



MINUTES
Town of Atherton
CITY COUNCIL
November 6, 2019
SPECIAL MEETING
STUDY SESSION

Mayor Widmer called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

STUDY SESSION – *Convene as the City Council*

1. **ROLL CALL** - Wiest, Lempres, Lewis, Vice Mayor DeGolia, Mayor Widmer – Present
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by John Flaherty
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – *None*
4. **RECIEVE A REPORT AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO EL CAMINO REAL AND THE GRAND BOULEVARD GREENWAY CONCEPT**

City Manager Rodericks introduced this item and provided a brief review. Rodericks noted for the Council that the staff report outlines the history of the project and options.

Public Works Director Ovadia shared initiatives from City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) and Caltrans that pre-date the Complete Streets concept.

Council discussed the level of service evaluation, inclusion of bike lanes, and options available to the Town.

Ovadia noted there is potentially enough room to include a bike lane on one side of the street and a pedestrian walkaway on another. Ovadia clarified that if one bike lane or sidewalk is added without the other that would solve the issue of removing a lane, but both cannot be done.

DeGolia stated the Complete Streets concept is an overlay of all modes of transportation and how that transportation impacts the community. He suggested a solution to include a two-lane bikeway/pedestrian way on one side.

Council discussed improvements on areas throughout Town, timelines for activity involving Caltrans, the Grand Boulevard proposal, and need for regional collaboration.

Council Member Lewis stated her support for protected bike lanes as proposed in the past adding pedestrians would feel safer.

DeGolia noted that at a minimum the Town should develop a two-way lane that bicyclists and pedestrians can use.

Council requested staff gather more data to understand options and potential impacts and requested comments from Chief McCulley considering impacts to Police and Fire. Council collectively support the inclusion of bike lanes on El Camino Real (ECR) and the Grand Boulevard initiative.

Rodericks noted that the General Plan is broad, but flexible. He added improvements along ECR will need to overcome several issues. Rodericks stated supports the Grand Boulevard plan, will expand our involvement in the initiative, engage with neighboring jurisdictions, and consider a public education process. He indicated this item will come back to Council with a potential funding recommendation.

Public Comment

Jen Wolosin, Parents for Safe Routes, encourage Council to look for solutions to make EL Camino Real safer.

Chris Jones commented on the item representing those in the community that commute.

John Langbein requested Council study El Camino Real and Selby Lane.

Gary Lauder commented that residents have concerns about cut-through traffic and the impact of development from neighboring jurisdictions.

5. DISCUSSION ON AMENDMENTS TO ATHERTON MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 8.10 “REMOVAL OF AND DAMAGE TO HERITAGE TREES”, INCLUDING AMENDING THE TREE PRESERVATION GUIDELINES, STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Senior Planner Davis presented the item noting that a series of public meetings have been held beginning in 2016. She continued to highlight the main topics the Ad-Hoc Sub-committee addressed. Davis noted the Ad-Hoc Committee recommended amending the Municipal Code to include protection of all Heritage Trees within 15 feet of Town boundaries. Davis reviewed requirements and steps for removal.

Council discussed barriers for trees on private property, notification of neighboring properties, the inclusion of additional requirements for removal and a not to exceed time frame for replacement.

Council requested that a notice include information about the 15-foot rule.

Town Arborist/Park Manager Bentz noted that removals are done on case by case basis. Each species is evaluated, and an Arborist will determine what is reasonable for each tree.

Council Member Lempres asked if a landowner has an option for removal versus relocation. Davis stated that only if the tree in questions it is not dead or in dangerous position. Councilmember Lempres further commented that he wants to be certain we are not encouraging people to attempt to relocate trees.

Davis highlighted that Redwood Trees have been removed from the ordinance, and in terms of keeping track of the Town trees staff will report back to Council with those numbers.

Council continued to discuss the need for a maintenance bond or security deposit and the number of Heritage Tree removal requests per year.

Lempres commented that this amendment only applies to Planning Commission related approvals. Bentz stated that the amendment only applies to Planning Commission approvals and that for staff level removals the Town Arborist has some discretion.

Larsen stated staff was thoughtful about regulations and they included broad discretion in the amendment.

Rodericks noted staff will bring this item back at the December Regular meeting for a first reading of the ordinance. This will include the Council feedback.

6. **ADJOURN**

Mayor Widmer adjourned the meeting at 6:36 p.m.



Anthony Suber
City Clerk