Florida Avenue Park

City Council Meeting
Item 6b: Appeal of the Removal of Two Heritage Trees
Tuesday, November 13, 2018
Presentation Objectives

• Provide Overview of the Development of the New Florida Avenue Neighborhood Park

• Present Park Layout and Design

• Provide Information on Heritage Trees
  • Decision to Retain or Remove Two Heritage Trees
  • Citizens’ Appeal of the Heritage Tree Removal Permit

• Discuss Potential Alternatives and Next Steps
Agenda

1. Background
   - Site Acquisition
   - Park Planning

2. Current Design
   - Approved Design
   - Park Elements

3. Heritage Trees
   - Heritage Tree Ordinance
   - Arborists Findings/Recommendations
   - Heritage Tree Removal Permit
   - Appeal of Heritage Tree Removal Permit

4. Potential Options
   - Approve or Deny Appeal
   - Alternative Design 1
   - Alternative Design 2

5. Questions/Answers

6. Appellant Presentation

7. Public Comment

8. Council Discussion and Direction
Background

• Site Acquisition
  o October 28, 2014 - City Council authorized purchase of 324 Florida Avenue for future use as a neighborhood park

• Internal Planning and Budgeting in 2015
  o $430K for site remediation
  o $1.4M for park planning, design, and construction

• Site Remediation Started in 2016
Background

• Restoration of 1915 Carving (Tableau)
  o “Independence of Switzerland” carved by a former resident of 324 Florida Avenue, Francois Perroset
  o Displayed at the 1938-39 Golden Gate International Exhibition in San Francisco
  o Restored 2016-2017, currently on display in City Hall Lobby
Background

- Park Master Planning Process
  - City hired design firm MIG to undertake master planning process (community engagement and design services)
  - Needs Assessment / Site Inventory conducted
  - Two community engagement workshops conducted in June 2016
  - Draft Master Plan developed
  - City Council approval – October 20, 2016
Background

• Preparation of Plans & Specifications (Late 2016 to Early 2017)
• Construction: Bidding and Contact Award (August 2017)
• Cancellation of Construction Contract (November 2017)
• Design Changes
• Concerns Regarding Heritage Trees
• Staffing Changes
Current Design

• Key Park Features

  o Children's play area with play equipment and rubberized play surfacing
  o Adult exercise features including a cardio course and multi-generational play equipment
  o Great Lawn area with turf or drought tolerant grass
  o Minimum of 12 new trees per the City's standards and preservation of two existing on-site heritage trees
  o Neighborhood square with scored tone paving and picnic tables
  o Pedestrian paths with seating
What is a Heritage Tree?

San Bruno Municipal Code Defines a Heritage Tree as...

1. Native Bay, Oak, Redwood, or Pine Tree *(6 inches or more in diameter @ 54 feet)*

2. Any Tree or Stand of Trees Designated by the City Council to Have Special Historical Value or Significant Community Benefit

3. Stand of Trees that Depend on Each Other for Survival

4. Any Other Tree with a Trunk Diameter of 10 inches or More @ 54 feet
Removal of a Heritage Tree

San Bruno Municipal Code Heritage Tree Removal...

• Requires City Permit

• Subject to Specific Site/Tree Conditions

• Replanting Requirements for Each Tree Removed, Either...
  ▪ Two twenty-four inch box trees, or
  ▪ One thirty-six inch box tree

• Minimum 10-day Appeal Period

• Appeals Heard by City Council
Heritage Trees at Park Site

Norfolk Island Pine

Deodar Cedar
Concerns Regarding Heritage Trees and Park Design

- Proximity to Children's Play Equipment
  - Hazard from falling cones
  - Potential impact to tree root structures during construction
  - Play equipment maintenance issues related to honey dew excretions

- Health of the Trees

- Enhanced Landscape Maintenance from Pine Needles

- Park Aesthetics
Norfolk Island Pine

• **Arborists Findings**
  • Play structure within 6 feet of the trunk
  • Root loss will be between 25-30 percent from construction
  • Tree at maturity point, producing many cones (observed 100+ on tree)
  • Cones are grapefruit size and weigh about 1 to 2 pounds
  • Cones fall near the top of the tree (about 50 to 80 feet)
  • Falling cone could cause serious harm or death

• **Arborists Recommendations**
  • Remove tree w/ current park design
Deodar Cedar

**Arborists Findings**
- Tree has been heavily trimmed and topped in the past
- Recent trimming decreased chances of limb failure
- Disfiguration permanent
- Root loss from walking path installation approximately 10-15%

**Arborists Recommendations**
- Remove one limb that has a decayed and cracked
- Overall risk posed is currently low
- Tree can be retained with proper care
Recap of Heritage Tree Removal Process

• Staff Arborist Recommended Removal of the Trees

• City Hired Two Independent Arborists to Evaluate Both Trees

• Park Development Process and Heritage Tree Issue Presented to the Park and Recreation Commission on September 19, 2018

• Staff Issued and Posted a Heritage Tree Removal Permits on September 20, 2018

• Citizen Appeal Received on September 26, 2018
Appeal of Heritage Tree Removal Permit

• Duly Submitted and Received within Municipal Code Guidelines

• Primary Reasons Cited...
  1. Heritage trees are healthy
  2. Community design altered
  3. Risks can be mitigated

• Group Appeal by 17 individuals

• Appellant Presentation to Follow
Potential Alternative Designs

• Should the City Council Accept the Appeal and Retain Both Heritage Trees, Staff has Developed Two Preliminary Alternative Designs
Alternative Design 1

• Relocate the Children’s Play Area closer to the middle of the Park site, thereby increasing the distance from the core root structure of the trees. This alternative also reduces the size of the lawn feature near the Florida Avenue side of the park. Fall zone for the Norfolk Island pine’s cones to be fenced off, making that portion of the park unusable.

• Estimated Timeline
  o 2-3 months to revise design/specifications (est. additional $50-75K)
  o 3-6 month process to rebid and select contractor
  o Construction start est. during second quarter of 2019
  o Anticipated completion fourth quarter 2019 or early 2020
Alternative Design 1
Alternative Design 2

• Eliminate all play equipment in the park and provide a large lawn from the middle of the site to the Florida Avenue frontage. This will create a dedicated area for the heritage trees in the rear of the site that will be enclosed with a fence and unusable.

• Estimated Timeline
  o 1-2 months to revise design/specifications
  o 3-6 month process to rebid and select contractor
  o Construction start est. during first quarter of 2019
  o Anticipated completion second or third quarter 2019
Alternative Design 2
Council Questions on Staff Presentation

Appellant Presentation

Public Comment

Council Discussion and Direction