

Streetscape program aimed at sprucing up downtown

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Last Thursday members of the Waterfront Development Committee in St. Marys met with the Genesis Group to discuss a Downtown Streetscape Program.

Joe Petrich, with the Genesis Group, presented a streetscape program which would make the downtown area of St. Marys more tourist friendly. The Genesis Group is designer of record on the Waterfront Park in downtown St. Marys.

"There is a tremendous amount of pavement on the waterfront," said Petrich. "St. Marys is the ideal setting for a walkway system, which would make it more walkable and more enjoyable for visitors."

This walkway system would involve softening the

streetscape by moving curb lines back to create space for greenery and benches, eliminating a lot of the striped pavement areas and adding greenery and tying the Waterfront Park landscape to the rest of downtown.

The National Park Service is already breaking ground for the new visitor's center on the waterfront.

Art Frederick, Superintendent of Cumberland Island National Seashore, said that they already have a landscape plan in place, but it is not finalized.

The Park Service kept the look of the Waterfront Park in mind when making decisions on the new visitor's center, so as to make sure the two areas do not clash.

The Park Service also has plans to create a new facade on

the museum, so it will fit in better with the structures surrounding it.

Jerry Lockhart, of the St. Marys City Council, asked the Genesis Group to create a proposal on cost and give it to the Downtown Development Authority for further consideration.

"We need to get a plan, at least, so local business owners who want to beautify their area can have something to go by when they make decisions on plants or anything of that sort," he said. "We have no money right now, but we can look into grants."

According to the Genesis Group, the money for this project will not be like what went into the Waterfront Park.

The Streetscape Program can be done in phases, unlike

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