

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
December 08, 2022, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, December 08, 2022 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Nancy Chrystal-Green – Assistant Vice President, Student Engagement
Maya Fives – Student
Basil Iannone – Assistant Professor, Forest Resources and Conservation
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Bart Knowles – Major, UF Police Department
Lucas Majure – Assistant Curator, Herbarium
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability

Members not attending:

Fernando Alférez – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture
Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Carlos Dougnac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Ryan Klein – Assistant Professor, Environmental Horticulture
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Brandi Renton – Associate Vice President, Business Affairs

Visitors attending:

Rachel Mandell – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Robert Hatker – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Milo Zapata – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Kaylee August – Office of Sustainability
Phillip Seay – Grounds Superintendent, Facility Services

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the Agenda and the July Minutes.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF – 678 Broward Dining Expansion – Programming & Site Selection Robert Hatker

Robert introduced himself and stated he was before the committee for the programming phase and site selection of the Broward Dining project. He gave an overview of the project location. The dining areas are now under Chartwells, and they would like to make some renovations to the building and add an expansion. The project will add about 5K to 7K square feet to the existing building. The new residence halls will create an increase in students in this area and 850 new seats will be added at the dining hall. The expansion will either be vertical or expand the footprint of the current building. The design team will work through the options. The project will be brought back to committee once there is a design.

Robert spoke about a few other projects nearby that will be contiguous with this project. He also spoke about enhancement area between the project site and new residence halls. The project is in the historic impact area and not in a conservation area. The project design team will take all of this into account.

The Inner Road project will last about 14 months and is starting in January. It will be converted from a one lane road to a two-lane road.

Robert went over the trees in the area that may be impacted by the project. The design team will be made aware that the plan should not impact any heritage trees, and there are currently no anticipated impacts. The trees will be protected during construction.

The committee encouraged building upward because the oak trees on Inner Road are very important. The trees bring a comfortable shaded area on campus to walk through. The project should expand on the existing hardscape as to not affect the surrounding trees. The students don't use the existing hardscape because it is uncomfortable. There may be enhancement going around the whole building with outdoor dining. ADA compliance will be enhanced in this area as well.

The committee asked about the scope of the project and if it will address the slopes and elevation changes that hinder access to the building from the southeast. The design team will work on that issue when developing the building options. The committee asked about the cost of the project and the budget given was 20M. The committee asked about food services during the construction closure and if food trucks will be provided for the students. Robert explained that they hadn't finalized a plan at this time, but it will be handled by Business Services. The committee also asked that the project incorporate the Art into the project design. The committee also wanted the project team to be aware of the birds in this area and the design team will look into bird friendly glazing for the windows.

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

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

None

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

CALM Update

Rachel Mandell

Rachel gave an overview of the ongoing process for updating the Conservation Area Land Management Plans on campus. In February of this year, the team impaneled a steering committee of about 35 people from different departments and backgrounds. The committee went to each conservation area to evaluate the existing conditions and create a holistic land management plan for these spaces.

Rachel said that the committee just wrapped up the working session phase of the project, which was the opportunity to take all of the feedback from the site visits and go into more detail for the management plans. They are now drafting the overall CALM plan. They are also going out and field verifying where the boundaries are for the conservation areas and will be bringing those back to the committee to update the Master Plan.

One outcome from the CALM update was that outreach and awareness for our conservation areas needed to be improved. Hillary Laskey, and intern for PDC, helped organize tabling events and the CALM committee also participated in clean up events and invasive species removal events hosted by student organization.

The steering committee participated in a survey to identify what the priority projects were for the CALM plan. The results were that signage needs to be updated and that invasive species needed to be removed and maintained. Rachel said that they would like to create a plan for long-term removal of invasive species in the conservation areas. Overall, this will enhance the landscape of our campus and the conservation areas.

The committee asked what proactive measures were being taken. There currently is not a management plan for invasive species removal. There are a few areas that have had work done or monitoring but most areas do not. Gail stated there was talk already about the need of hiring a person to be permanently in charge of monitoring the conservation areas. There needs to be one person coordinating the management process.

The committee discussed that a crucial part of invasive species removal is restoration. The committee wanted to talk about the Tree Mitigation fund being used for this process. Rachel reminded the committee that they don't see the tree mitigation funding as a permanent solution, but as a pilot opportunity. If approved, Rachel said that they would come back to the committee with a more detailed plan.

The committee recommended the funds be used for the two top priority sites, such as Jennings Creek, and tracking the costs. This would give a good picture of what the cost would be before moving forward at a larger scale.

The committee asked how much money was currently in the tree mitigation fund. Tom Schlick responded that there is about \$187K. Rachel told the committee that the tree mitigation policy states that the LVL committee makes recommendations and approves how the tree mitigation funds are dispensed.

The committee asked if there was an overall assessment of tree canopy on campus. Tom stated the tree mitigation fund couldn't pay for an employee dedicated to tree canopy or conservation areas. He also stated the fund would not have enough to address invasive species campus wide.

Matt Williams said that part of the invasive species removal process is to replant native species, and that replanting is a goal of the tree mitigation fund. The committee discussed that a holistic plan is needed for evaluating tree canopy and replanting trees campus wide. Rachel stated they are working with BATS now to map tree canopy on campus. The committee added that trees are not the only thing on campus. There are natives, shrubs, etc. that contribute. The Tree Mitigation Policy was created because of the environmental impacts of construction on campus. The committee needs to be more consistent on how the policy is handled.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve the use of the tree mitigation funds be used to address ecological restoration and enhancement management in our conservation areas, as prioritized by the steering committee. The project team will need to return to the committee with a more detailed maintenance plan, time frame and budget for final consideration.

Second: Brian Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chair Report

Gail Hansen de Chapman

Gail stated the Tree Mitigation Policy has been discussed for about 5 months and she is gathering feedback on the policy. She is hoping to simplify the policy to one-page document and create a separate set of guidelines to help people make better decisions. Gail asked for feedback or comments on that format and if it would be helpful.

The Planting Palette from the Landscape Master Plan was sent out to the committee for their suggestions. It was recommended the list be shortened and easier to find.

The Yardley courtyard was redone. The steam was an issue in that area. Rocks, plants and grasses were added. The steam is capped now.

Gail said that a student had reached out to her about documents missing from the committee website. Rachel said that the only items that were removed from the website were the parts of presentations that contained floorplans.

A student had also asked Gail about the Passion Fruit removed at the Grounds nursery and Wilmot Gardens.

Bart from UPD discussed that for safety reasons, Facilities Services trimmed the trees in the parking lots and replaced LED lights. There was great feedback on that effort and the faculty and staff felt safer.

New Member Orientation

Rachel Mandell

Rachel stated she would be sending out an email with an orientation presentation due to the committee meeting being short on time. She added that Major projects come before the committee 3 times and usually the Minor projects only come once. She will send out an email explaining the process in more detail.

Bat House Woods

Tom Schlick

Tom went over the location of Bat House Woods and stated he needed to clear the area near the fence line. He added that most of the plants are invasive species. He said that they need access along both sides of the fence. The committee asked if there could be some signage to let people know what was going on in the conservation area. The committee also reminded Tom that any work in a conservation area needs to come before the committee. Rachel recommended that herself, Tom Schlick, Basil Iannone and Matt Williams meet on site to further discuss the project and then return to the committee with a plan.

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