



MEMORANDUM

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: AILEEN NYGAARD, ASSISTANT PLANNER

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING PLANS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 12-010; ARROYO GRANDE SHOPPING CENTER RENOVATION; APPLICANT- PHIL FONTES, GRAND AND ELM PROPERTIES; LOCATION- 1205 EAST GRAND AVENUE (AT SOUTH ELM STREET)

DATE: MARCH 18, 2014

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission approve by voice vote the landscape and lighting plans.

BACKGROUND:

The renovation project was approved by the City Council on June 11, 2013. The conditions of approval require that the landscape plan and the lighting plan return to the Architectural Review Committee and Planning Commission prior to building permit approval. The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) reviewed the plans on February 3, 2014 and March 3, 2014. The ARC recommended site alterations for the gateway to be located at street level and the addition of decorative paving on the adjacent sidewalk. The Tree Guild reviewed the landscape plan and made recommendations which the applicant incorporated, with the exception of a few trees as supported by the ARC.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:

The Architectural Review Committee considered the Tree Guild recommendations and the applicant's proposed modifications, and accepted the following proposal:

- The tree planting along East Grand Avenue and South Elm Street will be *Metrosideros excelsus* - there will be one tree added to the area in front of Building A and one tree added to South Elm Street (as shown),
- Two *Arbutus marina* along each side of the main entrance drive instead of three each (as shown),
- No additional tree needed behind Building D, and
- No tree is shown in the parking aisle planter between Building B and D since this planter may be too small for a tree.

Missing planters at the rear of Building F, G, and H will be added to the construction documents to allow vines to be grown on the trellis structures.

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A maintenance program note has been added to the Landscape Plan to guide the pruning of the privet hedge to a height no more than 42", to maintain shrubs in their natural form and to allow shrubs to overlap their growth.

Site engineering produced changes to the main gateway pedestrian connection on East Grand Avenue. The gateway feature was added by the Planning Commission in order to provide required pedestrian connectivity with the site. The intent of the gateway was to actively invite pedestrians into the site and lead them to an outdoor seating plaza. Locating the gateway at street level and additional decorative sidewalk paving provide a visible entrance to the new pedestrian ramp and stairs. An approximately 3' tall retaining wall runs the full length of the East Grand Avenue sidewalk in front of Building A and with only a 3' wide planter along the back of sidewalk, the wall will require a guardrail. This sunken arrangement has the benefit of screening the drive-thru from the street level and strengthens the visual connection between the active space at the street and on the site, which the ARC agreed would meet the original intent.

The Landscape Plan includes the following responses to the required conditions of approval:

Parking lot

9. Increase decorative paving at East Grand Avenue and throughout center for pedestrian connections.

The pedestrian paths of travel are shown as colored stamped concrete and include banding along the East Grand Avenue entrances and the main entrance median. A section has also been added to the sidewalk area in front of the gateway feature.

10. Expand the planter at Elm Street around the monument sign.

Final placement of monument signs within planter areas will be evaluated with the building permit. The sign placement will need to comply with the 15-20' sight safety triangles.

12. Reduce the driveway widths to reduce the pedestrian crossing width and add special paving. Driveways shall be constructed per commercial City Standards detail.

Pedestrian crossings at driveway openings on East Grand Avenue are shown as special paving and will provide a visual reminder to drivers and pedestrians that this is an interaction zone.

16. Provide alternate tree species and bring landscape plan back to ARC prior to Building permit. Existing palms to be reused.

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The existing palms on Elm Street are shown to remain. The existing palms on East Grand will not be retained due to poor health conditions.

18. Add railing on north side of Building A plaza on East Grand Avenue.

Railing is shown between the outdoor plaza and the drive –thru aisle. Railing will also be required on the retaining wall.

53. No trees or shrubs to be planted in the Sight Distance Triangle. Low ground cover only.

During building permit review, any landscape material taller than 3' within the sight safety triangles at the driveway entrances will be replaced with a low growing plant.

104. Backflow valves shall be hidden by landscaping.

Screening will be verified during building plan check.

106. Shopping cart storage areas shall be shown on the landscape plan.

There are four(4) shopping cart corrals shown on the plans.

107. Parking lot trees:

- a. *A Tristania species tree shall be located centrally in the parking strip in front of Building D.*
- b. *Tristania species are recommended in the central parking area to provide year round shade and Chinese pistache are recommended at the ends of aisles for seasonal accent color.*

Tristania trees are shown centrally located in the parking area with Pistache trees providing an accent along the main drive aisles.

110. Applicant shall consult with the Arroyo Grande in Bloom Public Art Committee on the design of the fountain area.

The Public Art Committee was consulted for available participation at this time with the fountain design. The fountain has a circular form and a sheet flow design with potential opportunity to incorporate art within the tile design. The project design team is currently working with the art committee.

Street Trees

51. Trees shall be planted (within) a minimum of 10 feet behind the edge of the sidewalk.

52. Install root barriers for all trees planted adjacent to curb, gutter and sidewalk to prevent damage due to root growth.

56. Tree wells on Elm Street need to be removed and replaced.

There are no new street trees proposed with this project. The street tree requirements and details required by the conditions will be evaluated with the building permit.

Poplar Street

14. Add landscape along Poplar Street. Sidewalk on Poplar shall be replaced per City Standards with an 8 ft pave-out.

54. Existing asphalt concrete between existing wall and sidewalk on Poplar Street shall be removed and replaced with landscaping.

55. Potential removal and replacement of the Magnolia trees on Poplar Street shall be reviewed by the Arroyo Grande Tree Guild, and followed by final approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

As required, the Arroyo Grande Tree Guild reviewed the existing Magnolia trees and asphalt strip located on Poplar Street. The Tree Guild recommended retaining the existing Magnolia trees and root pruning to correct impacts to paving. Root barriers are to be installed after pavement repair. The asphalt ground cover is to be removed and replaced with a bark mulch and curb at the back of sidewalk. A Creeping Fig vine is to be planted along the wall to provide vertical greenery and limit the amount of irrigation needed for this area. Supplemental water is not recommended for the Magnolia trees in order to limit growth.

The Lighting Plan includes the following response to the required conditions of approval:

13. Lighting Plan details shall be added and return to ARC with LED parking lot lights.

Site lighting is accomplished through a variety of building lights, parking lot pole lights and pedestrian scale pole lights. The 15' tall pedestrian scale lights are located at the East Grand Avenue gateway plaza and along the main entrance drive. The light standards will have a decorative pole and hanging bell style fixture. The main parking lot light fixtures are proposed to be complementary and nondescript in order to 'disappear' within the context of the building details and landscaping. The fixtures have a rounded top and the standards are 30' tall, similar to the height of street lights. The existing light poles are approximately 25' for comparison. Fixture colors are a dark bronze to complement the building accents. The building lights and wall sconces are depicted on the building elevations.

The photometric plan shows the average site foot-candles as 5.3 foot-candles with a maximum of 15.7 foot-candles. For comparison, some jurisdictions typically recommend 2-10 foot-candles for parking lots and 5-10 foot-candles at building entrances. An auto

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dealership may have 15 foot-candles on average and gas stations may have 20 foot-candles. If the LED lights are too bright upon installation, wattages may be adjusted to reduce the brightness. The lights adjacent to the residential uses will have shields installed to allow any adjustment necessary to prevent glare intrusion.

The Municipal Code section 16.48.090 currently sets forth lighting requirements adjacent to residential uses and provides an average illumination for parking areas utilizing the measurement of foot-candles.

Municipal Code 16.48.090 Lighting.

- A. All outdoor lighting associated with nonresidential uses shall be shielded and directed away from surrounding residential uses. Such lighting shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles of illumination beyond the property containing the nonresidential use, and shall not blink, flash, oscillate or be of unusually high intensity of brightness.

- B. All parking areas of five or more spaces shall have an average of one-half foot-candle illumination per square foot of parking area for visibility and security during hours of darkness. Wiring for the illumination shall be underground unless existing overhead lines can serve the need without any additional overhead lines. Each parking area of five or more spaces existing prior to the effective date of this section that is enlarged, constructed, altered or changed from its previous configuration shall be subject to the above illumination requirements.

The photometric plan meets the minimum requirement for safety lighting and the maximum allowance for residential adjacency. A code comparison with the City of San Luis Obispo indicates that 10 foot-candles is the maximum allowable illumination for this type of commercial use and pole heights are limited to 21' as a means to promote 'night sky' preservation.

Since LED light is more aligned with the sensitivity of the human eye and fewer lumens offer more effective illumination, there is less spillover light. LED output color is also more similar to daylight and provides improved color rendering over High Pressure Sodium lighting. This factor results in less light pollution and color spectrums that are more aligned with natural light.

ALTERNATIVES:

The following alternatives are provided for the Planning Commission's consideration:

- Approve the landscape and lighting plans;
- Modify the landscape and lighting plans;
- Provide direction to staff.

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ADVANTAGES:

The proposed landscape and lighting meet the requirements set forth by the project conditions of approval and will improve the vitality of the shopping center with contemporary aesthetics and pedestrian amenities.

DISADVANTAGES:

There are no disadvantages identified.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Environmental review was completed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for the approved project and further review is not required.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENT:

The Public Hearing agenda was posted on the City's website on March 14, 2014 and this item was agendized as a non-public hearing item.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Architectural Review Committee Minutes; February 3 and March 3, 2014
2. Gateway Arch and Building elevations
3. Lighting specifications
4. Landscape and Lighting Plans

Rita Belluz-Sias and John Sias, applicants, and Travis Rushing, representative, all spoke in support of the project.

Committee members asked questions regarding the project's conformance with the Village Design Guidelines, clarification of rock type proposed for the structure, type of wood siding being proposed, and design details regarding the new proposed windows.

Committee members provided comments regarding the project, such as the details of the project have yet to fully be identified, discussion on the appropriateness of evaluating the project against the Village Design Guidelines, and other aspects of the project. Discussion between the applicants and the ARC followed; the ARC reassured the applicants that the Committee is trying to help the applicants proceed with their proposed modifications.

Barbara Harmon made a motion, seconded by Chuck Fellows, to continue review of the project so that it may return to the ARC with the following items addressed:

1. Specific color and style of rock veneer selected;
2. A color that complements the bronze of the proposed windows;
3. The rock veneer to terminate below the lower window of the tower, while wrapping around the side to the top of the stairs; and
4. Approval of the windows as proposed windows due to multi-pane windows not being a requirement of the Village Design Guidelines.

Following discussion of the approval of sliding windows, Chuck Fellows withdrew his seconding the motion. Warren Hoag seconded the motion.

The motion carried on a 3-2 roll-call vote:

Barbara Harmon –Yes	Mike Peachey - No
Chuck Fellows – No	Lan George - Yes
Warren Hoag – Yes	

6.b. **CONSIDERATION OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 12-010; LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING PLANS; LOCATION: 1205 EAST GRAND AVENUE (AT SOUTH ELM STREET); APPLICANT: ARROYO GRANDE SHOPPING CENTER (GRAND & ELM PROPERTIES); REPRESENTATIVE: PHIL FONTES**

Staff Contact: Aileen Nygaard

Assistant Planner Aileen Nygaard provided the staff report for the project.

Committee members asked questions regarding the health of palm trees on E. Grand Avenue frontage, specifics of the conditions of approval for the project, height of the light poles, and other details of the proposed lighting.

Phil Fontes, Grand & Elm Properties, and Pam Brown, Hirsch & Associates, spoke in support of the project.

Committee members asked questions regarding the project's lighting plan, details of the proposed trellis, consideration of glare on neighboring residential properties, landscape maintenance, and clarification of where specific lights were proposed to be located.

Committee members provided comments regarding the Tree Guild's review of the proposed landscape plan, consideration of signage when asking for additional street trees, that some lighting fixtures are oddly contemporary, and excitement for the project moving forward.

Barbara Harmon made a motion, seconded by Chuck Fellows, to continue review of the project so that it may return to the ARC with the following items addressed:

1. The applicant review the Tree Guild's suggestions to the landscape plan and return with alternatives;
2. The primary walkways in the center to be stamped and textured concrete as originally conditioned;
3. The Galleon LED, Mesa LED, 2365 LED, and sconces be revised to appear less contemporary and match the new architecture of the buildings to provide continuity in the center; and
4. Lighting adjacent to residences near the west property line be shielded and reduced in overall intensity (candles) of lighting.

The motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote:

Chuck Fellows made a motion, seconded by Barbara Harmon, and unanimously carried, to continue the meeting passed 5:00 pm.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.a. Election of Vice Chair.

Chuck Fellows nominated Mike Peachey as Vice Chair of the ARC. The motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote.

Barbara Harmon made a motion, seconded by Lan George, to recommend approval of the project as submitted.

The motion carried on a 4-0 voice vote.

6.b. CONTINUED CONSIDERATION OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 12-010; ARROYO GRANDE SHOPPING CENTER LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING PLANS; LOCATION: 1205 E. GRAND AVENUE (AT SOUTH ELM STREET); APPLICANT: ARROYO GRANDE SHOPPING CENTER (GRAND & ELM PROPERTIES); REPRESENTATIVE: PHIL FONTES

Staff Contact: Aileen Nygaard

Assistant Planner Aileen Nygaard provided the staff report for the project.

Committee members asked questions regarding tree mitigation already included in the project, possibility of adding stamped concrete in the public sidewalk, and if the applicant had received the Tree Guild's recommendations prior to the meeting.

Phil Fontes and Pam Brown, representatives, spoke in support of the project.

Committee members asked questions regarding the congruency of proposed lighting, reasons for the gateway being moved in the site, current parking ratio for the center, and reasons for not including additional trees in specific locations.

Committee members provided comments regarding the need for more trees but in consideration of safety, the desire to have the gateway moved as close to the public sidewalk as possible to draw pedestrians into the center, and the updated lighting.

Barbara Harmon made a motion, seconded by Chuck Fellows, to recommend to the Planning Commission approval of the project with the following conditions:

1. Lighting is acceptable as proposed;
2. The gateway feature should be located as close to the street and public access as the site will allow;
3. Stamped, colored concrete included in the public sidewalk from the site to the curb to draw pedestrians into the site; and
4. Support the landscape plan as proposed with two (2) additional trees, one located between the storefronts on E. Grand Avenue and one on Elm Street.

The motion carried on a 4-0 voice vote.