

# DRAFT

## MINUTES THE MAIN STREET COMMITTEE SPECIAL SESSION October 14, 2021

A Special Meeting was held by the Schertz Main Street Committee of the City of Schertz, Texas, on October 14, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in the Hal Baldwin Municipal Complex Council Chambers Conference Room, 1400 Schertz Parkway, Building #4, Schertz, Texas. The following members present to-wit:

**Present:** Chair & Councilmember Mark Davis  
Mayor Ralph Gutierrez  
Councilmember Allison Heyward

**Absent:** Councilmember Tim Brown

**City Staff:** Brian James, Assistant City Manager; Brenda Dennis, City Secretary; Adrian Perez, EDC Director

**Attendees:** Frenchy Bourgeois; Dean Weirtz; Stephen Aniol, PE; Leo O'Brian, PLA; Devin Simpson, PE; Blaine Mikulik, PLA

### **Call to order**

Chair Davis call the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **Hearing of Residents**

This time is set aside for any person who wishes to address the Committee. Each person should fill out the speaker's register prior to the meeting. Presentations should be limited to no more than 3 minutes.

Any person making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks while addressing the Committee may be requested to leave the meeting.

Discussion by the Committee of any item not on the agenda shall be limited to statements of specific factual information given in response to any inquiry, a recitation of existing policy in response to an inquiry, and/or a proposal to place the item on a future agenda. The presiding officer, during the Hearing of Residents portion of the agenda, will call on those persons who have signed up to speak in the order they have registered.

*No one signed up to speak.*

## Discussion and/or Action Items

### 1. **Design Concepts/Elements** - Discussion/presentation and possible action regarding the Design Concepts/Elements for the Main Street Project. (M. Davis/B. James/)

Chair Davis opened the meeting stating that over the past two (2) years now they have been meeting to press forward to make improvements with our Main Street Bond Initiative. The Sector Plan identified Main Street as hopefully a place where people can go and gather, assemble and spend some time attending events. The area was a little run down, and we are now in the process of making improvements. One of the things that we have taken care of is a whole section of Main Street did not have any sidewalks, which limited mobility up and down Main Street. We have now installed sidewalks there.

We have spent a lot of time discussing the flood plain issues in that area and how to address them moving forward. Some initiatives have taken place to attract some businesses down on Main Street. New businesses include: Bar House on Main, Coffee Shop, Ice Cream and a Food Truck Court business is also coming to Main Street.

Chair Davis stated that we are at the point now where we can start talking about the rest of the physical improvements. He asked, how do we make it a place where people want to come and hang out? Our Main Street is not what you would think a traditional Main Street would be, like downtown New Braunfels, Seguin or Fredericksburg. We would like to keep an older feel to it, a more of a Historical feel while we are upgrading amenities to make it easier and more friendly Main Street.

Our plan includes putting in benches, trash receptacles and lighting. We envision that the lighting would have capabilities of hanging banners on them, as well as electrical capabilities, so we could put up Christmas or others decorations. The sector plan called for entrance marquees and parking lots down on Main. We are at the stage of discussion where we can sit down and discuss the design elements. This would be helpful to all be on the same general page.

Chair Davis recognized Assistant City Manager Brian James who explained that when we started looking at the possibilities, the City looked to Kimley Horn for assistance. The City was pleased with the previous work Kimley Horn has provided. Our previous discussions began with where we may want electrical capabilities on Main Street. We have discussed the challenges of where Main Street is located because it is not your typical town square. You cannot see it coming off FM 78. Some comments suggest we need to look at setting up a long term vision. Thinking about how we are integrating wayfindings with the aesthetics that we are planning and putting signage up on Schertz Parkway and I-35. This way we are able to get people to come down to Main Street. It became a long term vision layout of what we want and what the residents want, so it supports the redevelopment we are going to have.

Mr. James reiterated that we are not going to have a Main Street like Kerrville, New Braunfels, or Seguin. We are going to have our own unique thing, maybe a little edgier or cooler and still have the historical elements that we build or want to highlight. It will be a little more eclectic as you see on those that grow over time. Celebrating the portions of history that we want to maintain, highlight and preserve. For example, the old hospital that has been there more than 50 years, basically captures the different history and have it integrated to be the vision we want. This also will support the businesses that we want to bring in and what kind of improvements will we need to make this happen. The idea this evening is to set the stage and then start the survey work to see

what we have underground, so we can move forward on some art installations and parking lot improvements.

Mr. James turned the meeting over to Mr. Steve Aniol with Kimley-Horn.

Kimley-Horn Associates:

Mr. Steve Aniol, Ms. Devin Simpson, Mr. Blaine Mikulik, and Mr. Leo O'Brian introduced themselves.

Mr. Steve Aniol provided the following outline for the meeting:

#### Purpose of Tonight's Discussion

- Understanding the City's vision for Main Street
- Create open dialogue to help determine concept and landscape vocabulary
- Review of implementation zones - different areas along Main Street
- Start thinking about design considerations

#### Looking Back

- 2010 Schertz Downtown Revitalization Planning Report
- Serves as a resource to establish a vision for the Main Street Revitalization project

#### Looking Ahead

- Build upon previous studies and existing urban design components
- Determine influences for the implementation zones identified
- Establish a landscape vocabulary

#### Project Vision

- Old town
- Garden Walk

#### Branding and Theme

- 2021 Branding Design
- Signage and Wayfinding

#### Project Scope

- Main Street from Schertz Parkway to Curtiss Avenue
- Limited to the space within the existing right-of-way
- Setting the tone for adjacent streets and re-development
- Look at multi-phased approach (funding)
- Proposed typical section to be developed based on coordination with Staff and Committee members
- Maintain existing curbs/sidewalks where feasible
- Dimensions and elements may vary from what is shown

#### Design Considerations

- Landscape areas
- Illumination
- Entrance Archways

- Street Furniture
- Utilities
- Street Surface

#### Next Steps

- Evaluate Input from Staff and Committee Members
- Complete Additional Stakeholder Coordination
- Conduct Field Work
- Develop Design Approach to Landscape Architecture
- Prepare Multiple Concepts based on Committee Input
- Review Concepts with Staff and Committee Members

Mr. Leo O'Brian, Landscape Architect stated that he has gone over some of the old studies that have been mentioned. He stated that they have done some quick hand sketches of the first impressions and broke the areas of Main Street into different districts. First sketch was four districts of the area: Neighborhood, Old town, Garden Walk and Civic Park, second sketch was where they are planning the design improvements of the four districts: Parkway Tree Areas, Pocket Garden, Theme Pedestrian, Light pole, Theme Street Marker etc. and the first impressions were discussed.

Mr. James stated that previously they were not thinking about Main Street being divided up into different areas/sections, the question the committee may have is how will this work. Do you like the idea of breaking down into districts, but it all still working together? Members present discussed the new development being constructed now, and how the current business will fit in with the vision of Main Street. Mr. James explained that the current owners might choose to sell their current location to a new owner and set up someplace else. All things considered, we need a long term vision for Main Street. Chair Davis described the current businesses and current styles they are representing.

Mr. O'Brian stated that these were first initial ideas and now that some development has happened, they will adjust the plan moving forward. Others committee members provided their thoughts on the developments that have been built on Main Street.

Mr. Dean Weirtz stated that regarding gateways, there are two boulevards coming off of FM 78 that are not attractive. These need to be complimented on what we are planning and follow some form of decorum which will continue the theme we are choosing for the Main Street area. He asked that those areas be looked at.

Mr. Frenchy Bourgeois asked if markers could be placed on FM 78 letting drivers know that up ahead, Main Street, Schertz is a place of interest. He would like drivers to turn into that area and not drive past it. Mr. Brian James agreed about the markers and said this what staff has been talking about, how to catch people's attention before they pass Main Street.

Mr. Bourgeois asked about Lindbergh Street and if was it going to be part of the future vision. Mr. Aniol explained that it is part of the plan to incorporate the reconstruction of Lindbergh into the Main Street concept. We have a design mostly done and until we get further along on the Main Street portion, we can merge the two plans together.

Mr. O'Brian continued to explain the design sketch that included taller, nicer light fixtures, curbs, parking accessibility and ROW's. We can do a lot with very little space. He presented an example of the light fixture with banners and the fixture is adjustable. The feel of old town would more vertical, with the trees it would have a nice garden feel.

Mr. Dean Weirtz stated pavers were discussed as part of the surface area in the main roadways vs. concrete. Mr. Brian James said that the pavers would be in the key locations, but not down the entire street.

Mr. Aniol indicated many of the buildings will redevelop and that is when we need to phase in some of these ideas. The focus needs to be what we can do now by identifying those key locations that we feel we can improve now. Some of the T-streets that come in from the north will be addressed as those areas are developed. What it comes down to is, what can we accomplish now with the funding we have? Mr. Aniol asked, do we identify and separate as districts or do we continue a general theme for the entire thing?

Mr. O'Brian continued to explain the sketch drawings, they considered having some extension north of Curtiss Ave. and having markers on Curtiss Ave. letting drivers know Old Town is a left turn on Randolph. As they headed towards Main Street they would see the improvements which included decorative light fixtures and the parkway trees. Mr. O'Brian added that a lot of work has been done on Main Street already will use this as a base as they move forward. He would like to get some help from a signage designer on scale, height and the designs of the sign markers.

Mr. Dean Weirtz asked if the red boxes on the sketch are the entrance markers. Mr. O'Brian replied that they are entrance markers for Main Street, and they will bring back several options of what they could be. He also mentioned an archway at the entrance and explained there are a variety of types. Mr. Weirtz suggested antique light poles on both sides with a fabricated steel design and banners could compliment the area.

Mr. Aniol stated in terms of the archway, they thought as close as they could get it to Schertz Parkway, and the more you move west, there are a couple of different locations to consider, as Curtiss Ave. has potential. The challenge is, it is a TxDot area and if you are considering an archway, it would be a wide stretch across the road. The decision does not need to be made right now, and there are several options to consider. If you need an easement, speaking with the owner of the property and letting them know you are pumping in money in to improving that area, they might be receptive knowing the businesses are going to benefit. These are some possible issues moving forward.

Mr. Dean Weirtz asked if there was an archway at the end of Main Street/Schertz Parkway, would we necessarily have to have a similar feature at the other end? The discussion several options including half-arches, pillars or straight columns. Mr. Brian James stated that these are the comments Kimley Horn wants to hear, do we want to match at both sides of the entrances or can we design something that compliments each other. Mr. Weirtz stated there is an ideal spot near Lindbergh and Main Street and Mr. James said the city owns that green area he mentioned.

Mr. O'Brian stated that it is important to put something interesting in those areas when you can. He added that one of the most prominent streets is Schertz Parkway and the key is to get their attention.

Mr. Aniol said he spoke with Mr. James asked about having electric hookups. When Mr. Aniol was in Pleasanton he had noticed they had some general archway designs but no electrical outlets incorporated into them. He knew moving forward, this is something he would put in his designs and not have the client put up man-made electrical outlets for their holidays or festivals. There are so many options since we are talking about lighting and needing electric for that area. We would just need to contact GVEC and work with them.

Mr. James asked the committee if they were in favor of having electrical outlets incorporated to the

designs so holiday decorations and other festivals would have electric available. The committee was all in agreement to add electrical outlets. We would like to have events at night and draw people down to Main Street. Mr. James continued that the idea would be to close the street down and have the events spread out down Main Street. Concerns about truck traffic and the planned designs elements to accommodate truck traffic would be discussed as the project is planned out.

Mr. Aniol wanted to get into some design particulars, but first he asked if concepts that Mr. O'Brian presented about the zone areas is something the committee wanted to do or stick to a general theme across the whole area. The designers want to hear what the committee wants and then come back with some conceptual level layouts, talk through it and get a consensus. Mayor Gutierrez stated Main Street provides a lot of challenges because of the way it is, splitting it in two zones might work.

Chair Davis added that he understands there is a funding issue and the need to take care of the less developed areas. Once we take care of street, sidewalks, planters and the garden area some sculptures in no man's land, we could do the heavy design on the end where businesses are located and do a similar design at the other end. The entire area is from Main Street to Pfeil Street. We could phase the work as we bring in new businesses. If an owner suddenly sells and the buyer wants to turn it into a restaurant, then it could be developed at a high end. He sees no advantage to do high-end design work the entire length of Main Street at this time.

Mr. Weirtz explained there are two historical homes on Main Street. He stated from the Schertz Historical Preservation Committee perspective, the whole street is 'Historical'.

Chair Davis stated that he is in favor of standardize lighting, benches and garbage receptacles. In front of the historical homes, there would not be a stub-out in front of those homes. From earlier discussions, our concern was parking. We looked into angled parking, but it wasn't possible because of the width of the street. Folks can still park on Main Street, but the issue is there is no delineated parking. We need to figure out parking and to mitigate some traffic issues. He added that the food truck area, this might be a good area to do a stub-out, pavers, and benches to dress it up.

Mr. James reiterated that we need to keep in mind that what kind of development we will get over time and make sure what we do now is supportive with the change of use. We do not want to put anything out there that would be in conflict with the historic homes. Mr. Weirtz would like all of Main Street to evolve and be recognized as historic. Adding sculptures and markers at key locations will help represent the historic past.

Mr. James stated that the concern from residents, business owners and citizens, is that there needs to be more lighting. There is a value to go with a higher-end light with an historic look in the area with a lot of businesses. The concept at the business ends would be we have more light and in the areas that have not been redeveloped, use standardized lighting.

Chair Davis would like uniformed lighting up and down Main Street and, have the capability to add additional lighting when more businesses are redeveloped. Mr. James summarized that what we are doing at the ends will be different from the middle part of the street. As development grows, the plan can grow with it.

Mr. O'Brian stated since they are going to be putting in the infrastructure they could set it up to where in the middle, they have outlets on every other pole, but in the future you will not have to recut the street to connect to electric. There are many options.

Chair Davis explained that we have a bond money, available street money, EDC money and HOT funds,

that can be used for this project, and if we could do the lighting for the entire street, he would be all for it. The big picture is all of Main Street from the Schertz Parkway to the other end towards FM 1518. The question is do we have enough money to do the entire length? We might have the funds for some of the project but not all of it, and if that is the case, where do you begin with development, on both ends of the street? Mr. Davis is recommending that we build up the areas that have active businesses, In middle where it has not been redeveloped, we will plan to keep the same theme and upgrade when development does occur.

Mr. O'Brian discussed the heights of the light poles will need to adjusted if the lights are next to a two-story building vs. a home residence. They would look at all the elevations before deciding the height of the light poles. There were questions about the sketches and the placement of the lights. Nothing needed to be decided today, but the designers wanted the committee to start thinking of the look they wanted, more historical, contemporary or eclectic.

Mr. Aniol explained that the pavement width is about 40-41 ft. wide, ROW is 60 ft., it is mostly built out, so we would have about 4-5 ft. behind the sidewalk to work with. With funding and the limited budget, we can identify the lighting and improvements with the more developed areas and approach it as a multiphase plan. They will come back with conceptual plans, full design plan and a scaled back design, and the costs to each one of them.

Mr. Aniol continued explaining the sketch with the design improvements that included pavement trees, pocket garden, light poles and street markers. He also discussed the parking on the street and needing proper striping to mark off parking spaces. He also addressed the sidewalk improvements that would be needed to be ADA compliant. Mr. Aniol summarized on the topics they discussed that included: architecture, lighting, bumpouts, benches, sidewalks, parking.

Kimley Horn would like to be included with utilities' coordination with GVEC, ATT and the city, to make sure the planning, relocation, alignment and future improvements are considered. They have already identified a few street surface base failures that will need to be repaired and that could be close to \$300,000-\$400,000 dollars.

Mr. James agreed that when the design concepts come in and the infrastructure repairs are identified, those discussions on whether it would be viable to wait on repairs or plan to repair the infrastructure before all these improvements are put in. Staff's plan is that we want to make sure we are making informed decisions with all the information given.

Mr. Aniol spoke about the sewer on Main Street and how eventually it will be replaced. Currently, with it built out, there probably wouldn't be any additional flow to be accounted for. There will need to be some consideration on when the sewers are worked on, the tearing up the sidewalk will be inevitable. Planning when the infrastructure for the street will be key to when we put in the design improvements.

Mr. James stated that we will need to look at our sources of funding, and it may cause us to re-prioritize the water and sewer to do it now and get it done. He explained Council's opinion is, do it right and have folks get their money's worth.

Mr. Aniol talked about the different surface materials that included pavers, concrete, stained concrete and stamped concrete. The city is looking for a low maintenance option for street designs and are open to learning about all the options out there. Kimley Horn will bring back some examples of all the surface street options with the conceptual drawings.

Staff and City Council are aware that drainage is a big concern for the Main Street area. Mr. Aniol was

explaining that when they start the conceptual plans, proper drainage will not be overlooked. If the project gets underway and the drainage needs to be addressed, it will make the project more challenging.

Mr. James stated that from a City's standpoint, we know there are several areas that have drainage concerns. Staff is aware that changes that are being planned could have the effect of improving drainage in that particular area, but if not, we never want to make the problem worse.

Mr. Aniol finished up his presentation explaining the improvements that will help the drainage near Main Street and existing roadways. He explained about not having to regrade or put in a storm drain near the intersection of Lindbergh and the Exchange, will save money on this project. There will be curbs and sidewalks on both sides of the street to help maintain the existing grade to help water flow and not pool in certain areas.

Mr. Aniol thanked everyone for their feedback, and said they will go back and work on the comments and suggestions that were discussed today. They will have an additional survey done next week to identify the existing infrastructure and are coordinating with other utilities to get maps of their lines. They will also work on the landscape approach for this project, create some conceptual plans and cost them out. Once all the details have been confirmed and approved, they will schedule a complete presentation for City Council.

Chair Davis asked if Kimley Horn is planning on working with TxDot to see if they would be able to widen out the sidewalk in front of the stairs near the old Sippel Hardware Store and making it ADA compliant. He presented a design from Blanco that has a similar challenge as to the narrow sidewalk and their solution.

Mr. James stated that once we receive the survey and discuss with TxDot the options, we will have a better idea of what can be done.

Chair Davis asked Mr. James with the work that the city has planned and done already, should we pause on the artwork plans? Mr. James agreed and said that the art/fiberglass shirts are on hold until the survey comes back before continuing with the artwork plans.

Chair Davis thanked the representatives with Kimley Horn and is looking forward to seeing their conceptual designs. Mr. James asked how long will the survey take? Mr. Aniol stated the survey should take about a month and a half, and then another month to them to come up with the designs. He was glad they were able to meet with everyone before the survey got started. Mr. Aniol will get a detailed schedule written up and share it with the city, so everyone will know the timeline.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 7:35 p.m.

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Mark Davis, Chair

ATTEST:

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Brenda Dennis, City Secretary

