

MINUTES
REEDLEY STREETScape MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
November 14, 2000

The agenda for the Streetscape Maintenance Committee Meeting of November 14, 2000, was duly posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

A regular meeting of the Streetscape Maintenance Committee was held on November 14, 2000, in the Reedley City Hall Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m.

Members Present: Richard Bedoian, Jan Minami and Dale Melville.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Andrew Benelli, Public Works Director/City Engineer; and Kay Pierce, Administrative Assistant.

Others Present: Steve Loeffler of Loeffler Landscape Maintenance.

Dale Melville moved, Richard Bedoian seconded, to approve the minutes from October 10, 2000. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORT ON MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY

A. Steve Loeffler reported that he has changed the blowing pattern and his crew is now blowing debris out to the street. Monday and Fridays are the scheduled days for use of the blower, and Wednesdays are set aside for weeding and removing suckers from the trees. The irrigation system is set to come on every morning for three minutes at 6:00 a.m. Irrigation was originally set up for every other day, however, the pots were not getting enough water and the watering was changed accordingly. Steve will hold back on heavy pruning until after Christmas. Dale Melville asked if the pruning is going to be very minimal? Steve replied that was correct. He plans on only thinning out the crepe myrtles in the centers so that branches aren't crossing and any dead branches removed in the magnolias as well as thinning out the centers. Jan Minami stated that she liked the pruning Steve did on the magnolia in front of the Burgess Hotel last year.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Staff is looking into pricing on teak or mahogany slats for the benches instead of oak. Staff called Kings River Casting for pricing, but has not received a call back.

B. Staff is also looking into pricing on six additional trash cans for placement in the downtown area. The trash can at the corner of 11th and "G" at Coffee and Candy is always full and could probably use an additional can at that corner.

C. The next block for tree removal and replanting is between 9th and 10th Street. Public Works crew will remove the trees and root balls and Loeffler Landscape will buy and plant the trees. Steve Loeffler stated that it would be \$100 per tree. There are ten trees in this block for a total of \$1,000. Andrew Benelli is going to check on the budget and see how much money is available for tree removal.

D. Jan Minami referred to the Christmas decorations stating that she took this item to the RDA meeting and the general consensus is that the angels are so ugly that even you replace every single part of them, they will still not be very attractive. RDA is working on a deal with Immanuel School doing the bulk of the work to build standards for wreaths. The RDA and the Chamber will split the cost on wrapping the wreaths. Bill Ollinger of Bike Trax is the shop teacher at Immanuel and is in charge of building the standards for the wreaths. At the Streetscape meeting in October, Jeff Viau stated that he is familiar with a company that can wrap the wreaths with short notice.

E. Staff is in contact with the insurance company representing the gentlemen who crashed into the bench in front of Reedley Social Services. AAA has agreed to pay for bench replacement.

NEW BUSINESS - None.

A. Discussion of Traffic Signal at 11th and "G". City Engineer Benelli explained to the Committee that a decision has to be made on whether or not to accept the grant available for new traffic signals at 11th and "G". It is only a three year grant and if we don't take action on it, the City will lose the money. The original decision on the grant was to table it because of the controversy downtown between stop signs and traffic signals.

Dale Melville asked if doing a study on signalization and signage would be part of the downtown specific plan? City Engineer Benelli replied that was affirmative, even though the focus is not on a traffic study, a traffic study would be done. He stated that the study that was done for the other specific plan is not a very detailed study. Jan Minami added that traffic issues were discussed and decisions were made on roads based on the traffic issues, but there was nothing said that you had to have so many stop signs or stop lights in a certain place. The other plan talked more about types of roads, not actual stops and starts.

Andrew Benelli stated that this will be a little more focused, but he still doesn't feel that the traffic study will have a whole lot of detail.

Jan Minami stated that the other thing about the traffic signal at 11th and "G" is that when it was brought up before, it was before the Trail was built and there is a factor that now with the bulb-outs on the trail, traffic does not move as fast down 11th Street as it used to because it can't. People can't zoom from the "I" Street light to the "G" Street light because of the bulb-outs.

Andrew Benelli stated that he received a complaint about the bulb-outs slowing down traffic and that the City should remove them.

Jan Minami relayed to the Committee that the whole Specific Plan process was interesting, but in the other study was the different types of traffic issues and that whole process of understanding what goes on and the dynamics of it and what is a thoroughfare and what isn't and what makes a lot of sense and what doesn't. It would be great if 11th Street was not a thoroughfare. She asked if the ambulance moving down on 11th Street is going to impact 11th Street and do they have primary routes that they follow? They used to go down "G" Street very fast and scary, however, they have cut back on using that route.

The consensus is that 11th Street will have to be used when they are called to that side of town, but they moved to their new location to be closer to Manning Avenue.

Jan Minami stated that as much as she would rather have stop signs at 11th and "G" and no traffic signals at all, it may not be very realistic because of the volume of traffic.

Andrew Benelli stated that when the issue of stop signs at 11th and "G" went before the Council, they did not approve it. Jan Minami added that the reason it wasn't approved is because there was one guy who was really opposed to it and gathered a lot of signatures and so it was dropped like a hot potato because of the controversy. Andrew stated that the proposal was to have stop signs for two or three months to study traffic flow.

Dale Melville added that there has been more discussion lately towards a more walkable liveable community and what we need to do is take a look at the overall plan as to what can be done at one or two intersections.

Jan Minami stated that when Dan Burden came to Reedley, he spoke to the Specific Plan Committee. She asked if Dan Burden spoke about changes to "G" Street and did that mesh with "G" Street being a thoroughfare and 11th Street being main arterial? Andrew Benelli replied that the suggestion he made was to have gateways at each end of "G" Street, with a roundabout in front of the DMV where the big pine tree is and another roundabout where the spaghetti bowl is located by the triangle. The other suggest was bulb-outs mid-block with pedestrian crossings. Andrew Benelli added that we should really use "I" Street instead of "G" Street, but there is still the old Hamilton Cold Storage building which is still being used and Nash de Camp at the opposite end of "G" Street.

Dale Melville offered to submit some drawings with different ideas for the Committee to discuss.

Andrew Benelli added that Bob Trout did a traffic study mainly on "I" Street and he suggested a traffic signal at Reed and 8th Street, 11th Street and 13th Street. Signals are already installed at 11th and 13th Streets. Mr. Trout suggested removing the four way stop at 10th Street and placing the four way stop at 8th Street and his logic was for better spacing and also because there is so much traffic on Reed Avenue that comes out at 7th Street. If the signal was installed at 8th Street, some of that 7th Street traffic would start coming out at 8th Street. A signal at 8th Street might help to reduce the through traffic that is currently using 11th Street. Mr. Trout's main logic was spacing.

Dale Melville asked if any plans have been drawn up for the spaghetti bowl? Andrew Benelli replied that there are plans for installation of a signal at "I" and Reed, but no plans

for the triangle area where North Avenue intersects with Reed Avenue. The traffic study for the Walmart indicated that a signal is needed at North and Reed. Mr. Trout's analysis also suggested a signal at North and Reed and he submitted a sketch where North Avenue would angle slightly further away from the other intersection just to move it further back and then have a signal eventually. If the traffic signals are too close, the traffic will back up and cross over into the second signal.

Jan Minami asked how these suggestions mesh with what Mr. Burden suggested as to having a roundabout at this intersection? Andrew Benelli stated that Mr. Burden suggested a roundabout at both ends and his logic in this suggestion was to primarily create a gateway to "G" Street, but also because there is enough land there and because there are so many roads that come together at both of these. It seems like a reasonable idea, but there are some problems such as the truck traffic on Dinuba Avenue and at Hamilton Cold Storage could be a problem. The old cold storages were originally designed for loading onto rail cars and are not designed for loading onto trucks, which is why the trucks pull out into the street. Andrew Benelli added that we really need a traffic signal at "G"/East and Dinuba Avenues, but with the amount of frontage that would be required from Davis Road Oil, it would take up all their parking area, so this probably won't happen.

Jan Minami asked if there are studies that address the use of a roundabout versus stop signs? Andrew Benelli replied there are no studies particular to Reedley, although there probably have been studies done. Jan Minami stated that there are traffic studies that are done to warrant stop lights or the installation of stop signs, but are there any warrants that recommend a roundabout versus the signal or stop signs? Andrew Benelli stated that it depends upon which leg has how much traffic and how much traffic is through traffic and how big the roundabout is. There are publications that show different designs of roundabouts, but there are many "what ifs." Each site would have to be looked at individually and analyzed. There are many generic articles that take into account ideal situations where the roads are all coming together and the examples in Reedley are not ideal situations. Roundabouts in Reedley would need to be fairly large and we don't have the right-of-way to do a large roundabout. A traffic circle is probably the most we can hope for. Roundabouts would make a nice gateway to the downtown area, but it would be a big project to try to accomplish this. One of the problems that exist is the lack of right-of-way owned by the City.

Andrew Benelli stated that the other subject Mr. Burden talked about was the installation of more directional signs on "I" Street showing people where downtown is located. They could be decorative, old-fashioned signage.

Dale Melville asked if there are any plans for fixing the railroad tracks on Manning Avenue. Andrew Benelli stated that the City now has the money for this project and the railroad has been notified. The railroad stated that they have been working on some design work to remove a kink in the tracks along with changing the crossing.

Jan Minami stated that she has noticed a lot of people using the Rail Trail.

Dale Melville stated that since a decision has to be made today regarding the grant money for the traffic signals at 11th and "G" Street, and with no additional information to consider,

He would move to recommend the installation of stop signs and make 11th Street diagonal parking to obtain more parking stalls. If we went to stop signs, we could eliminate the left turn lanes on 11th Street and this would move Reedley closer to a more walkable, liveable community. Jan Minami agreed with Dale on turning down the grant. Dale Melville would like to be able to go out and do some measurements to see if diagonal parking could be accommodated by the existing street width. Andrew Benelli stated that the street width would be wide enough for parallel parking if the left turn lanes are removed. The Committee agreed that if they have to make a decision today regarding the grant, they will turn the grant down.

City Engineer Benelli stated that with the existing traffic signals at 11th and "G", people tend not to see those signals and accidents occur. The signals are located at the corners and there is no mast arm for the signal in the middle of the intersection. Most drivers, especially those from out of town, are used to seeing a signal that is on a mast arm hanging in front of the lane. This would include the signals at 11th and "G" and at 10th and "G". He stated that if the signals are going to be left at the intersections on "G" Street, those signals should be replaced with signals with mast arms. The existing traffic signal poles are not very attractive. The existing lights are also eight inch rather than the new twelve inch light and more difficult to see, especially during the fog. Additionally, the existing controller is the old time clock style and the City is having a difficult time getting parts for it. At the present time, Reedley is getting used parts from Fresno because they have replaced all this type of signal with the newer controller. Public Works can keep the present controller going for awhile, but a new controller who have loops and be traffic activated so that traffic wouldn't have to wait if no vehicle was on the opposing street. It would just be nice to have a more modern system if we are going to leave the signals in place. Dale Melville agreed with these statements. The Committee previously looked at new light standards that would blend into the downtown scheme. Jan Minami again stated that if Andrew Benelli needs an answer today regarding the grant, she still maintains that she would turn down the grant. By accepting the grant, there will never be an opportunity to test stop signs at the 11th and "G" Street intersection. Andrew stated that this has been presented to the Traffic Safety Commission and they recommended accepting the grant. Richard Bedoian agreed that it was logical that if the signals are going to remain in this intersection, then they should be upgraded. Andrew stated that the grant would allow the installation of new attractive signal poles and mast arms that could blend in with the downtown and the handicap ramps could be replaced with attractive pavers which would look like bulb-outs so that truckers can still driver over them. The 11th and "G" Street intersection would look very nice after this was done.

Dale Melville suggested going with the upgraded signal at 11th and "G" and trying stop signs at 10th and "G". Jan Minami agreed that it might be better for downtown overall if traffic can be cut down at 10th Street and install stop signs. 11th Street is always going to be a thoroughfare because it connects Manning Avenue to "I" Street. Dale Melville would still like to get rid of the left turn lane on 11th Street and install diagonal parking on 11th.

Jan asked if we got the new traffic signals, are there any possibilities to do diagonal parking that wouldn't create the same firestorm that stop signs did? Andrew Benelli replied that is possible. There are five phased signals where there is an extra phase is for left turns, so instead of trying turn with traffic coming at you, one of the phases stops the

oncoming traffic so that the vehicle can either turn left or go straight without conflicting with oncoming traffic. The only downside is that you do have to wait longer through the whole cycle, but it's not that long. It would have to be decided whether the default is for "G" Street or 11th Street. After some additional discussion, it was the consensus of the Streetscape Committee to recommend to City Council to accept the grant for traffic signal upgrade at 11th and "G" Streets.

Dale Melville asked if there is any parking on the right-of-way near the rail trail? Andrew stated that the City purchase the small lot next to the alley that used to belong to Martens and that will be used for public parking and will accommodate ten vehicles.

Andrew Benelli will be attending the RDA meeting on 11/15 and present to them the request for the traffic grant for upgrading the signals at 11th and "G".

Dale Melville moved, Jan Minami seconded to recommend to City Council the acceptance of the traffic grant to upgrade the signals at 11th and "G", with the stipulation that all effort is made to change the 10th and "G" Street intersection to a four-way stop intersection. Motion carried unanimously.

CITIZEN REMARKS - None

COMMITTEE / STAFF COMMENTS / REPORTS

A. Richard Bedoian asked if there are any plans to install stop signs on "G" Street at 13th Street? Andrew Benelli replied this request has been brought to the Traffic Safety Commission at least twice since he as been with the City, but Caltrans warrants have not supported the stop signs. There is limited visibility at this intersection because of vehicles parked so close to the corners, but no one wants to give up any parking spaces. It was suggested that a handicap space be installed at this corner.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m. Next meeting will be December 12, 2000.

Richard Bedoian, Chairman
Streetscape Maintenance Committee

ATTEST:

Andrew Benelli, Secretary