

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
November 10, 2021, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, November 10, 2021 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

William Barber – Assistant Director, UF Police Department
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Matt Williams – Director, Sustainability

Members not attending:

Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Carlos Dougnac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Basil Iannone – Assistant Professor, Forest Resources and Conservation
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Andrew Smiarowski - Student

Visitors attending:

Rachel Mandell – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Scarlet Seymour – Facilities Services
Casey Reimann - Jacobs Engineering
Jose Ramos – Jacobs Engineering
Sam Schatz – City of Gainesville – Sitting in for David Conser
Doug Soltis – McCarty Woods Director
Savannah Cantrell – Unknown
Victor – Student – Unknown
Vasilios Kosmakos - Unknown

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: **Tim Martin made a motion to approve the Agenda with an added information item and to approve the October Minutes.**

Second: Melanie Nelson

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS – no business

III. MINOR PROJECTS

UT00469 – McCarty Chilled Water Extension

Scarlet Seymour

Scarlet provided an overview of the chilled water extension path and piping alignment. The alignment is the result of a study conducted to have a root connection to the three chilled water plants in that district of campus. Scarlet explained there will be an increase in the trench width required than what is shown on the current plan which is causing some tree impacts. The project is waiting on the 60% submittals which will reflect the corrected trench width. Scarlet presented the trees that will be impacted and noted that she met with the project contractor and Tom Schlick on site. The elm trees proposed for removal are infringing on the canopy of the heritage trees in the project area. Grounds suggested there be no replanting back in that area to prevent future infringement. In a cluster of five palm trees on site, three will be removed. Additionally, two palm trees in the planting bed area near the bus shelter will need to be removed. These two palms were not previously presented for removal to the committee and will need approval.

The last time the project was presented to LVL, the committee asked if the project team could look into saving an 8” oak tree located near the proposed alternate bus route. Scarlet explained that at this turn there are underground utilities, a fire hydrant and a light pole so restructuring the turning area in order to preserve the oak tree would not be feasible.

The committee asked about the two 15” elm trees infringing on the heritage trees and if it would be feasible to plant something in the green space closer to the buildings. Scarlet responded that the project can investigate planting trees in the green space when they complete the landscaping plan. Scarlet summarized the tree removals and asked to pay into the tree mitigation fund. Tim Martin explained that paying into the tree mitigation fund should be a last resort.

The committee asked if an arborist has surveyed the tree impact area for pruning and protecting the root systems of the impacted trees. The committee suggested that the project look at different species of trees and maybe some understory trees could work in the green space area to increase the tree diversity and not disturb the heritage trees.

The project includes 11 tree removals at 2:1 ratio and would have a mitigation fee of \$5,500. The committee asked that this project work with the UF-654 landscape architect for the replanting of the trees on site.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the amended tree impact list adding the two palm trees and the 8” oak tree. There is no approval of paying into the tree mitigation fund and the committee asked the project to provide a landscaping plan working with UF-654 to show the tree mitigation plantings on site. An arborist should be involved in this project as stated at the last meeting to survey the trees impacted, removed, or saved.

Second: Melanie Nelson

Motion Carried Unanimously

Scarlet provided an overview of the project. She explained the route of the chilled water infrastructure and how it's located along the UF-654 Gator Village project. The reason this alignment was chosen was because Broward Drive is an emergency access road for these housing buildings. This is important and needs to stay open because of all the students in the area. Most of the trees impacted in this area will be removed by the UF-654 project. There is some overlap of these projects and tree removals. She showed the trees impacted and gave an updated tree impact summary and would like to pay into the tree mitigation fund. There will be seven trees impacted that were approved last month at a 2:1 ratio with a mitigation of \$3,500.00.

The committee asked last month to have mitigation on site not paying into the tree mitigation fund. The committee stated the project will work closely with UF-654 and the Landscape Architect for the planting plan of the area.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the tree impact list with onsite mitigation as discussed in the previous motion.

Second: Melanie Nelson

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

McCarty Woods Recovery: Update and New Requests

Doug Soltis

Doug explained that there have been monthly work parties at McCarty Woods focused on removing invasive species. He described the good response from volunteers each month and displayed before and after pictures of the woods to show the progress made so far. He stated that there were hundreds of pounds of invasive species removed from the woods and now he is returning to the committee to request to start reintroducing native plants back into McCarty Woods.

The project would also like to redo the kiosk signs and permanent signs for trees. They would also like to improve the old trails and there may be some target spraying needed of the cats claw to combat future growth. Doug said that they would work with Grounds to make sure the target spraying happened properly.

The improvements would allow an increase in birdwatching, plant identification, insect identification and increased usage by faculty and others. The committee asked if there is a documented volunteer list to ensure that the new plantings would not go unattended. The committee asked for a schedule of volunteering events so the upkeep can be tracked.

Doug showed a list of native plants that the volunteers will be planting in the woods. He explained that he would need approval as quickly as possible because the plants have a greater rate of success if they are planted in December.

Gail stated she would contact VP Reynolds once Doug was able to provide a commitment letter with the watering and maintenance schedule for the volunteers.

Linda stated that she wanted to discuss the way that palm trees are listed in the tree mitigation policy. She also noted that the policy does not address off-campus mitigation. The committee discussed this topic at a previous meeting, and it was determined that the committee members would e-mail Gail their thoughts. The discussions are still in progress and Gail said that she will keep working on getting the information from the other members.

This topic will stay on the agenda to have regular updates and keep the discussion ongoing. The committee thought that quarterly check-ins on the tree mitigation fund would be useful. It was suggested that Tom Schlick and Gregg Clarke be included in this discussion. The committee would like to know what happens with the tree mitigation funds and how it is tracked.

Heritage Tree @ PKY- Planned for Removal

Gail Hansen de Chapman

Gail presented on behalf of Adam Dale that he received an email stating that a heritage tree at PK Yonge is proposed to be removed. She explained that it was claimed the tree was diseased, but the determination was not made by an arborist. The committee also expressed that the tree removal should come before the committee. The committee stated there is a utility project going on in that area, and it may be one of the trees previously approved in that project. Gregg Clark asked that Linda connect with the project manager, Keith Humphreys, to see if the tree is a part of his project and if it was previously approved by LVL.

Pruning of Palms

Tim Martin

The committee asked about the pruning of the palms in a few places on campus and wanted to know who oversaw these things. Grounds may oversee this, but there was concern about the palms being over-pruned. Gail asked for the photos and said she would investigate it.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:07 AM.