



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Tell and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: David N. Carmany, City Manager

FROM: Jim Arndt, Director of Public Works
Sona Kalapura, Environmental Programs Manager

DATE: January 17, 2012

SUBJECT: Landscape Renovation of the Post Office Demonstration Garden

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve proceeding with the landscape renovation of the Post Office Demonstration Garden so that work on the project can begin.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

There are no General Funds being used for the estimated \$20,000 project. There are costs associated with City staff involvement in site preparation and participation with the Environmental Task Force and Leadership Manhattan Beach class as the Post Office Demonstration Garden moves from conceptual through construction stages. Staff costs are available in the existing budget.

BACKGROUND:

The mission of the Environmental Task Force is: "To unite the community in a comprehensive effort to promote sustainable living in the City of Manhattan Beach." As part of this mission, the Environmental Task Force has developed several proposals to raise awareness on energy efficiency and the responsible use of water in the community. City Council approved these proposals on October 4, 2011, one of which is the redesign of the existing landscaped area in front of the Post Office to promote water conservation and implement sustainable landscaping practices.

DISCUSSION:

The goal of the Post Office Demonstration Garden is to create a beautiful public space that champions the principles of sustainable landscaping, while reducing the City's utility and maintenance costs and removing harmful impacts to the environment.

The City of Manhattan Beach owns and maintains the existing landscape in front of the Post Office and City Hall Annex building at 425 15th Street. This location is a highly visible point in the community, across from the 9/11 Memorial and Veteran's Parkway. Because of its high visibility and potential to serve as a focal point for the community, the Environmental Task Force proposed redesigning the landscape to create a demonstration garden, with design elements similar to the project flanking the entrance to City Hall.

The City Council reviewed and approved the initial concept for a demonstration garden at the Post Office site on October 4, 2011. With this approval, the Environmental Task Force began seeking community support for this initiative. On November 28, 2011 the Leadership Manhattan Beach 2012 class selected the Post Office Demonstration Garden proposal as their class project, and has committed to raise funds and contribute volunteer hours to design and install the new garden.

Project Design

The draft landscape design features California native and climate-appropriate plants to draw wildlife to the area; and options for seating and circular pathways for the public to enjoy (See Attachment A). The initial design concepts, including pathways, climate-appropriate plants, and seating were presented for approval during several Environmental Task Force meetings and to City Council on October 4, 2011. The Leadership Manhattan Beach 2012 class will present a final design plan to City Council at their February meeting.

Site Assessment

To prepare for the project, the City's arborist was brought in to examine the site and assess the visible tree-health issues. Serious problems with two of the trees on the project site were found, and tree removal is recommended. The arborist recommends the removal of the Monterey Pine and Victorian Box trees because of health and safety concerns. If removed, the trees will be replaced with climate-appropriate shade trees. If the City Council approves the project, the Leadership Manhattan Beach class will begin to lay down mulch once City staff remove the diseased trees and turf on the project site.

Community Outreach

A Community Outreach meeting was held on January 12, 2012 in the City Council Chambers to specifically address concerns from the members of the public regarding tree removal at the Post Office Demonstration Garden project site. The overall design plan and partnership between the Environmental Task Force and Leadership Manhattan Beach was also discussed. The meeting was properly noticed in the Beach Reporter, on the City website and physical posting locations, and was noticed through a mailing to property owners within 400 feet of the project area. (Note: The proposal for the Post Office project has also been discussed at 3 publicly noticed ETF meetings as well as a City Council meeting, and meeting minutes are available on the City website.)

CONCLUSION:

In order for the project to move forward, City Council approval to begin work on the site preparation, including tree and turf removal is requested. Staff recommends that City Council approve a notice to proceed with the landscape renovation of the Post Office Demonstration Garden so that work on the project can begin.

Attachment A: Draft Landscape Design and Plant Materials

Attachment A:
Garden

Draft Landscape Design and Plant Materials for Post Office Demonstration

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ph 310.218.6875

MANHATTAN BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& U.S. POSTAL OFFICE ANNEX



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Garden Design

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SHRUBS/TREES:

CALIF LILAC

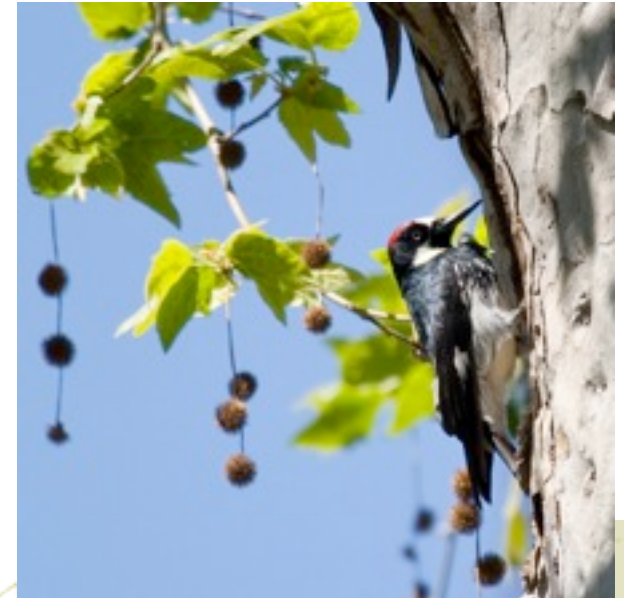
Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'

COFFEE BERRY

CALIF SYCAMORE TREE

MANZANITA

Arctostaphylos 'Howard McMinn'



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PERENNIALS:
OCTOPUS AGAVE
BLUE GLOW AGAVE
BRIGHT STAR YUCCA
LOMANDRA GRASS
DEER GRASS
CAREX GRASS
PINK MUHLY GRASS



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BUTTERFLY GARDEN:

YARROW
MILKWEED
SEASIDE DAISY
MOOR GRASS
BIDEN'S DAISY

OTHER FLOWERS:

SAGE
KANGAROO PAW



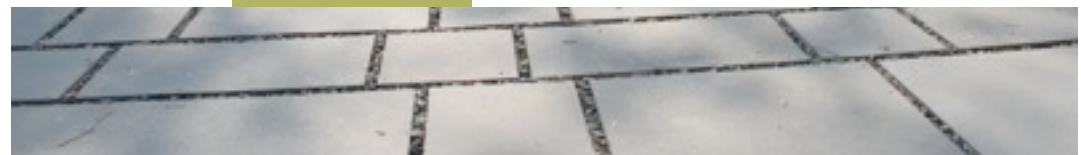
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GARDEN ELEMENTS:

BOWL FOUNTAIN
DG PATHWAYS
CONCRETE PAVERS
SEATING AREAS
WATER WISE PLANTS
BOULDERS



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