



CITY OF BEXLEY TREE & PUBLIC GARDENS COMMISSION APPLICATION STAFF REVIEW

Project Name: TPGC-23-8 2200 E. Main Street Development
 Project Address: 2200 E. Main Street
 Reviewed by: Elena Andrews
 elena@designspruce.com
 626-676-3330
 Date: 11-10-23, 11-27-23

	Project Description	Completed	Incomplete	Missing	N/A
1a	Application	X			
1b	Project Description	X			
	Research				
2a	Significant examples				X
	Design Documentation Drawings				
3a	Existing conditions photographs	X			
3b	Site plan or location plan	X			
3c	Schematic plan with north arrow and bar scale	X			
3d	Elevations, perspectives, isometrics, axonometrics or detailed model	X			
3e	Existing City trees indicated on plan	X			
3f	Proposed vegetation	X			
	Recommended information				
4a	Irrigation and maintenance plans	X			
4b	Hardscape layout and materials	X			
4c	Lighting locations and specifications				X
4d	Fixtures, furniture and equipment	X			
4e	Accessories				X
4f	Buildings				X
4g	Other				X

Comments

4g Overview

This project is currently under review by the City of Bexley. The ARB tabled the application on 11/9/23 to be reviewed in December followed by a review by BZAP. No substantial changes to the site plan and landscape are anticipated so the owner has decided to come to the 11/15/23 Tree Commission meeting for review.

The Tree Commission is to review and provide a recommendation to BZAP of the landscape plan within the property limits of 2200 E. Main St and the street improvements in the Right-of-Way immediately adjacent to the property.

The Tree Commission is to review the and vote on the proposed curb cut off Main Street per Ordinance 1262.01 (m) which states: *Construction of an access drive which requires the removal of trees within the public right-of-way shall receive the prior approval of the Tree and Public Gardens Commission which may condition its approval on the number, type, size and location of replacement trees and the charge, if any to the property owner to compensate the City for the loss of the tree or trees being removed.*

The proposed changes to the Bexley Square parking lot are not part of the review at this time. The Bexley Community Improvement Corporations (CIC), City of Bexley, Continental, and Edge are in preliminary discussions regarding the design and improvements. The Tree Commission can provide preliminary feedback if they desire with the understanding that a fully developed design will be submitted to the TPGC for a formal review in the future months.

Tree Removal and Canopy Coverage

A total of 58 trees will be removed on the site and in the Right of Way (39 deciduous and 19 evergreen). See Sheet L1.00. A total of 128 new trees will be provided (70 deciduous and 58 evergreen). See sheet L2.21.

The existing tree canopy coverage on the site is 37%. Including the street trees and canopy in the Bexley Square parking lot, the coverage is 45%.

The proposed tree canopy coverage on the site is 18% increasing to 24% at full maturity (a decrease of 13-19%). Including the street trees and canopy in the Bexley Square parking lot, the coverage is 27% increasing to 38% at full maturity (a decrease of 7-18%).

It is important to note that the existing building and pavement coverage is 50%. The proposed building and pavement coverage is 66%, an increase of 16%.

There is an opportunity to provide larger shade trees in the bed between the garage entries on the west elevation of the building facing the Bexley Square parking lot. Currently (5) Street Keeper Honeylocust and (4) Seven-son Flower trees are in the bed between the building and lawn strip adjacent to the sidewalk. If the lawn strip were to be removed and the bed increased, larger shade trees could be planted in this area to increase the overall canopy coverage.

It is the staff's recommendation to remove the lawn, provide a larger bed with larger shade trees and additional shrubs/perennials to fit with the overall design.

11-27-23 Revisions

The lawn area was removed and larger shade trees were provided along the east elevation.

73 New trees are provided on site. (40 deciduous shade, 21 deciduous upright, 9 deciduous ornamental, and 3 evergreen.) The proposed canopy coverage calculations on Sheet L1.01 are focused only on the proposed site and does not use off site tree coverage.

Approximately 7 new shade trees (with an average 50' diameter coverage) are needed to obtain a 37% canopy coverage. Approximately 9 new shade trees are needed to obtain a 40% canopy coverage which is the Tree Commission's goal for the City.

It is the staff's recommendation to ask for funds for 9 additional trees.

Street Trees

(12) London Planetree street trees are requested to be removed. Given the change in grade and adherence to the Main Street Guidelines, the removal of the trees is necessary. Efforts to try and protect the trees in place (such as providing elevated tree well) would not only interfere with the footprint of the building, but the construction would most likely damage a significant portion of the roots thereby effectively killing the trees.

(10) new Exclamation London Planetree are proposed at 30-feet on center. They will sit in a continuous 10' wide channel of structural soil per the Tree Commission's previous request. See sheet L2.01.

There is a break in the row of street trees that identifies the central plaza accessed off the Main Street Sidewalk.

The street trees are located in planters edged with granite curbs and filled with Wintercreeper. Limestone is the material used in the current planters along Main Street and the material should match the adjacent conditions. The plan does call for the brick border immediately behind the curb which will tie into the overall Main Street design. See sheet L3.01

While there has been a lot of debate currently about the use of Wintercreeper, the plant is currently installed in the medians along Main Street as well as most of the tree planters in the sidewalk. The Tree Commission and City should have a larger citywide discussion about the use and proposed replacement of this material and develop a plan for its replacement if desired. For visual consistency and ease of maintenance, Wintercreeper is an appropriate plant.

It is the staff's recommendation to change the granite curbs to limestone curbs, noting that the size and installation should match the immediately adjacent tree planter installations.

11-27-23 Revisions

Granite curbs are still listed on Sheet L3.01 and should be replaced with limestone to match the adjacent tree wells.

A note was added to the Remark column on Sheet L2.21 that the Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*) that the installer must "Verify Actual Species Prior to Planting." The Tree Commission should select a species appropriate for the tree wells and advise the landscape architect to modify the plant list.

It is the staff's recommendation to change the granite curbs to limestone curbs, noting that the size and installation should match the immediately adjacent tree planter installations.

Plant Selection

Overall, the proposed plants are appropriate for the site and light conditions and offer seasonal interest. See sheet L2.21 for the plant list. Cross referencing the Arboretum Tree and Shrub List and considering recent City projects, this project introduces (6) species not currently listed as part of Bexley's arboretum. They are:

- Quercus bicolor 'JFS-KW12' PP 23632 / American Dream Swamp White Oak
- Betula platyphylla 'Fargo' / Dakota Pinnacle Birch Tree
- Juniperus chinensis 'Keteleeri' / Keteleeri Juniper
- Syringa meyeri 'Palibin' / Dwarf Korean Liliac
- Viburnum carlesii / Koreanspice Viburnum
- Juniperus chinensis 'Sea Green' / Sea Green Juniper.

11-27-23 Revisions

The applicant stands by their selection of the Green Vase Zelkovas along the access alley. They explained that they are urban tolerant, have interested bark, a vase-like branching pattern and given the shade studies, are confident that they will have enough light to grow. The previous plan showed (8) Zelkova and the current plan increased the number to (11) to provide more coverage.

Irrigation

The project will be irrigated. See sheet L2.31. The tree wells along Main Street are shown to have drip irrigation. The City does not typically provide irrigation in the tree wells.

Staff recommends that the City Arborist confirm if irrigation in the tree wells should be included or not.

Maintenance Plan

The project includes a maintenance plan which includes lawn care (which may or may not be needed), Landscape Bed Care, Tree Care, General Maintenance, and Manual Watering Guidelines. See sheet L2.21. Overall, the maintenance plan represents a typical commercial maintenance contract.

If the project is to be irrigated, the guideline could be renamed 'Watering Guidelines'. The Street Trees may require the Treegator bags if the irrigation system is into installed in the tree planters at least for the first year until the trees are established.

It is the staff recommendation to amend the Maintenance Plan's Manual Watering Guidelines pending the Tree Commission's discussion.

Planters

(7) planters are proposed along Main Street on the west end of the south elevation where the sidewalk widens. In response to concerns about disproportionate planters, Development Guidelines for Tenant Improvements was proposed on sheet L2.21. This gives guidelines for site furnishings and lighting, including minimum sizes for planters and recommended materials.

It is the staff recommendation that a note be included that all site furnishings (including planters, benches, tables & chairs, and trash receptacles) along public streets and corridors be submitted to the City of Bexley for staff review and approval.

Staff Recommendations

It is the staff recommendation to recommend approval of the landscape plan to BZAP as presented with the above comments incorporated.

It is the staff recommendation to approve the new curb cut and removal of street trees in the Right-of-Way with the condition that the existing egress curb cut from the Bexley Square parking lot be removed and repaired to match adjacent conditions.

11-27-23 NEW ITEMS

North Property Line Fence

There is an 8' tall composite wood fence located 5' from the northern property line that is required by code to screen the parking lot from the adjacent (4) residential properties. The fence is located immediately behind the parking lot curb which gives a 5' bed on the north side which is planted with a row of evergreen shrubs to provide screening for the neighbors. No plant material is proposed for the south facing side of the fence next to the parking lot. This condition of having a fence/wall that separates the residential and commercial districts can be found along many of the properties on Main Street and often landscape is not provided on the commercial side. (City Hall being a prime example.) Note that it is anticipated that this parking lot will be used by employees. To date, it is my understanding that the residents have been told that the evergreens will be provided as shown to help screen the fence from their properties.

The Tree Commission should discuss which is preferred – the current plan that provides screening for the neighbors facing their property or pushing the fence to the property line thereby creating a bed between the fence and parking lot where screening can be provided.

Alley off Bryden

Three bollards have been added at the alley entrance off Bryden to dissuade vehicular traffic. The applicant explained that the area will be repaved with asphalt at a 10' width to be used as a pedestrian and bike path for the community. The green lawn to the east of the path has a Fiber Optic line that runs the full length which prevents shrubs being installed adjacent to the wall and the west side has a heavy canopy.

It is the staff's recommendation to better identify on the plan the proposed improvements to the alley and to consider shade tolerant plants or groundcover along the west side of the alley.

Use of Brick

Brick pavers have commonly been used in the new buildings along Main Street to highlight major entry ways and gathering spaces. The current plans show the brick band between the curb and tree wells, but

there are more opportunities for brick pavers at important plazas and entry ways. This will provide continuity with the rest of the brick details along Main Street.

It is the staff's recommendation to add brick pavers at the Central Plaza, Eastern Plaza, Northeast Access area and the Eastern Entrance.

EV Chargers

There is no plan to relocate the current EV Chargers from the Bexley Square Parking Lot. EV Charging stations take up room and are difficult to screen well with landscape. It is anticipated that additional EV Chargers, if provided, would be located within the covered parking lot.

It is the staff's recommendation to ask that additional EV Chargers be located in the covered parking lot.

Bike Racks

Bike racks are noted to match City standards. Two sets are proposed in the ROW between the tree wells on Main Street and one set is located by the Eastern Entrance. It is unclear what happens to the existing COGO Bike Station at the Bexley Square Entrance.

The Tree Commission should discuss if the bike racks in the ROW are appropriate or not.