

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
March 11, 2021, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday March 11, 2021 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

William Barber – Assistant Director, UF Police Department
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Alpa Nawre – Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine

Members not attending:

Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
Carlos Dougnac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Craig Hill – Assistant Vice President, Business Affairs
Brett Scheffers – Assistant Professor, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Kevin Trejos – Student
Matt Williams – Director, Sustainability

Visitors attending:

Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Stephen Caron – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Basil Iannone – School of Forestry Resources and Conservation
Fiona Hogan – Office of Sustainability
Cydney McGlothlin – UF Architect, Planning, Design & Construction
Milo Zapata – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Adam Gayle – LEVEL Design
Terry Harpold – Associate Professor, Director of Imaging Climate Change
Brooke Whitaker – UF Undergraduate Student

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: **Brian Keith made a motion to approve the Agenda and Minutes of February 11th and 22nd, 2021.**

Second: **Alpa Nawre**

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF – 668 – Racquet Club Dining Renovation – Design/Build

Milo Zapata

Milo introduced himself and stated he presented this project to the committee last month wherein the committee asked to look at different options incorporating outdoor dining. The Land Use Committee met last week, and the new options were presented to them with approval. Adam Gayle is here today to discuss the new design.

Adam showed the location of the space and the preferred option. The option has an open-air trellis which can protect the users from the sun but not the rain. This option is more open and transparent and engages the street. The committee asked if access is allowed from the street to the outdoor dining area. It will be open but will have gates because this is a pay as you enter facility and they need to monitor people coming in to eat. The committee was also concerned with the green space in the area and if there were going to be planters or vines on the trellis, or some way that greenery will be incorporated. Adam stated there will be planters on both sides of the wall and a roof element to provide more protection. There was a consideration for seating and maybe also rail seating. The “crinkle crinkle” brick wall was an alternate being priced for the budget. The committee asked about the fence and Linda stated it will be compatible with the standard black metal fence in the Landscape Master Plan.

Motion: Alpa Nawre made the motion to approve the proposal as presented, with a request to add additional enhancements as discussed related to the fence or planting as the budget allows, and to explore the potential to relocate some or all of the bike racks from in front of the outdoor dining area.

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

UF-670 – SW Recreation Center Weight Room Expansion/Programming

Stephen Caron

Stephen introduced himself and showed the project location. The project will construct a 7,000 square foot, one-story addition on the SW Recreation Center. The building will expand to the west but the exact placement is pending a design. Currently there is an existing stormwater detention area located north of the building. The grade drops about 8 feet to this stormwater area. The project may require expansion of this stormwater facility. There will be two Live Oak tree impacts in this area. The tree closest to the building will have to be removed and the second tree may need to be removed or pruned.

The committee asked if the addition height would be the same as the existing building. Stephen responded that the user group would like to keep it at the same height. The committee thought if the building were narrower, it would be able to avoid the second tree. The committee asked about utilizing space in other areas of the gym for more weight machines. The user group wanted to keep them together and expand the space to eliminate the wait times and long lines. There is no space in the building that can be reclaimed in the existing building. The committee asked about having an open space with a courtyard with the tree in the center in order to save the tree. The committee also mentioned that maybe there can be some outside planting and large windows so the users can still get that outside experience. Stephen said that the user groups wanted to add mirrors instead of just windows. The committee asked if the building can be configured by the design team such that the second tree can be trimmed back instead of removed. The committee suggested that this area may be configured as an indoor and outdoor work out space so this expansion could address the expansion of services not just space. Stephen discussed the need to maintain security of unauthorized guests and will require careful consideration and staffing.

Motion: Alpa Nawre made a motion to approve the expansion with a request to explore alternatives such as outdoor exercise space or integration with outdoor and indoor spaces. The committee approves removal of the tree closest to the building and preserving the other tree while lessening impacts to it.

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Committee Review Criteria

Linda Dixon

Linda introduced herself and stated there was a motion at the last meeting about the committee wanting to know what projects are not coming to the committee. She showed the Campus Master Plan policies that provide criteria for projects that come to committees.

Brian Keith stated he heard an observation by a non-committee member that there are actions impacting landscaping that do not come to the committee such as maintenance projects, and the Liberty Pond project was a catalyst of why this discussion came about. Linda agreed that there are sometimes projects that fall between the cracks, such as the CITF projects that are student-driven and do not always go through the normal channels of project development. Sometimes Grounds-initiated projects do not come before the committee. However, the policies are clear on what projects should come before the committee and the PDC office works diligently to ensure projects do not bypass the committee. She also noted that the LVL committee is charged with evaluating project's impacts on lakes, vegetation and landscaping not with setting university project priorities.

Gail stated she will bring this issue to the Infrastructure Council meeting today to reach out to the other chairs of the Joint Faculty Senate Committees. Gail stated she will be reporting to the Committee on Committees and will bring up this committee's concerns and issues. The committee understands that it is an advisory committee and a step in the process of project approvals. Brian noted the words "human intervention" were put into the new policy of the Campus Master Plan concerning conservation areas; and all such projects should come before the committee. The committee discussed the LVL Chair's outreach to VP Reynolds and whether she could contact him again. Linda asked the committee to clarify what they would be requesting of VP Reynolds if Gail were to do that. The committee suggested she may ask him to route all projects to the committee involving "human intervention" in Conservation Areas within his area of influence. Gail agreed to report back at the next committee on her continued discussions on this topic.

Preservation Proposition: The Anthropocene Tree

Dr. Terry Harpold/Brooke Whitaker

Dr. Terry Harpold, the Director of Imaging Climate Change, requested to be on the agenda to discuss the oldest documented tree on campus. As an English Associate Professor here at UF, this came about from a class discussion. Brooke Whitaker is now writing her honors thesis on this tree.

This tree is located behind Keen Flint Hall and was probably a seedling in 1749. This places this tree at the beginning of the industrial age, and therefore the beginning of this period of the late Holocene epoch, which we now call the Anthropocene. This tree has been an eyewitness to the dramatic transformation of the planet. This tree is a long leaf pine, which was once the primary forest of the Southeastern United States and now less than 4% remain. Currently about 3.4 million acres of long leaf exist in this area and only about 12,000 of those trees are old growth pines. Brooke showed aerial photography of years past to show the tree growth progression.

There is a stone in front of the tree that was placed there for a bicentennial celebration of the United States' 200th Anniversary in 1976. At that time, UF wanted to commemorate this anniversary with a tree on campus and this tree was chosen. UF chose a tree that was standing prior to the signing of the Declaration of

Independence and living in 1749, which would make this tree 272 years old today. This is why we would like to take steps to preserve it and possibly change the name of the tree from the Bicentennial Tree to the Anthropocene Tree. This tree could become a living classroom, and a focal point for discussion. The class would like a plaque or an historical marker so that when students, faculty, or staff pass by it they will know its significance.

Motion: Adam Dale made a motion to approve creating an historical marker designating this space for the Bicentennial-Anthropocene Tree.

Second: Alpa Nawre

Motion Carried Unanimously

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.