



Legislation Text

File #: 23-3852, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Presentation of Maple Avenue/Church Street Streetscape Conceptual Design

BACKGROUND SUMMARY :

The Town of Vienna has streetscape improvements along Maple Avenue and Church Street that were installed approximately 20 years ago. These improvements include uniform installations of brick sidewalks, streetlamps, bus shelters and landscape planters. The landscape plants have matured over the years and the uniformity of the design has waned. The trees are the predominant feature of the landscape planters while the shrub and herbaceous perennial layer is inconsistent and often absent.

In an effort to beautify the streetscape, Council approved spending on May 1, 2023 of \$83,445 with LSG Landscape for Maple Avenue & Church Street Streetscape landscape for design of the approximately:

- 81 landscape planters on Maple Avenue located between East Street and 213 Maple Ave., W, on both sides of the street.
- 46 landscape planters on Church Street located between Mill Street, NE, and Lawyers Road, NW, on both sides of the street.

OVERVIEW :

The purpose of the presentation is to review and receive Town Council feedback on the overall concept for the understory planting project, how it has been evolved and refined after further study of existing built conditions and landscaping, how the concept could be applied, and next steps for the project.

The presentation will touch on the methods of study of the existing site conditions, which included a formal survey, visual assessment and inventory, and soil sampling. Following that is a review of the proposed design concept to add color, texture, and consistency to the streetscape, via color-blocked plantings staggered to provide pops of blooms throughout the different growth seasons. After that follows a detailed examination of existing planter conditions, limitations, and proposed corresponding planting solutions.

Along Maple Avenue, two understory planting design concepts are prepared:

1. A combination of shrubs, ornamental grasses, perennials, and limited annual use at street intersections.
2. More annual plantings, pros and cons.

Along Church Street, the design team proposes to keep the majority of the existing understory plantings, and supplement with plantings with similar colors and textures to improve consistency. Annuals are proposed only at street intersections.

The design team is seeking Town Council's approval to selectively replace some but not all removed street trees, for the purpose of increasing sun exposure to ground level to increase understory variety.

In summary, we are seeking Town Council input on the following:

1. Overall planting design approach with color blocks;
2. Along Maple Avenue, replacement of all understory planting with the exception of some of the well-established liriopae masses;
3. Along Church Street, supplemental planting rather than total removal of existing understory planting.
4. Limited use of annuals in the proposed planting scheme;
5. Selective replacement of removed street trees;
6. Authorization to proceed with the detailed planting phase.

SUMMARY/STAFF IMPRESSIONS :

Staff supports the approach and direction of LSG Landscape's concept designs for Maple Avenue and Church Street. Staff wholeheartedly supports retention of liriopae in some planters with dense *shade* and dense root systems. Replacement of the herbaceous plant layer just doesn't seem logical or practical considering that it may be impossible to establish a new herbaceous plant layer without removing a significant amount of tree roots. Staff supports removal of trees along Maple Avenue that are in poor or waning condition as well as selected tree removals to allow more light and reduce root competition with the new plant installations. Trees will not necessarily be replaced 1 for 1. Replacement will be determined based on landscape design to ensure success of the new plantings and to provide the visual of a tree lined street.

RECOMMENDATION :

Staff recommends proceeding with LSG Landscape's concept design for Maple Avenue and Church Street.

In the interest of the aesthetic benefits of perennials/annuals it would benefit the project to strategically remove and replace trees so as to allow more light and room for plant growth.