

APPROVED

**CITY OF EDMONDS
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN BOARD**

May 4, 2016

Chair Guenther called the meeting of the Architectural Design Board to order at 7:00 p.m., at the City Council Chambers, 250 - 5th Avenue North, Edmonds, Washington.

Board Members Present

Cary Guenther, Chair
Tom Walker, Vice Chair
Brian Borofka
Joe Herr
Lauri Strauss

Board Members Absent

Staff Present

Mike Clugston, Associate Planner
Karin Noyes, Recorder

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER STRAUSS MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2016 BE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. BOARD MEMBER WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

BOARD MEMBER BOROFKA MOVED THAT THE AGENDA BE ACCEPTED AS PRESENTED. BOARD MEMBER STRAUSS SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REQUESTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

No one in the audience indicated a desire to address the Board during this portion of the meeting.

ELECTION OF 2016 OFFICERS

BOARD MEMBER BROADWAY NOMINATED BOARD MEMBER GUENTHER TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE BOARD IN 2016. BOARD MEMBER BOROFKA SECONDED THE NOMINATION, WHICH WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD.

BOARD MEMBER STRAUSS NOMINATED BOARD MEMBER WALKER TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD IN 2016. BOARD MEMBER BOROFKA SECONDED THE NOMINATION, WHICH WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD.

MINOR PROJECT: EDMONDS VETERAN'S PLAZA

Mr. Clugston explained that the project is being presented for information purposes. The intent is to have the Board hear the presentation, provide comments and suggestions, and then make a motion of support.

Brian Bishop, Site Workshop, provided a presentation about the project. He noted the location of the project, and provided an aerial photograph to illustrate the existing development on the site. He explained that the project began with the City working with a group of veterans within the community to create a place for veterans, their families, and

community members to get together and acknowledge the role of veterans in Edmonds and the surrounding community. The City originally dedicated the grassy area under the existing oak tree as the location for the memorial, but the project was later expanded.

Mr. Bishop explained that one main requirement of the design competition was that the project should not significantly impact the existing plaza, and the goal was to retain as much of the landscaping and plaza work as possible. He provided a drawing of the original design that was selected and presented the three main elements of the proposed design as follows:

- **Veteran’s Wall.** The goal was to extend the plaza and balance the parking lot and plaza. This enabled them to insert a memorial wall along the north side of the plaza to screen the parking lot. The original wall design was envisioned as a monolithic element that was separated into five pieces to acknowledge the different branches of the military. Over the past year, they worked with the City, a group of veterans, and other community members to find the right scale and create elements that met the mission of the memorial to honor the veterans, but also enhanced the community function of the plaza. The intent was to create an area that promotes conversation and acts as a community gathering place.

The current wall design has a series of graphic elements. The first and fourth elements will be water features. The second element will identify the five branches of the military, and the third will identify the mission of the memorial. The element at the far end will feature a quote that was selected by the committee. Material for the wall will be granite veneer, and they are working with the committee and City staff to select the final choice. They are currently considering a lighter material for the front panels, and a darker material with more texture for the rear panels. Although the two water features do not appear to be connected, they both will drain into the same recirculating system.

An evergreen hedge is proposed behind the Veteran’s Wall. The hedge will be scaled to the size of the wall to control the view without creating anything that is imposing. This will likely be a variety of yews, with grass and groundcover to fill in the space. Some maintenance access for the water features will also be provided in the hedge garden.

- **Veteran’s Garden.** This garden would be located west of the Public Safety Building and will include a granite circular seating area, as well as a walkway made of granite stone pavers to connect the garden to the existing plaza and the sidewalk along the street. The intent was to limit the amount of construction that occurs within the drip line of the existing oak tree, and a large part of the garden will be located under its shade. However, the area between the tree and the building gets enough sun to support different types of plantings. The intent is to plant both deciduous and evergreen shrubs within the garden area, with groundcover, grass, and even ferns. The geometry of the garden was straightened to create spaces that complement each other. Other elements that will be located in the Veteran’s Garden include a new service dog memorial and the existing memorial boulder,
- **Plaza.** Public comments have indicated a desire to create a garden setting that still supports circulation within the plaza. The proposal is to remove the existing maple trees. Instead of eight small planting areas, the proposal identifies five larger ones with American Hornbeam trees being planted along the northern edge of the three planters adjacent to the Veteran’s Wall to provide a bit of separation. The southern portions of these three planters will feature understory plantings that do not include trees.

Consistent with the original requirements, a significant amount of the existing pavement will be retained and all of the elements will be aligned with the existing concrete. It was pointed out that there is very little seating available within the existing plaza, and the proposal includes granite seating cubes along the west and east sides and standard donor benches on the north and south sides of the three center planter areas.

Board Member Herr asked if the service dog memorial would be specific to military service dogs, and Mr. Bishop answered affirmatively. He said the actual sculpture will be of a dog in military gear.

Board Member Borofka asked Mr. Clugston to explain the Board's roll in the design review process. Mr. Clugston explained that design review is required because the subject parcel is zoned "Public." He reviewed that the project has been going on for quite some time, and the intent is to bring it to the Board for design review. Assuming the Board likes what they see, they can make a motion of support for the project. They can also recommend refinements that might improve the design. The Steering Committee would like to submit a building permit application soon, and the intent is to get the design wrapped up within the next few weeks. There will be no other public meeting or hearing.

Board Member Strauss asked the applicant to clarify where the existing pavement and proposed new pavers would be located. She also inquired about the scale of the proposed donor benches. Mr. Bishop provided a drawing of the current site plan, which shows the benches at the correct scale. He reviewed that the original proposal identified different benches, but the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department wanted to use the same benches that are used in the City's donor program. The bench locations were reconfigured based on feedback from the City Council. Previously, they were oriented to the north/south, but the proposed east/west orientation works better with the grade of the plaza. Mr. Bishop also explained that all of the paving in the plaza will be cast-in-place concrete. The only place where additional concrete will be added is along the base of the Veteran's Wall in order to set the lights. Pavers will be used for the walkways in the Veteran's Garden.

Vice Chair Walker asked if the seating in the reflection area within the Veteran's Garden would be the same granite material that is used for the wall and the seating cubes in the plaza. Mr. Bishop answered that the vertical elements would be lighter granite. The idea is that the seating cubes and the seating area in the garden would be of the same granite with a similar finish. The granite pavers in the garden area would be darker. The intent is that the details will speak to each other even though they are across the plaza from each other.

Vice Chair Walker asked if all the quotes and memorial plaques would be located near the wall or if they would extend across the site. Mr. Bishop answered that some of the granite pavers in the garden area will be used for a donor program, and approximately 50% of the pavers will have names engraved upon them. The seating cubes near the service dog memorial will also feature quotes on top, with smaller donor names engraved on the sides. In addition, the memorial to service members from Edmonds and the surrounding area who have been killed in action, which is currently located in front of the museum, will be relocated adjacent to the garden space.

Board Member Herr asked if the two walls that are designated by elevation symbols 2 and 3 would be granite walls. Mr. Bishop answered that they are currently identified as cast-in-place concrete, but they are having conversations about using granite for them instead.

Board Member Herr noted that in one drawing the memorial boulder is located closer to the edge of the garden. Mr. Bishop clarified that there is still some discussion about where the boulder will be located. The black and white drawing shows the intent, but it hasn't been updated in the colored drawing.

Board Member Broadway asked what considerations have been given for the two existing concrete benches and the proposed new benches with regard to skateboarders. She also asked if consideration was given to the Veteran's Wall in terms of anti-graffiti coatings. Mr. Bishop answered that no coatings have been specified at this point, but they realize it will be necessary. Given that the stone surface will not be polished, there will be additional moisture retention and the stone will be susceptible to graffiti. The cast-in-place concrete walls will be designed to prevent skateboarders from grinding on them, and the scale of the granite walls will not be conducive to skateboard activities.

Board Member Borofka asked if the existing trees at the end of the parking lot would be retained, and Mr. Bishop answered affirmatively. Board Member Borofka asked if there has been a lot of community feedback regarding the proposal to replace the eight existing trees in the plaza area with three trees of a different variety. He asked if any

consideration was given to a design that would have allowed the existing trees to remain. Mr. Bishop said they considered potential designs that would incorporate the existing trees into the larger planters, but the trees are columnar and quite constrained in terms of what they are planted in. It was difficult to work them into a scheme that met all of the other requirements because the columnar shape of the existing trees did not fit with the canopy that was envisioned for the plaza. They wanted something that spread out more.

Board Member Borofka asked about the size of the three new trees, and Mr. Bishop answered that they would likely be 3 to 4-inch caliper. Board Member Borofka reported that he attended a recent meeting of the City's Tree Board. While he likes the proposed design, the thought of replacing the existing trees with smaller ones concerns him. He recalled that the City has had discussions about a management plan for trees, and Edmonds has been designated as a Tree City USA. The plaza is located at the front door of the City's civic quarters, and removing existing trees seems counterintuitive.

Mr. Bishop said he had the same reaction to the idea of removing existing trees. He said the City Council decided not to have a study done on the health of the trees. However, there were questions about the amount of growth that would occur in the future given the variety of tree and planting conditions. The thought was to create more canopy, which would require another tree species. The existing trees are utility trees. Although conditions provided to them when planted were consistent with standard practices, trees are never planted in that small of a soil volume today. The idea was to replace the trees with a new species that is planted in ideal soil conditions.

Board Member Strauss asked if any thought was given to what will happen to the existing trees and plants. Would they be made available to the public? Mr. Bishop answered that he has had discussions with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department about the idea of relocating the plants to another City property or making them available to the public. However, transplanting the existing trees would require the removal of a significant amount of pavement in order to protect the roots.

Board Member Herr observed that some older trees in the City have grown to a size where the roots have caused the sidewalks to buckle. He suggested this would eventually be a possibility with the existing trees, given the small size of the planter areas. He expressed his belief that the City would eventually lose the existing trees anyway because the conditions are not conducive to larger trees. Vice Chair Walker concurred. He said he appreciates that the applicant considered different options for retaining the trees. However, because the plaza is located at the front door of the Public Safety Building and it will remain as a park use for the foreseeable future, he supports the proposal to replace the trees. This will allow them to have an open pallet to work with for the design. Mr. Bishop determined that there would be 10 times the soil volume with the proposed plan than what currently exists.

Board Member Broadway asked if the new trees would be a shallow-rooted variety. She also asked about the long-term growth pattern of the trees and whether there is a risk that the roots would eventually cause pavement upheaval in the plaza area. Mr. Bishop answered that the proposed species is shallow rooted; and with the soil volumes proposed, he would not expect the trees to cause the sidewalks to buckle. He agreed to double check and suggested that a root barrier could also be used to control the direction of the root growth.

Chair Guenther noted that the Edmonds Summer Market uses the parking area and the plaza space during the summer months. He asked how the new design would interface with the other ways the City uses the plaza. Mr. Bishop answered that this was a major concern, and his understanding from the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is that the summer market will be located in the parking lot and plaza this year. In the future, the event will be relocated from the plaza to the street. The construction access would be situated in such a way to prevent interface between the market and plaza construction. Chair Guenther asked if the plaza could accommodate booths during the summer market in future years. Mr. Bishop agreed that is possible, but the intent is for the booths to be located on the street and the plaza would be reserved as a place for people to sit adjacent to the market.

Chair Guenther asked if any lighting has been proposed for the project, and Mr. Bishop answered that lighting would be limited. Some high-control, integrated LED up-lights will illuminate the text and imagery on the Veteran's Wall, as well as the water feature. Also, the existing egress lighting would be replaced with bollard lights.

Chair Guenther said he realizes that the Veteran's Wall is supposed to screen the parking lot behind it, but the rendering shows that cars would still be visible. He asked the height of the proposed wall. Mr. Bishop said the height would vary. He explained that no survey was done prior to the competition, and they did not realize how significant the slope of the plaza was. The wall in the original design was significantly taller than the current proposal of between 3.5 and 4 feet. They recognize that cars would still be visible, and the purpose of the hedge is to provide additional screening. It is more a question of whether or not the hedge is maintained and to what height it is allowed to grow.

Board Member Borofka asked if Mr. Bishop has had discussions with the Edmonds Historical Museum in terms of construction schedule and how the design would impact the Summer Market. Mr. Bishop said he has not, but the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director has, and his understanding is that both groups are on top of what is being proposed.

Board Member Strauss cautioned against trying to match the existing concrete with the material that is used to fill the existing planters. Matching will be very difficult to do. She also cautioned that the joint detail on the water walls should be designed in such a way that the water will not cause it to crack or pop. Mr. Bishop responded that larger panels would be used, and the major joint elements would be five feet on center.

Board Member Strauss said she likes the design of the Veteran's Wall, as well as the step going down to it. She felt it would be a very nice feature.

Vice Chair Walker commented that Horn Beam trees tend to grow more columnar, and Mr. Bishop said the variety proposed has more of a spreading habit. The intent was to plant something that would spring horizontally but not compete with the existing oak tree.

Board Member Borofka asked if the water feature was designed with safety features in mind, particularly in relation to small children. Mr. Bishop explained that, in this particular case, the volume of water will be low and the configuration and depth of the water would not require Health Department permits. However, they will still design with safety in mind.

BOARD MEMBER BOROFKA MOVED THAT THE BOARD SUPPORT THE PROJECT TO MOVE FORWARD AS PRESENTED. BOARD MEMBER BROADWAY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC HEARINGS - MAJOR PROJECTS:

There were no public hearings.

CONSOLIDATED PERMIT APPLICATIONS (No Public Participation):

There were no consolidated permit applications.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

Chair Guenther asked if the Board has a budget. He was particularly interested in learning if the City would pay for Board Members to attend events such as a "Short Course in Public Planning." He said he found this training to be beneficial. Mr. Clugston agreed to inquire about funding options, and he also suggested the Board could invite the City

Attorney to provide this training. The Board agreed that would be appropriate. Chair Guenther noted that there are two new members, and it could be a refresher course for the remainder of the Board, as well.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

The Board had some discussion about how City staff ensures that projects are consistent with the recommendations and conditions put forth by the Board. Chair Guenther reminded the Board that there can only be one public hearing for a proposed project. While the staff can informally follow up on recommendations made by the Board, they cannot enforce them unless they are specifically identified as conditions of approval. Board Member Strauss cautioned that conditions of approval must be consistent with the code regulations and design guidelines.

The Board discussed that development plans that are presented for design review are typically in the preliminary phase, so it is important to allow some flexibility to addresses things that come up as the project proceeds to final design. Staff inspects the final design and compares it to the approved plans, and anything that is radically different than the design approved by the Board will be noted. Mr. Clugston suggested that if the Board is concerned, they could review projects they have previously approved and provide direction to staff on how their recommendations and conditions could be better addressed.

Board Member Herr said he does a lot of work in the City of Redmond, and they actually compare the plans approved during design review with what is built. Even very small changes require an enormous amount of review. He reminded them that projects are presented for design review during the conceptual stage, and various constraints can require changes before a final design is completed. He cautioned against taking design review to the minutia because it can really bog down a project.

Board Member Strauss emphasized that the Board's charge is to uphold the design standards and City codes and not design projects for applicants. Applicants can choose whether or not to accept and implement recommendations from the Board that are not specifically required by the code and/or design guidelines. Mr. Clugston agreed and cautioned that if the design review is dialed down too specific, it becomes difficult for developers to complete projects. It becomes a balancing act. From his experience, staff considers what the Board approved to make sure the final design is consistent.

Board Member Borofka asked if there are any projects on the horizon that will require design review. Mr. Clugston answered that most of the current projects are small and do not require design review. As projects come up, staff will attempt to schedule them on the first Wednesday of the month rather than the third.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.