

North Little Rock Tree Board Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2017
At the Intersection of McCain Boulevard and North Hills Boulevard

The North Little Rock Tree Board meeting was convened at 2:02 p.m. by Chairman Ian Hope. The following members were present: Ian Hope, Bert Turner, Frank Otto, and City Clerk Diane Whitbey. Council Member Murry Witcher was absent.

The following members of the North Little Rock City Beautiful Commission were also present: Gayle Fisher, Susan Langley, Joyce Brewer and Becky Hight. City of North Little Rock Neighborhood Services Director Dan Scott, Street Department Director Patrick Lane and North Little Rock Electric Department Assistant General Manager Scott Springer, and Council Members Debi Ross and Beth White were also present.

Unfinished Business: The purpose of the meeting on site was to continue discussion from the previous meeting regarding the medians along McCain.

Goals are:

- Visual – Beautification, provide an inviting corridor into the city
- Must be low maintenance
- Use planting materials that are hardy and require little water; height consideration

Mrs. Fisher advised Mr. Al Osteergard had offered to pay for plants in the median if the city could provide irrigation when he was alive. However, it was not financially feasible. Mr. Clark McGlothin's father offered to redo the brick planters at the time as well. However, both men have passed away.

Several members suggested asking business owners of properties along McCain (The Ashley Group, McCain Mall, etc.) who would benefit from a beautification project to contribute funds. Council Member Ross also suggested an "Adopt an Island" program where local nurseries or landscapers could adopt an island and maintain the materials planted in it. In exchange, they would receive recognition for their adopted spot.

Irrigation was discussed. Considerations include the cost of digging and installation. Council Member Ross suggested Bayou Swales as a way to retain water. Mr. Lane said it would be possible to put in irrigation lines, however, it would require coming in from the side of McCain and going under each of the turn lanes. The costs would add up quickly.

Discussion also included whether or not to keep the existing brick planters or leave them and resurface them with rock to make them more visually appealing. Mrs. Hight suggested removing the shrubs, putting in super soil and replanting.

Vegetation discussion included replacing remaining grass and weeds and replanting the planters and trees. Types of vegetation discussed included Hornbeam trees, Monkey (Mondo) Grass, Low growing Junipers and drought hardy vegetation. Crepe Myrtles, Pampas Grass and Yuka plants were also mentioned.

Ms. Langley liked the desert concept. Discussion then evolved to the possibility of alternating the appearance of the islands, by alternating between rocks and hard scape and vegetation and boulders.

Street lights were also discussed. It was suggested that lights similar to those in the Argenta area be put in. Lights would cost between \$8,000 and \$10,000 each. Mr. Springer was asked if it was possible to put the light pole lines

underground. Mr. Springer said the cost would be about \$20 per foot to bore underground. Mr. Lane, said that would be the time to install irrigation. Mr. Springer further advised providing adequate traffic lighting would be an issue and poles would need to be at least 25 feet tall. Mr. Springer said they have a lot of light poles hit by cars in the area and are replacing them monthly.

Mr. Lane said each of the island areas needed to include a concrete toe of about 8 to 10 feet since vehicles run over the ends often which damages the vegetation.

Mr. Springer suggested not doing every island in the beginning, but to pick one to focus on and see how it turned out. Mr. Lane suggested the one in the area of the Firestone Store (at McCain Mall).

The main concern was what the project would cost and where the money would come from. Another concern was where the money would come from long-term to maintain the islands, etc.

New Business: None was discussed.

The next meeting will be held in January, 2018, at City Hall, City Clerk's Office.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Chairman, Ian Hope

Secretary, Diane Whitbey