

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
October 14, 2021, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, October 14, 2021 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
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 – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Andrew Smiarowski - Student
Matt Williams – Director, Sustainability

Members not attending:

Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
Carlos Dognac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Brett Scheffers – Assistant Professor, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
Kevin Trejos – Student
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
William Barber – Assistant Director, UF Police Department
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist

Visitors attending:

Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Melanie Heflin – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Rachel Mandell – Senior Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Scarlet Seymour – Project Manager, Facilities Services
Casey Reimann - Jacobs Engineering
Jose Ramos – Jacobs Engineering
Omarlie John – Jacobs Engineering
Sam Schatz – City of Gainesville – Sitting in for David Conser
Elizabeth Manley – Manley Design
Frank Bellomo - GAI

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: **Tim Martin made a motion to approve the Minutes with the corrections as stated by the committee.**

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to adopt the Agenda.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS – no business

III. MINOR PROJECTS

UT00469 – McCarty Chilled Water Extension

Scarlet Seymour

Scarlet stated that she was there to speak about the McCarty Chilled Water Extension. She added that Casey Reimann from Jacobs Engineering was present to discuss the project. Scarlett provided an overview of the project and showed the path of the alignment for the chilled water infrastructure. The extension will provide chilled water for the UF-654 - Gator Village project as well as the future UF/IFAS Natural Resources Building. There was a base study conducted by Jacobs Engineering that recommended the specific route of the chilled water lines so that UF could connect the three chiller plants in the north district of campus.

Scarlet discussed the trees that would be impacted due to the proposed path. There is a 12” Palm at the side of the McCarty Parking lot. There are two - 15” Elms and an 11” Palm near the sidewalk at Rawlings hall. There is a cluster of five Palms in front of Rawlings Hall but only three will be impacted. There are also 3 additional Elms that will need to be removed along the sidewalk between Rawlings hall and Garage 4.

The proposed alternate bus route may impact an additional 8” Oak because the turn off of Newell Drive is very tight and may need to be reconfigured to accommodate a bus. The committee discussed the turn and if other options could be done to save the 8” Oak tree. The sidewalk may be able to shave off some of that curve to allow the buses to come in from a straighter angle. Jose Ramos stated they could look at that to see if it was an option. The committee asked to relocate the light pole in that area if possible.

The committee asked what the landscaping would look like when the project is completed. Scarlet responded that the project has not completed a landscape plan but will pay into the mitigation fund or replant the trees. The committee asked about shutting down Newell Drive. The project doesn't want to close off the traffic, and the design is intended to leave as much of Newell Drive open as possible to allow traffic to continue. The committee questioned about the trees noted for removal that were not in the direct path of the water line and asked if PT105, PT106, PT108, and PT109 could be saved. Scarlet responded that the engineering team would look into that and try to save as many trees as possible. The committee asked about the mitigation plans for this project which Scarlet responded that being in the design phase, she didn't have an answer at this time. The committee also asked for an arborist to review the trees and root systems impacted by the project.

Motion: Brian Keith made a motion to approve the project sparing the three Palms in the cluster and the 8” oak. An arborist should be involved with pruning the roots of these trees as well as the Elm trees. The project should handle the tree replanting rather than pay into the tree mitigation fund if the impact is not avoidable. The project will need to come back to the committee with the landscaping plan. The committee approves the removal of 2 palms and 5 elms with standard.

Second: Tim Martin

Motion Carried Unanimously

UT00470 – Gator Residential Chilled Water Infrastructure

Scarlet Seymour

Scarlet stated that this project will connect to where the previously presented project left off. She explained that the location for this water line is the construction site for the UF-654 project, and the design will be handled by Facilities Services while the construction will be handled by the UF-654 project team.

This project includes extending the chilled water north of UF-654. It will provide a loop to the north district of campus. Scarlet showed the path alignment of the chilled water going across the back of the UF-654 site and joining back into an existing manhole. This will reduce distribution restrictions and increase service reliability of the north campus system.

The decision to move the path slightly north of the Broward Hall service drive was because the drive also serves as emergency access for the housing and the dining halls in the area. However, this design will require more tree impacts. PT199, a 9” Pine south of Rawlings Hall, was identified as no longer being impacted by the project and is to remain. There is a cluster of four Palms and the design team will try to save them by protecting the root systems when digging the trenches. The committee asked to consider the removals as a ‘maybe’ in case the root systems are damaged. The root systems are small, so the committee asked there be an effort to save them if possible.

There will be two palms and a pine tree that were approved prior by LVL in the pool area that will be removed by the UF-654 project. To the south of the pool are two pine and three palm trees also previously approved by LVL for removal under the UF-654 project. There will be a total of 6 palms and one pine impacted for removal by this project.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the plan with the removal of one pine tree (PT204) and 8 palms. The project will return to LVL with a landscaping plan.

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

UF-656 – NE Gateway Update

Melanie Heflin

Melanie introduced herself and explained that she came to the LVL committee to share some information and tree mitigation changes associated with UF-656. Elizabeth Manley with Manley Design was in attendance to present the changes and provide an update.

The Newell Gateway project has changed to focus on the base bid portion. There will be hardscape paving and gateway walls which will tie into the east/west pedestrian pathway.

The tree removals have not changed for the Newell Gateway project, nor have the design and pedestrian walkway. A small oak and a magnolia were previously approved for removal and the project will be replacing a small oak in approximately the same area. Elizabeth reviewed an approved plan of the site and how it would look, noting that the bollards were no longer included.

The Northeast Gateway is located north of Tigert Hall and NW 13th Street. The project includes improvements to the entry court and parking lots in front of Hough Hall and Little Hall. The scope has changed to focus on the entry court. The parking lots will not be in the project scope and will be added to another project to reconfigure

Union Road to a pedestrian walkway. The tree removals in the area have been largely reduced because the parking lots have been taken out of the project.

Elizabeth provided a spreadsheet of the tree removals previously approved by the committee. There were a few trees to originally proposed to be transplanted that were not able to be, and therefore the project will include those in the tree mitigation totals. There were several sabal palms that were relocated to the Alachua Conservation Trust that were located at the center of the Union Road area. The new total is 123 replacement trees for the project. There were three sabal palms, a loblolly pine, and a winged Elm that were not able to be transplanted so they will be removed. There were 9 sabal palms removed and 7 were able to be relocated to an off-campus site. Melanie asked if mitigation was required for trees relocated off of campus. The committee stated mitigation should stem from the success rate of the palms. This would have to be tracked over several years, which would be a challenge. The ACT did pay and use their own equipment to collect the trees. Melanie explained that relocating the trees offsite was a successful way to reach the project's SITEs requirements.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the changes to the plan with appropriate mitigation.

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

Tree Mitigation Policy Discussion

Linda Dixon

Linda stated that the purpose of this discussion was to bring the tree mitigation policy to the committees' attention and discuss possible updates.. The tree mitigation policy was last updated in 2019. Linda questioned if an off-site transplanting procedure should be incorporated in the tree mitigation policy or if they should just be heard on a case-by-case basis.

Linda displayed the canopy tree categories in the tree mitigation policy and pointed out the unclear policy language regarding palm mitigations. Palms are not considered a canopy tree, however a 26" Pindo palm requires significant mitigation as an understory tree. The committee suggested maybe palms should be in their own category. It was questioned if the \$250.00 price per mitigation tree was still an accurate fee. It was suggested that \$800.00 dollars might be more realistic based on inflation.

Linda stated this could be a continued discussion and the committee can draft recommendations to address palm trees and off-campus mitigations. It was recommended that the committee members send their comments to Gail and that the topic be discussed further at the next meeting.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:03 AM.