

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION QUESTIONS
May 12, 2021 MEETING

Item 5.1 – Sylvan Park Trellis Replacement Concept Plan, Project 21-47

1. Has staff considered the possibility of keeping a couple of the wisterias? I counted five currently growing up the stakes. Could staff perhaps preserve the trunks of a few of the wisterias while demolishing the pergola (keeping their stakes as free standing)? My experience with wisterias is that they recover very well from hard pruning - and this might be a way to have some greenery in place while the new plants begin to grow?

It was staff's original intention to save as much of the existing wisteria as possible. However, after analyzing a number of possible options for preserving the existing wisteria (including the suggestion mentioned above regarding keeping some of the existing trellis posts freestanding as supports for the wisteria), staff determined that the best long-term design for the trellis included the use of new wisteria. Some of the reasons for this conclusion include:

- *Damaged Wisteria Trunks and Poor Plant Structure - Several of the existing wisteria trunks are damaged at the base. In addition, the general structure and form of all the wisteria plants are poor due to lack of regular pruning over the years. Planting new wisteria will allow Parks staff to properly prune and train the vines so that they grow with a healthy structure.*
- *Maintenance issues - Because wisteria vines grow so fast, any pruning done to the existing wisteria to facilitate the trellis removal will trigger intensive ongoing maintenance work in the future to control sucker growth.*
- *Cluttered Trellis Area - Leaving freestanding posts to support existing wisteria will result in an awkward trellis design with a cluttered trellis space that compromises the open feel of the trellis area.*
- *Possible Root Damage - As staff worked with the design consultants, it became apparent that the work necessary to remove and replace the trellis impacted the wisteria much more than originally anticipated. There is a high potential for damaging the roots of the existing wisteria during construction. This could result in wisteria that fails to grow or dies after the trellis is in place.*

2. Approximately how old is the existing wisteria? How long might it take for replacement wisteria to provide a comparable amount of shade cover?

The existing wisteria plants are approximately 35 – 40 years old. Our landscape architect estimates that it will take 3 – 4 years to provide some shade and 8 – 10 years to provide a considerable amount. These time frames depend on weather conditions and size of plant used.

3. Approximately how much would Trellis replacement circling the restroom cost (or how much would that section cost versus the main (semicircular) portion of the Trellis replacement...20%? 10%?)

The current preliminary estimated cost of the optional trellis surrounding the restrooms (with no wisteria) is between \$75,000 - \$100,000. The current preliminary estimated cost for the main semicircular trellis around the amphitheater (with new wisteria) is between \$450,000 - \$520,000. The average construction cost for both items of work is about \$600,000.

4. Will a metal trellis and posts generate more heat? Will the posts be warm to the touch?

Metal is commonly used for site furnishings such as fences, hand railings, arbors and trellises without any problems, and many have plants growing on them. The metal could absorb some heat and be warm to the touch at times but once the new wisteria grows, it will shade it.