

NOTES FROM MEETING 14 OF LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE – APRIL 5, 2021

Present were : *Gerry Alfano, Destinee Astheimer, Tony Baker, Judson Clinton, Debby Davis, Keith Francies, Steve Galanti, Sarah Healy, Tim Knowles, Christina Larson, Elizabeth Link, Nick Piornak, Walker Sanders, Jeff Sovich, Judy Stalder, Zach Strickland, Juhann Waller.*

Facilitator Teresa Lockamy opened the meeting with greetings for the attendees, and reviewed the agenda. The first item was a report on the survey of the Downtown Residents Association on attitudes towards trees in the downtown area, presented by Elizabeth Link. Since the previous meeting, the survey had been opened up to all Greensboro resident, and 206 additional responses had been received. Trends in the survey showed that there was a very strong response in favor of planting trees in downtown, and a lesser response for landscaping adjacent to parking lots.

In a comment in the previous meeting it had been suggested that a purpose statement was needed for the downtown streetscape requirements, to guide decisions on Type 1 and 2 Modifications. Ms. Link next presented the Statement of Scope and Purpose for the Landscape Manual, and asked if the group felt that it would adequately cover the downtown landscaping ordinance as well. Tim Knowles suggested that mitigation of heat island effect should be specifically added to the list of reasons for the requirements.

Next, Ms. Link presented Section 30-10-3 of the Land Development Ordinance, “Urban Landscaping Requirements”, which had been edited to include the CB district in applicable districts, and to include requirements for planting street trees and landscape buffers for parking lots. After reviewing the changes and new requirements, the first question was regarding the applicability of the option for paying fee-in-lieu as opposed to installing a streetscape as planned by the Dept. of Transportation. Sarah Healy asked about the circumstances in which it would be applicable. Ms. Link replied that the that it would be applicable to limited circumstances in which all of the following applied: 1) The Greensboro Dept. of Transportation (GDOT) has finalized streetscape plans for the street where the development is taking place, 2) GDOT plans to construct the streetscape within the next 4 years, and 3) the streetscape alters road width or design in a way that would be unsafe or impractical to only alter the portion of the street where the development is taking place.

Anthony Baker asked about the change from a 4’ tall wall to a 6’ in terms of how it relates to safety. MS. Link noted that the taller wall would be on a boundary between a parking lot and residential property, not adjacent the street, and be harder to jump over. It would also offer screening from lights and noise in the parking lot.

Tim Knowles noted that the screening requirements for travel lanes might be incompatible with alleys in the downtown area. Ms. Link agreed that this could be problematic and would look at the wording.

Ms. Link then reviewed the elements that would go into the Landscape Manual, and noted that there may be edits to the specifications for tree wells after discussion with Water Resources regarding underground utilities. Mr. Knowles noted that some of the tree wells downtown used the old granite curbing instead of concrete curb and suggested that granite be noted as an alternate method to the

concrete. In further discussion Mr. Knowles noted that flexibility was very important in order to be able to make the most of tight downtown real estate.

Keith Francies brought up the issue of irrigation and wondered why it is not being required in the specifications. Ms. Link noted that because of the difficulties of maintenance that Transportation had said that they don't want to include irrigation. Mr. Francies asked that a study be made of other cities' ordinances regarding requiring irrigation.

Ms. Lockamy then requested if there were any other thoughts or comments from the group. There being none, the meeting was adjourned.