



Item No. 5a Town of Atherton

PARK AND RECREATION COMMITTEE – REGULAR AGENDA

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

FROM: STEVE TYLER – PARK SUPERINTENDENT

DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2014

SUBJECT: PLANT SELECTION FOR PROJECT AT PARK BRIDGE

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends replacement of the plant material with the same material (*Arctostaphylos hookeri* “Emerald Carpet”) as was installed during original landscaping development in 2009.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the area around the new pedestrian bridge was landscaped. The plan for this landscaping was from Kikuchi and Associates Architects. The plan was vetted through the Park and Recreation Commission and was approved by City Council. The installation of the irrigation system and plant material began in summer 2010 and the project was completed and turned over to the town in November of 2010.

Following that time, the landscaping was neglected and much of it failed to survive the first summer it faced in 2011. Since that time, the area has sat in a “bare dirt” state.

ANALYSIS

Much can be said that this was due to the main species of plant chosen for the low shrubbery/groundcover in this project (*Arctostaphylos hookeri* “Emerald Carpet”). It is staffs opinion that this was caused less by the choice of plant species and more by the turmoil taking place in the Parks Department staff at that time. The bottom line is, the irrigation system did not operate properly, the newly planted material did not receive sufficient water during its first summer season, and subsequently 90% of the material died at that time (about 60 specimens).

The Park and Recreation Committee approved Park Project #3 (Footbridge Landscape and Irrigation Restoration) as one of its top priorities.

Staff has recently gone through the area and re-established the irrigation system into one that will work for the plants that are installed this time around. As previously requested by the Park and Recreation Committee, before planting any new or replacement plant material, MCE will vet their choices through them in case any changes are suggested.

Staff would also offer that another specimen worthy of consideration would be Cotoneaster "lowfast".

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of these plants in 1 galloon size equates to approximately \$360. The Park has sufficient funds in its budget to cover this improvement.