

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: .Tim Still
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To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Resident Comment on Agenda Item No. 8: Ordinance Amending Chapter 13.10 of the Municipal Code

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RESIDENT COMMENT ON ITEM No. 8 of the AGENDA FOR PASADENA CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2026: Ordinance Amending Sections 12.10.020 and 12.10.032 of the Municipal Code

My

name is Timothy Still and I am a homeowner at 740 S. Orange Grove Blvd., Unit #3, Pasadena, CA 91105. I'm also the president of the condominium homeowners' association at that address. Our complex is located at the corner of Markham Place and Orange Grove and is a "cut out" adjacent to the Markham Historic District.

I'm

not objecting to the proposed ordinance in general but would like to comment on its implementation with respect to Orange Grove Blvd. both as a resident of my neighborhood and as an HOA president.

I

have talked to several of my neighbors on Congress Place and Markham Place and universally they are disturbed by the potential disruption of the appearance of Orange Grove by the removal of the ornamental turf or "lawns". This includes even neighbors who have xeriscape landscaping in their own yards. They cite Orange Grove's role as a primary entrance to our city, its appearance during the annual Rose Parade, and the "iconic" sweep of wide green lawns from Columbia all the way up to Colorado Boulevard. Most specifically there is a concern that Orange Grove will be rendered a "hodge podge" as each of the many HOAs on the street determines how to landscape its property.

A

question raised by my neighbors is whether there is some potential in implementing this ordinance to create a "landscape exemption district", similar to an historic district, to preserve the existing ensemble of landscaping on the street and, thus, its impression on the many visitors to our city who enter Pasadena on Orange Grove? Having raised my neighbors' question, I will admit that I have been advised that California municipalities have had very little luck trying to establish exceptions to recent State laws like the one that is the impetus for this ordinance amendment, such as the laws related to residential zoning and lot splits. However, the question deserved to be raised and considered.

I

will continue to comment as an HOA president. I have talked to other HOA presidents and board members, and their basic reaction to the State law is resentment at yet another unfunded mandate. Each one has commented that their HOA has no money accrued for relandscaping

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and this will require a special assessment(s) on their members. In addition, they also would like clear, consistent direction from the city on what they should do with areas of city-owned property like the “parking strips” that HOAs maintain at their expense.

On

Orange Grove the “parking strips” stretch for miles and a short list of appropriate, suggested groundcovers might have the effect of maintaining some consistency in the appearance of the street. When I say “appropriate” I’m including performance characteristics like a ground cover that can be stepped on from a parked vehicle and which wouldn’t harbor rats. The need to consider practical considerations like that plus the very large number of affected HOAs in Pasadena suggests that the city should seriously consider eliciting community involvement from among those who are directly impacted in developing a specific plan to deal with these areas.

As

to the landscaping on the inside of the sidewalk, attempted uniformity would be much harder to achieve. For example, our building is built on a plinth and we will have to use plantings suitable for relatively steep slopes. Nevertheless, overall guidelines for plant materials could help to maintain as much consistency on the street as possible.

A

final comment is that HOAs need direction early. I’ve heard that Water and Power might not start “reaching out” until early 2028 for something with a January 1, 2029 implementation deadline. That’s too late, especially if the city makes an effort to include the affected HOA community in coming up with a plan. That should begin in early- to mid-2027.

HOAs

have multiple bidder rules and to raise funds by special assessment can take 10-12 weeks following State regulations for voting by secret ballot. Following the required processes and actually getting the work done could easily take up most of 2028 and, if a good faith effort is made at community involvement, that needs to happen in 2027.

Thank

you for considering my comments.