

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

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

Members attending:

Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
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
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services

Members not attending:

William Barber – Assistant Director, UF Police Department
Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Carlos Dounac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Andrew Smiarowski - Student
Matt Williams – Director, Sustainability

Visitors attending:

Rachel Mandell – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Keith Humphreys – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Robbie Grassano – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Rick Taylor – University of Florida Police Department
Doug Soltis – McCarty Woods Director
Laurie Hall – CHW, Landscape Architect
Caeli Tolar – CHW, Engineer
John Michael Simpson – Unknown
Guest - Unknown

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: **Tim Martin made a motion to approve the November Minutes.**

Second: **Basil Iannone**

Motion Carried Unanimously

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the Agenda with an added item for the approval of the McCarty Woods update.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS – no business

III. MINOR PROJECTS

MP06834 – PKY Covered PE Court – Construction

Keith Humphreys

Keith provided an overview of the PKY Covered PE Court project and the proposed location. He stated there would be three tree removals, including a Camphor, Elm, and Holly. He displayed the layout of the covered play area and explained that the user group tried several different layouts, and this was the best option. He showed a picture of each tree proposed for removal and stated that the project will be paying into the tree mitigation fund. Another project on site will be planting 22 trees in different areas on the PKY campus. Additionally, there is an upcoming project in the same area and the user group does not want to plant new trees only to potentially remove them down the road.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve as presented.

Second: Melanie Nelson

Motion Carried Unanimously

MP06867 – Baby Gator – Design

Robbie Grassano

Robbie provided a brief overview of the project and stated Laurie Hall from CHW would be presenting the landscaping updates. Laurie is a landscape architect and certified arborist working with Walker Architects on the project.

Laurie explained that the project was to expand the Baby Gator by Lake Alice to increase capacity as well as complete an extensive remodel of the existing building. The proposed expansion is approximately 5,500 SF and the renovation includes about 8,860 SF. There are numerous existing heritage trees on site and the design team tried to save as many heritage trees as possible with the proposed design while also working with the challenging grade elevation changes.

The building addition will be toward the west side of the existing building into the parking lot. The parking lot will be reconfigured. Four trees will be impacted, including a 15” and 17” cypress, a 23” sweetgum in the existing parking lot and a 12” sable palm at the edge of the building footprint. The parking lot will have a small drop off loop and provide a few parking spaces.

The project will be protecting all the heritage trees on site and will also replant the mitigated trees on site. The committee asked about enhancing the landscaping around the project area. Laurie stated that there will be enhancements to the playground area with foundation plantings and new landscaping will wrap around the building. The project will come back to the committee with a landscaping plan once it has been completed. This project will also include an expansion of the playground area and the construction is expected to last about 12 months.

Motion: **Tim Martin made a motion to approve the project as presented.**

Second: **Melanie Nelson**

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Grounds Report

Tom Schlick

Tom explained that he didn't have a grounds report to share but he wanted to talk to the committee about a new post and chain fence that is proposed to be put in the Plaza of Americas. There are a few landscape beds that will become cow paths if the post and chain fencing is not installed for protection. The post and chain will deter pedestrians from walking through the landscape beds.

Tom stated that there were a few other areas across campus that the post and chain assembly may need to be installed. The committee asked if Tom could bring each location back to the committee to show where the post and chain would be installed and what the installation process would look like. Tom stated he would send the committee pictures of the areas where the post and chain fencing may be installed. The committee recommended that the post and chain fencing should be along the edge of the sidewalk, not surrounding the landscaping beds.

The committee mentioned there was a concern about the fencing installed for the landscaping at Union Road. Skateboarders are using the rail and it may need to be changed to the post and chain fencing. Tom stated he was already aware of the issue. He said he would document all areas for the proposed post and chain fencing and send them to the committee chair.

McCarty Woods and Harmonic Woods Conservation Area Management Funding Proposal Doug Soltis

Doug stated campus staff and volunteers have been working in McCarty Woods. He highlighted that each area is special in terms of biodiversity and natural areas for teaching, research, and visitors of the community.

Doug stated he is proposing a management plan to help manage McCarty Woods and Harmonic Woods. The plan would help maintain both areas with removal of invasive species and revegetation of disturbed communities. The plan will work with trail management in the woods to increase safety and signage. The main goal is to increase overall awareness of teaching and educational activities. The proposal is to hire one UF undergraduate intern. This intern will work with campus staff and volunteers to help maintain the areas and handle watering of the revegetation planting.

Doug explained the proposed funding of the management plan moving forward. It will allow for an upgraded kiosk and new plant signage. The funding would also be for maintenance, gas and herbicides, but it will focus on the payment of the intern each year. Doug explained he is seeking a reoccurring funding budget from sources to be determined. The committee discussed the hourly salary and whether it could be increased over time. Tim offered to facilitate reaching out to the School of Forest Fisheries and Geomatic Sciences for

potential funding. The committee stated there may be grants that could help with the funding for this and Linda mentioned DEP grants that had been obtained in years past. The committee asked if the management plan could be considered a pilot to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses and determine if it is a sustainable program. The committee also mentioned that may be some of the tree mitigation funds could help with the expense.

Motion: Brian Keith made a motion to approve as presented this pilot with the idea that at the end of the pilot the university revisit a sustainable model for this proposal.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

Landscape Master Plan Plant List & Tree Mitigation Policy

Linda Dixon

Linda explained that she wanted to discuss with the committee the way that palm trees are addressed in the tree mitigation policy. Linda explained that the committee had previously discussed the topic and it was requested that the committee members e-mail Gail with their comments. The committee responded that the discussions are still in progress.

Linda also mentioned that the committee was looking into additional pollinator plants to be included in the Landscape Master Plan, as well as if there were other plants that should be added or removed. Gail replied that she received plant suggestions from Adam and Basil. Gail explained that some of the recommendations are ground cover plants and was worried about them being available at nurseries. Basil added that some of the plants are native and can naturally grow in lawns. Gail said that she would send the plant list to Tom so he can review it.

Linda stated that the plant lists in the Landscape Master Plan are guides or suggestions for the design teams. Basil asked if the design teams knew that they could be creative with their plant palettes. Linda explained that they knew they can and that the Landscape Master Plan lists are a guide for the team to use on campus. Tim suggested adding a statement in the Landscape Master Plan that the committee is in favor of native plants to Central Florida.

The committee also expressed the need to look at whether it is a proposed natural or garden landscape and who the audience and users would be. It is also important to consider what is underground. Some plants don't do well if there is infrastructure underneath. Linda explained that the campus is broken into precincts that help organize what kind of plants go where.

The committee added that some plants in the Landscape Master Plan are invasive and need to be removed. The committee also suggested adding educational signage. There are many opportunities for teaching and learning across campus. The committee discussed the issue of maintenance for plantings.

The committee discussed the palm selections in the tree mitigation policy. The mitigation amount is based on DBH, but the committee said it may be useful to determine the value of species instead since some may be more valuable than others. Another option is to base the mitigation from height rather than DBH.

Tim Martin brought up the over pruning of the palms mentioned at the last meeting. Greg Clarke talked with Tom Schlick and the pruning was done by UAA at the athletic center. Gail said she would reach out to UAA about the pruning.

Gail said that the committee would circle back on this topic at the February meeting to discuss and update the plant list and mitigation policy.

Gail and Tim received an email about the Family Graduate Housing issues. Gail said that it was suggested the graduate students speak with the senate committee. The subject was also discussed as part of the process for the city and county approval of the Campus Development Agreement.

The committee members discussed concerns with access to the committee meetings if a guest had comments or concerns they wanted to share. The committee members asked if the zoom invite could be on the website. Linda explained there were security concerns associated with posting it that way. The committee felt that there needs to be a clear path to the meeting if someone wanted to attend.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:54 AM.