

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
September 09, 2021, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, September 09, 2021 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Basil Iannone – Assistant Professor, Forest Resources and Conservation
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Tim Martin – Professor, School of Forestry Research/Conservation
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Sustainability

Members not attending:

William Barber – Assistant Director, UF Police Department
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Carlos Dougnac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Brett Scheffers – Assistant Professor, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation

Visitors attending:

Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Rachel Mandell – Senior Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Tamera Baughman – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Stephen Caron – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Laurie Hall – Landscape Architect, CHW
Caeli Tolar – Landscape Architect, CHW
Tahir Edwards – The Weitz Company
Chuck Weitz – The Weitz Company
Ryan Hulihan – The Weitz Company
Michele Westrick – VMDO Architects
Jacob Pruitt – University Police Department
Elizabeth McAlister – Facilities Services – Utilities Department
Chad Doering – Director of Facilities, Housing Division

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Basil Iannone made a motion to approve the Agenda and August minutes.

Second: Tim Martin

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF – 654 Gator Village (New Undergraduate Residential Complex)

Tamera Baughman

Tamera stated that she was there to present the New Undergraduate Residential Complex. The project selected a Design/Build firm and wanted to start demolition of the site as early as October 1, 2021. Laurie Hall from CHW was in attendance to explain the landscape plans.

Laurie stated the project has gone before LVL before and wanted to ensure that all areas were covered to start the demo. She showed the location of the project and what areas would be impacted by the project. She also reviewed the prior approvals that came before the committee in December 2020.

Laurie explained the additional tree removals that are now required. There were 21 trees that were previously approved for removal and then 26 palms to be transplanted on site. There was only one heritage tree slated for removal which is a 26" Magnolia. The palms that were approved to transplant on site are now being asked for removal because of the difficulty it would be to store them until they can be replanted. In addition, there are 8 additional trees needing removal for the installation of a temporary sidewalk to maintain pedestrian circulation. Laurie said that 8 trees that were previously approved for removal will now be saved due to the location of a utility building being changed. In summary, there is a total of 70 trees for mitigation with one heritage tree at 5:1, totaling 75 trees X 250.00 not including the 26 palms that are on site.

The committee asked if the project could work with Grounds to transplant the palms on campus. Tom from Grounds agreed to work with the project to relocate the palms in the southwest area of campus but not in the Grounds nursery.

The committee had concerns about the location of the temporary sidewalk. There is an existing cow path which is where the temporary sidewalk will be placed but will be ADA compliant. The committee discussed moving the sidewalk or finding an alternate location. Laurie explained that existing utilities and rerouted utilities in this area create a pinch point. The committee requested that the project team explore saving as many trees as they can on the site.

The committee asked about the landscape plan and Laurie displayed the planting plan approved in December 2020. The committee asked if the design team was returning to LVL for a final approval before beginning demo, and Laurie explained that this project is a Design/Build project so it will move forward with demo without another committee review.

The committee questioned why the tree removal numbers were changing after the previous approval. Gail suggested that since most of the additional removals were the 26 palms previously slated for replanting, that perhaps additional new trees could be placed in this location. There appears to be a lot of green space on the site to replant mitigated trees. Laurie stated that the project will be planting the mitigated trees back on the site or will mitigate the remainder to the Tree Mitigation fund.

Chad from Housing asked if moving the sidewalk closer to Yulee would make a difference. Laurie responded that doing so would cause additional tree impacts. The committee asked if the sidewalk could be moved closer to the existing sidewalk. Laurie explained that this would not work because of the utilities in that area and the fencing line.

The committee asked if the final landscape plan could come back to the committee in the motion. The committee stated they thought working with grounds to transplant the trees in a suitable area on campus would be better for the plant.

Motion: Brain Keith made a motion that the 26 palms that were going to be transplanted on site would be transplanted somewhere else on campus to be determined by grounds. Additionally, he moved to approve the ADA temporary sidewalk with as minimal tree and plant impacts as possible to be code compliant and serve the campus community.

Second: Tim Martin

Motion Carried Unanimously

UF – 670 Southwest Recreation Center Weight Room Expansion **Stephen Caron**

Stephen stated he was here today as a follow-up and to present the planting schedule for the project. Caeli of CHW was present to review the landscape plan and planting schedule. She provided a recap of the previous approvals from the LVL committee.

The project is to add a 7,000 square feet addition to the weight room area of the Southwest Recreation Center. As previously presented, two trees were subject to removal due to utilities and building design. The project is now at 60% site design and only one tree will be impacted.

Caeli displayed the location of the site and noted the impacts and slopes. It was determined that there would be no tree replacements because of the size and topographic limitations of the site. The planting plan shows a mix of shrubs and ground cover around the addition including camellias, azaleas, muhly grass and liriopse. The proposed plants are all found in the Landscape Master Plan. The project will pay into the tree mitigation fund for the removal of the oak tree.

The committee state Muhly grass doesn't do well and a low growing shrub in place of the Muhly grass or Liriopse should be used. Grounds stated they have crown grass which is now considered an invasive and needs to be removed from the Landscape Master Plan. The committee suggested Fakahatchee grass as an alternative since it is native and would do well in the area. The design team will look at the list for more native plants to revise the landscaping. The committee also recommended to take note of the ample shade in the area. The committee recommended that the oak leaf hydrangea could do well.

Motion: Basil Iannone made a motion to approve the planting plan with the inclusion of the Fakahatchee grass to replace the muhly grass and replacing the camellias with native shrubs.

Second: Tim Martin

Motion Carried Unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

UT00340 Lake Alice Drainage Improvements Projects **Elizabeth (Izzy) McAlister**

Izzy stated she was here today to talk about the Lake Alice drainage project that will require some tree removals. She reviewed the large scope of improvements in an overall effort to improve flooding on campus. She explained that there is flooding on the west side of Lake Alice during large storm events. The Baughman Center and administration building are at a low elevation and can flood during heavy rains. Currently, stormwater flows across the road toward the natural sink hole area to the north. This causes damage to Elmore Hall, the grounds nursery area and hole 7 of the golf course.

The existing infrastructure includes a low-lying lift station and when it floods, it can mix with sewer water which has concerning environmental impacts. Izzy explained that the project is looking to redirect some of the water to the swales on either side of the road. They would need to put ditch blocks in and culvert the water over to a swale system over towards Ficke gardens and then discharge the extra flooding into Lake Alice.

There is a 16” loblolly pine that will need to be removed to install the ditch block. Towards the eastern side of museum road, there are two oak trees that the pipes can be configured around, but it will require a 9” crepe myrtle to be removed for the alignment to work. There are also two tulip trees along the pipe installation that will need to be removed and three camphor trees along the wood line.

There is not a planting plan for this project, and they will be mitigating the removed trees. The project will be keeping areas open for the future trails project in the area. The camphors don’t need to be mitigated but the other trees do so there are 8 trees at a 2:1 ratio. The Landscape Master Plan includes a plan for landscaping the retention pond areas. Izzy explained that she will work with grounds regarding what plantings could go in.

The committee asked about making the corner area of the swale be more of a soft curve rather than a sharp angle. The committee also stated that the design team should be very careful not to damage the roots on the two oak trees that the pipeline will be installed between. From a water quality perspective, the roadway is our worst contributor of contaminants entering Lake Alice and this project will be adding just over a half an acre of additional impervious area.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the project as presented with the stipulation that Elizabeth collaborate with stormwater landscape experts for the landscaping and that the design will address softening the swale.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Landscape Master Plan Amendments

Rachel Mandell

Rachel stated the proposed amendment is to change Precinct 2 and the boundaries of the precinct map in the Landscape Master Plan. The major change for this is the change of the lighting fixtures, both roadway and pedestrian walkways, to a more contemporary feature.

Motion: Basil Iannone made a motion to approve the Amendment as presented.

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

General Campus Plant Palette

Rachel Mandell

Rachel asked the committee members to look over the plantings list in the Landscape Master Plan to see if there were any recommendations for species that need to be changed, removed or added to the list.

The committee asked for more time and Rachel stated to email her proposed updates to the list. Linda asked for additional pollinator plants. It was mentioned that there are a lot of roses and bottle brush being planted on

campus which are not on the list. Tom stated he is planting drift roses because they give some color, take drought well, and don't have many pests. Basil asked about the pollinators in the lawns that are managed by mowing. Another suggestion for ground cover is frog fruit - *phyla nodiflora* and *salvia visela* for shaded areas. Basil stated he would like to add more perennials. The committee asked Tom what is currently being planted around campus. Tom responded that *Farfugium* does well under live oaks.

The committee will look over the list and give more options and recommendations. Basil asked about recommendations for the turf grass. Tom suggested perennial peanut in all the medians and islands in the parking lots. Tom also suggested tractor seed since it is hardy and has a great flower for being a pollinator.

Conservation Area Management Model – Status Update

Matt Williams

Matt stated he has been looking at the Natural Area Advisory Committee (for the NATL area) and it is more formal than needed for the rest of the conservation areas. He also explained that they are doing another invasive cleanup event at McCarty Woods next weekend and it has been going very nicely. Matt explained that the management for the McCarty Woods clean ups have been a good guide for putting together a management plan and overall structure.

Gail asked if the management plans would eventually include Lake Alice. Matt said yes and Gail explained that Lake Alice has been a topic of conversation in NAAC concerning the algae and the funding for maintenance. Gail explained that one of the suggestions at the meeting was that UF would be receiving infrastructure funding from the federal government and if there was a possibility for applying for funding as an infrastructure project. Gail said one of the arguments would be that the campus needs natural areas for students to utilize for stress release and other purposes. Matt said that all of the conservation area land management plans are in need of an update and that once those are done, they could prepare a proposal for upper administration to create a revolving fund for maintenance.

Basil expressed the importance of coordination and considering what the overarching umbrella is over all of the conservation areas. He also explained how many projects start during an academic year as part of a course but are not continued as they should be. Brian stated there should be a consistent experience for projects in the conservation areas throughout the various plans, such as the Landscape Master Plan and Lake Alice Trails Plan.

Matt explained that a central website for the conservation area plans will be helpful. He said that NATLs website is three years out of date, and that we need to consider how to maintain quick and easy updates. He said there are some good opportunities through Business Affairs. He said that a write-up and presentation of ideas may be ready by the next committee meeting.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:14 AM.