



City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 20-3122

Type: Staff Briefing - Without Ordinance

In control: Planning Commission

On agenda: 5/13/2020

Title: TPV 20-026: Request by Mr. Brandon Ross for approval of a tree preservation variance request from Unified Development Code 35-523 (h), "significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent and heritage trees at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas." The site is generally located at 1349 Neal Road. Staff recommends approval. (Herminio Griego, (210) 207-6042, herminio.griego@sanantonio.gov, Development Services Department)

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. TPV 20-026

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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DEPARTMENT: Development Services

SUBJECT: TPV 20-026 Medina River Greenway Phase 3

SUMMARY:

Request by Mr. Brandon Ross for approval of a tree preservation variance request from Unified Development Code 35-523 (h), "significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent and heritage trees at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas." The site is generally located at 1349 Neal Road. Staff recommends approval. (Herminio Griego, (210) 207-6042, herminio.griego@sanantonio.gov, Development Services Department)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project A/P# 1913627

Council District: 3

Consultant: Mr. Brandon Ross with Parks and Recreation Department

Staff Coordinator: Herminio Griego, Assistant City Arborist, (210) 207-6042

ANALYSIS:

The Development Services Department (DSD) has reviewed the information presented in Mr. Homer Garcia's letter dated February 26, 2020.

The Unified Development Code (UDC) - Article V, Section 35-523 (h), 100-Year Floodplain(s) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas states that, "Significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas. Heritage trees shall be preserved at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplain and environmentally sensitive areas. Mitigation shall be prohibited in floodplains and environmentally sensitive area except when a variance is granted by the Planning Commission."

The applicant is requesting a Variance Request to mitigate for removal of a heritage tree in excess of the 100%

preservation requirements within the Environmentally Sensitive Area in place under the 2010 Tree Preservation Ordinance for construction of Medina River Greenway Phase 3 project. DSD staff does agree with the applicant's request to mitigate for the removal of heritage tree below 100% for the following reasons:

1. *Existing site conditions* - The Medina River Greenway Phase 3 project consists of a 3.1 mile trail from Land Heritage Institute property to the Pearsall Road Trailhead. When the trees were first surveyed for the project in 2013, tree number 4099 measure 20 inches in diameter. A great deal of time has elapsed in the implementation of the project due to flooding, site erosion and contracting issues. As of February 2020, tree number 4099 now measures 26 inches in diameter. Additionally, whereas the original design for the bridge across Medina River was a concrete structure requiring that piers be drilled into the river bed, the Parks and Recreation department is now planning to install a pre-fabricated bridge to avoid environmental impacts and alleviate constructability concerns with drilling piers into the Medina River. In order to place the bridge at the river crossing location, a crane will need to be utilized and tree number 4099 will need to be removed. The required mitigation for the removal of the 26 inch Cottonwood is 78 inches.
2. *Tree mitigation* - The project will exceed the required mitigation of 78 inches by planting (70) - 1.5 inch to 2 inch caliper native medium to large shade trees for a total of 106.5 inches planted back on Land Heritage Institute (LHI) property. LHI will perform the site preparation, tree plantings and maintenance to get the trees established. The proposed planting plan provides added species diversity to include native medium and large shade tree species per Appendix E "San Antonio Recommended Plant List." Trees proposed to be planted for mitigation include: Bur Oak, Mexican Sycamore, Pecan, Cedar Elm, Live Oak and Monterey Oak.

DSD staff supports the applicant's request to fall below 100% of heritage tree preservation requirements within the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) based on the conditions of the site, design constraints, and exceeding mitigation requirements. The proposed Variance Request meets the intent and spirit of the Tree Ordinance therefore, staff recommends approval.