

HMDAC October 2, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Present on the Zoom meeting for HMDAC, Byrne Conley, Chris Brittle, Bob Schussel, Ian Forsythe and Laurie Foster. Present for the City were Jason Lacey, James Olson, Sam Kumar, Mark Helmbrecht, Shawn O’Keefe, Mark Thomas, and Scott Tedrow.

- The major discussion concerned the roundabout at the entrance near the fountain. This is funded by a separate account collected from developer fees, with any remainder not spent to be returned to the general fund. The 65% design plans were discussed. Some slides were shown on the Zoom.
- There was a discussion of right of way. All of this will be in CalTrans right of way regardless of State vs. Vallejo vs. Solano or Napa County lines. But, CalTrans maintenance will be limited to access control, paving, for the on and off ramp. The City will be responsible for other surfacing outside of this.
- Laurie Foster raised the issue whether the roundabout should be built at all; in light of the expense, but it was noted that the project had been the subject of a couple of community meetings, and received favorable response. So, we are past the “go” or “no go” stage. Further, the funds are earmarked for the interchange area and cannot be released to HMD or HID, unspent funds go back to the City general fund (or to the developer, if nothing is built, per the original Development Agreement).
- There is a question, though, whether the project has to pay for a matching roundabout (without landscaping) at the opposite “side” of the overpass, which is completely outside the City of Vallejo and County of Solano. Staff is going to find out if CalTrans would agree to exempt the project from putting a roundabout on the opposite side. The current plans include this feature, the notion being that having roundabouts at both ends improves traffic flow.
- The question is what we put in the project for landscaping. The consensus of HPOA and City representatives was that it should be low cost and easy to maintain. If we want more, we have to show CalTrans the ability to pay for the maintenance. There will be a maintenance agreement with CalTrans, which from past experience will be quite one sided in favor of the State in its terms. Jason said the City could make some connective thread to the HMD (justifying HMD paying maintenance costs) and the roundabout near the fountain and entrance, and the shoulder aprons, but not for the “other side” of the overpass. There must be a “special benefit” to the HMD. The roundabout is technically just outside the HMD boundaries but has sufficient proximity to find a benefit. The question is whether to extend landscaping to the shoulder approach and exit next to the on and off ramps. Picking up maintenance for the roundabout and shoulder would have to include repair of any landscaping is hit by a car.
- The Committee is in favor of oak trees and arbutus strawberry trees (3 of each) on the shoulders, but minimal landscaping otherwise. Hydroseeding, at most, not planting

bushes, or annuals, etc. and not incurring ongoing maintenance costs. Even this would necessitate running irrigation to the trees for establishment, for a few years, then sealing off the irrigation with an isolation valve, once the trees are established. Doing it now when the road is being installed is the only reasonable time to install irrigation.

- Chris Brittle is in favor of more enhanced landscaping on the onramp and off ramp shoulders, noting that there is a bit of a harsh transition now. We might explore options but City staff did not like the idea of permanent irrigation to an area outside the HMD boundaries or even touching on the boundaries, and other Committee members tended to agree. Chris wondered if HPOA would be willing to get involved in supporting landscape enhancements at the shoulders.
- 2025 is a realistic construction time.
- The coloring of the center piece for the roundabout will need to be considered, we do not want it attracting graffiti.
- Plans should be final and accepted by CalTrans by the end of the year.
- **Other issues:** We talked about the finishing of the Parkway project, which is ongoing.
- We talked about weed whacking of firebreak areas, New Image pulling up dead plants, and maintenance of the “strip” along Bennington next to the 18th hole, and that there are several lights out on the Parkway. On this last point Jason indicated there is a City crew that addresses this, but there are issues all over the City re lights needing replacement.
- The City will be planting some trees throughout the City funded by a Calfire grant, including near the Orchards.
- We talked about the eyesore on golf course property outside the white fences, which are no longer being maintained by the course and are weed infested. The City is reluctant to take over maintenance of those areas since they are not City owned, not irrigated with City water, and the golf course is exempt from paying into HMD (a deal made by the original developer with the City). We did think some tan bark or “gorilla hair” might be a low maintenance option, and Jason suggested that the City could supply wood chips. We will take the issue up with golf course management.
- Also, along Bennington next to the 18th hole, there is an area of carpet roses that looks OK but then it is just dirt, followed by an area of distressed and non-maintained bushes, most of the way up to Fairway Villas. This is HMD area from the sidewalk to the street, with City irrigation that was shut off during the drought. James is going to look into testing what works and we would like the area planted; not necessarily elaborately, but consistent with the Parkway approved plants. New Image can install them under its maintenance contract.
- The median just past the Welcome Center was left out of the Parkway plans; due to an oversight in considering it in the plans, it is cut off from the newly installed irrigation; James is looking into this. It is currently tied into the “wrong” controller but this can be fixed, the old irrigation underground still feeds that median. Meanwhile, all the carpet roses on the median have died, and the trees are distressed, one looks dead.
- The Welcome Center needs a new sign next to the door. A new one was ordered.

- We would like to see a no parking sign or red curb to stop people from parking next to the utility box directly across from the fountain. Having gotten the informal “park and ride” on McGary closed down, we now find people parking in the utility driveway. Jason is going to look into this.
- **Next call will be November 14, 2023 at 9 a.m.**