

Holly Hills Special Business District Infrastructure Committee
Meeting Minutes for November 8, 2023

Meeting began at 7:02. Members in attendance:

Alison Bryar, Linda Callahan, Meghan Cotner, Ryan Hanlon, Loren Lang, Joe Lorenz, Colleen Nigro, Ed Papes, Abby Richter and ex officio members Mechelle Minden and Brett Reinert.

Meeting opening:

Ryan motioned and Abby seconded.

Colleen offered two changes to the minutes to note that Ed Papes was at the entire October meeting and Ryan came but was 20 minutes late. Abby motioned for the October minutes to be approved with those edits and Ryan seconded.

New Business:

Guest speaker, Erin Godwin head of Neighborhood Foresters, a volunteer group filling the gap in tree care, come speak:

Overview from Erin: The City Forestry Department has a big task without enough resources to cover it, so we are building out the capacity for residents to learn the basic care of watering, pruning, and mulching to support city-owned trees in parks, streets and alleys. Note, some trees can only be pruned during certain times of the year. We primarily focus on “clearing pruning” low canopies that block pedestrian activity and overgrowth. We do not use ladders / touch anything we can’t reach while standing on the ground. We do not do planting. We are focused on harm reduction from negligence and overgrowth, our work won’t be perfect but it will be a huge improvement. (Forrest Relief does planting if you are interested in that.)

The way it works: If you want to have a volunteer event, you tell us and we schedule a date. We send out an arborist to lead training. We send the tools you need to care for the trees as well as orange vests to clearly signal that you are a worker / volunteer.

We have the tools and if you have a volunteer event we could find a certified arborists to train on tree pruning and mulching, and summer focus is on watering. (You can get an app on Metrotreelc.org to help you keep track of the watering needs of the trees on your property.)

Working Group: Installation of new gates for Carondelet Park

Ryan had a call with Kim Haegele about gates, traffic calming. Our vendor working with us on the gates said that the Cultural Resource Office who manages historic aspects of the city and the Streets Department need to approve the gates, to. Kim didn’t believe that was true but said she would find out and let Ryan know what she discovered.

During their conversation, Ryan and Kim also talked about traffic calming in the park. Ryan showed her and her engineer a Google Earth image of Carondelet Park where you can clearly see burnout spots from where cars were drag racing and doing donuts. Ryan pointed out to them that one area had zero problems - the Leona and Holly Hills corner because of a pork chop in the road which chokes traffic. The visual context helped them understand what immediate temporary things could be done to improve traffic calming in the park. Kim mentioned: adding pork chops at major intersections OR big rocks. Next steps were not discussed but we look forward to following up on this conversation.

Working Group: Signage and visuals cues to signal Holly Hills Neighborhood

Before the meeting Colleen emailed the aggregated data summaries and conclusions from the community event in September. Her overall takeaway was that Ten8 is an expert group that knows what they are doing and they are really taking their time to listen to the community as shown in their summaries.

Abby shared that Ten8 met with the Infrastructure and Beautification committee branding working groups for two hours to discuss their findings, hear additional feedback and talk through the next community meeting.

The current plan is to have the Ten8 group present for 10 - 15 at the November HSBD meeting. They will share their high level direction but they will let the landscape architecture firm that the Beautification committee has selected to be the star of the presentation as they are just getting started in their work. There is a tight partnership between these two groups as they will need to execute on a cohesive plan.

Bridget noted that she wants to see branding at Grand and Bates as it is the area that could use the most attention.

Alison will check in with Heather from Ten8 to see if they've consulted with the Carondelet Historical Society yet.

Traffic calming to encourage safe driving through the district streets.

Loren and Joe shared: we received one proposal from the 5 vendors (3 declined because of workload, TrailNet and CBB submitted theirs together - TrailNet would PM and CBB engineer).

Overall Joe said the proposal was vague, it talked about their qualifications, how they'd get buy-in from the community and examples of projects (i.e. tools like traffic calming demonstrations and studies), however it didn't share deliverables or timelines other than the plan would take 10 months to develop and cost \$55,000.

They have follow up questions to dig deeper and get more concrete information. They are also considering calling past clients as references. Overall they'd expect the deliverable to be a plan that could be used over the course of many years with different traffic calming measures prioritized at different times but that would fit into a holistic plan.

Once we have the entire plan, we could pick a few items that could be implemented quickly / as quick wins.

Next step the working group is going to meet with TrailNet and CBB to get more information and have them flesh out their proposal. Ultimately, the group would like to be able to ask for approval to move to contract at the December board meeting if everything goes well.

Eric talked about how once we have the plan, we could take it to Anne Schweitzer / look for grants to match and move on different aspects of the plan more quickly.

New Projects / Other updates

Bret and Mechelle shared that the board is in the process of getting a new board member. This is done through the board of aldermen and then background checks with mayor's office.

Also, there is a potential mailed newsletter with HHSBD updates going out in January. Abby offered to send the Infrastructure committee updates for it.

Brett shared that Karen Hanks' office connects businesses to new locations in the city and Abby said she would contact Karen.

Action Items:

- Ryan followed up with Kim to see if we need Culture Resources office approval for gates.
- Traffic calming committee meeting with Ten8 and CBB to get more information in preparation for bring a complete, solid proposal to the HHSBD board meeting for approval to move to contract in December
- Aliso is contacting Ten8 to see if they've been in contact with the Carondelet historical society
- Abby is contacting Karen Hanks' office to learn more about business owners looking for city locations
- Abby is writing a 2023 Summary of the Infrastructure Committees work for the January newsletter
- Bridget is going to speak at the HHSBD November board meeting on behalf of the Infrastructure Committee

Ryan motioned to adjourn and Abby seconded at 8:01 PM.