again I am sorry I cannot be with you this evening, and believe me I would much rather be talking about the project than what and where I will be, but I know it must be done and I am looking forward to putting this chapter behind me. Hope you have a great meeting tonight and stay warm!

dick

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