

Memorandum

To: The City of Asbury Park
From: FHI Studio and French & Parrello Associates
Date: 06.27.22
Project: Main Street Streetscape Improvements, Asbury Park
Subject: Public Information Center Report 06.23.22

Meeting Summary

Michael Drobny and Sarah Rebar Bisaha from French & Parrello Associates (FPA) were present to give the Public Information Center presentation and answer questions. Michele Alonso and James Bonanno from the City of Asbury Park were present to facilitate the meeting and answer questions, as well. Adam Tecza and Laura Nagle were present to collect and report on public comments. Following the presentation, the questions and answers section began.

- **Construction conflicts:**
 - One member of the public requested the PowerPoint be posted online to share. They emphasized the meeting time conflicted with local businesses' hours, and therefore many business owners were unable to attend the meeting. They stated their pressing concerns were understanding where construction may impact business operations and where construction will specifically be occurring. The consultant team confirmed the presentation will be recorded, and a video and the materials will be posted on the City's website. They also responded that the construction schedule is to be determined.
- **Tree height:**
 - Other concerns were shared regarding the proposed trees' heights blocking business signs. The consultant team responded that the trees' branches will need to be pruned at their base to keep signs visible and above a person's height while walking.
- **Tree maintenance:**
 - There was concern expressed about who will maintain the trees, which the City confirmed tree maintenance is their responsibility.
- **Tree location:**
 - There was shared concern amongst several members of the public that the trees will impact parking spots and block car doors being able to fully open. The consultant team explained the tree grates will be flush with the sidewalk. The consultant team also responded that the tree location is targeted to be between parking spots where the trunk will not affect car doors.

- There was a request for the proposed trees along Deal Lake Drive to be placed differently. A member of the public suggested the trees are planted as cluster nodes to provide sections of unobstructed views of the lake.
- **Type of tree:**
 - There were several comments about the type of tree selected. There was question that the sycamore could survive on the street and concern that they require wet environments.
 - There was also concern about the trees' biodiversity to support other species like insects and birds. A member of the public requested there be an analysis comparing the number of species supported by a proposed tree's ecosystem. They referenced ongoing DOT work at the Asbury Circle as strategic species to plant instead. They complimented the Willow Oak selection, but they expressed concern about sycamores and honey locust.
- **Bike racks:**
 - There was a request that bike racks are strategically placed according to popular destinations. Instead of bike racks being installed at fixed intervals along the blocks, several members of the public emphasized that they would need multiple bike racks placed beside popular locations for bikes.
- **Alternative designs:**
 - There were several requests that the project be expanded to include the following elements. The project team explained that the scope of the project was fixed at the time of the application and that the City is pursuing several of the projects through other grant programs.
 - Putting sidewalks along the Deal Lake Drive.
 - Placing bump-out and curb extensions along Deal Lake Drive.
 - Converting the median along Deal Lake Drive into a landscaped median and/or creating pedestrian refuge islands at especially long intersections.
 - A greater focus on the beautification of Deal Lake Drive.
 - Addressing the 3 concrete boat launches
 - There was a request for trees to be incorporated as a green infrastructure initiative to collect and filter stormwater.
 - There was a request for the plan to include consolidation of signs on Main Street as part of the streetscape plan. Several members of the public expressed concern that the number of poles along the sidewalk detracted from their experiences while walking.
 - There was a request for benches to be included in the plan. There was specific concern about benches and bus shelters at transit stops along Main Street and Deal Lake Drive.