



CITY OF ENNIS, TEXAS

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22 April, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

This memo is an informal record of the events and discussion that occurred at the Main Street Board meeting on Friday, April 22nd, 5:30 Pm at the Chamber of Commerce Board room.

These comments are not minutes approved by the Main Street Board.

The Main Street Board convened at 5:35Pm with Betty Glaspy calling the meeting to order and the ED Coordinator calling the roll. The Board was unable to form a quorum. The acting President ordered the meeting proceed with no official decisions or actions taken on the posted agenda items.

Board Members Present: Beard, Glaspy, Holley, Juenemann, Patak and Zembala
Board Members Absent: Betik, Chapman, Culpepper, Davis, Guitierrez, Haupt, Holland, Kovar, Puckett, Sullivan and Watson
Staff Present: Dixon, Nelson, Liska and Rokas
Consultants Present: Shook and McCaffery

1. Pledge of Allegiance was recited & Invocation offered by Juenemann.
2. Minnie McDowal Park:
 - a. Staff and MESA facilitated a discussion about a potential project to redesign and reconstruct Minnie McDowal park. The discussion topics and staff comments are listed below.
 - i. WHO: - Main Street Board, Parks Board, EDC and City of Ennis
 - ii. WHAT: - Collaborate to redesign and reconstruct Minnie McDowal Park
 - iii. WHEN: - 2016
 - iv. WHERE: - Current location of park (Knox / Dallas)
 - v. WHY: - Downtown Master Plan implementation
- Steady drum beat of progress
- Reasonable cost
- Permanent improvement compatible with the design and intent of the Downtown Master Plan.

- Maximize the usable space
- Creates a gathering space
- Public restrooms encourage longer stays
- Encourages social and commercial transactions

vi. Parking

1. Back-In / Head-In:
2. Staff Comments: Discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of parking configuration occurred. If we are going to introduce back-in parking, this is the right time to do it (small footprint – limited scale). Back-in parking should be incorporated as a permanent feature of the new park (South Side of Knox). Existing head-in parking on the north side of Knox should be converted to back-in parking without major reconstruction of the current curb (use wheel stops)

vii. Restrooms:

1. Include or exclude:
2. Safety and Unseemly behavior:
3. Staff Comments: Lively discussion about whether or not public restrooms should be included or excluded from the basic features of the redesigned park. Points to consider: There are “no” public bathrooms in the downtown. Vendors and patrons of the Farmers Market have consistently raised the issue of public bathrooms. MESA advises; the presence, accessibility and proximity of public restrooms is a key driver of social and commercial activity “the longer people stay” the better their experience “the better their experience” the more they connect with the space, each other and spend as a result. Magnetic locking mechanisms are available to contract access.

viii. Benches, Tables & Chairs

1. With backs / without backs:
2. Staff Comments: Discussion occurred about the style of benches envisioned for the new park. One point was “why benches at all ? - people won’t sit together on the same bench anyway”. Another point was a preference for benches without back supports. Another point was about the need for movable tables and chairs. As currently envisioned, all three types of seating will be incorporated in the new park. Benches are the most efficient form of seating and will be “filled” based on the density of people experiencing the park. Benches with back support provides a much more comfortable experience and comfort equals an extended length of stay “the longer people stay the better”. In addition to providing green space, the raised planters provide a bench w/o back support option for people who enjoy that kind of experience.

ix. Eyncon Engineering “Future Windows”

1. Discussion occurred about the safety of the public restroom in relation to being at grade level and observable.
2. AStaff Comments: As currently envisioned, the park is essentially grade level “flat” and provides an opportunity to open the historic gates in the Eyncon Engineering building.

- x. Existing Alcove (behind Eyncon and Wildflower Café)
 - 1. Staff Comments: As currently envisioned, the existing alcove in the south/west corner of the park will be closed and not accessible through the park space.

- xi. Existing Tree (oak)
 - 1. Discussion ensued about the cost and practicality of trying to save the large oak tree and whether or not there was an emotional or political attachment to the tree that needed to be considered.
 - 2. Staff Comments: Consensus seemed to be the tree is too large and costly to save and people would be understanding of the need to remove the tree.

- xii. Intersection Encroachment (Knox / Dallas)
 - 1. Discussion occurred about the project encroaching into the Knox / Dallas interesting.
 - 2. Staff Comments: As currently envisioned, the “blub-out” into the Knox Dallas intersection will be done in a safe and practical way compatible with the Dallas Street “grade level” design. Grade level car and pedestrian spaces are separated by visual cues and physical barriers such as bollards.

- xiii. Tables & Chairs
 - 1. Fixed or movable:
 - 2. This issue is similar to the discussion about bench style.
 - 3. Staff Comments: It is important to include a variety of seating options in the new park. Movable sidewalk café’ style tables and chairs create an environment and experience moldable to the patron’s desires. It creates a creative and flexible space conducive to social interaction. Move tables together for a social gathering, sit at a single table and chair to read a book.

- xiv. Water Features
 - 1. Water wall
 - 2. Splash pad
 - 3. Staff Comments: The inclusion of water features was mutually supported among all present. The issue is the scale, design, placement and cost of the amenity.

- xv. Wildflower Café “Existing Window”
 - 1. This issue was discussed in terms of the current concept “art wall” blocking the view through the current window.
 - 2. Staff Comments: This is a design challenge and options will be presented to accommodate this concern.

- b. Next Steps:
 - i. Comments and feedback from the April 22 meeting will be used to update the project packet.
 - ii. A new version of the project packet will be emailed w/o 4/25/16 to the Main Street Board and senior City staff for review and comment. Board members representing a Board or Commission are encouraged to seek comments from their respective Board or Commission.

- iii. Comments and feedback to: Marty Nelson mnelson@ennistx.gov
- iv. Comments and feedback will be used to prepare an updated project packet for the Boards review at their June 1, 2016 meeting.

3. Adjournment: 6:15 PM



Marty W. Nelson
Economic Development Coordinator