

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
January 12, 2022, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, January 12, 2023 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
Nancy Chrystal-Green – Associate Vice President for Student Life
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Maya Fives – Student
Basil Iannone – Assistant Professor, Forest Resources and Conservation
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Bart Knowles – Major, UF Police Department
Ryan Klein – Assistant Professor, Environmental Horticulture
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability

Members not attending:

Fernando Alferéz – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, 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
Lucas Majure – Assistant Curator, Herbarium
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
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
Mac McKinney – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Alex Gauthier – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Stephen Caron – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Andrew Meeker – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Kaylee August – Office of Sustainability
Chad Doering – Director of Housing Facilities, Housing
Cydney McGlothlin – University Architect, Planning, Design & Construction
Jody Green – Harn Museum Team
Jess Uelsmann – Harn Museum Team
Lee Anne – Director, Harn Museum Team

Ken Hill – Principal Engineering, GSE Engineering & Consulting, Inc.
Caeli Tolar – CHW Professional Consultants
Laurie Hall – CHW Professional Consultants
Gage LaPierre – NATL
Randy Olney – CHW Professional Consultants

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Basil Iannone made a motion to approve the Agenda and the December Minutes with Gail's correction to the Chair report and tabling the email concerning the tree removals from Brian Keith to next month's agenda.

Second: Maya Fives

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

None

III. MINOR PROJECTS

MP04082 – Harn Reinstall Hammering Man

Mac McKinney

Mac introduced himself and stated he was before the committee with representatives from the Harn Museum to discuss the lighting and landscaping associated with the return of the Hammering Man statue. Mac provided an overview of the proposed location and the lighting that will be placed along the sidewalk and corner area where the statue was originally. He also reviewed the landscape choices of the user group, including juniper and dwarf palmettos.

The committee asked if there would be signage to discourage climbing on the statue. The team responded that signage would be incorporated into the landscaping. The committee expressed concern juniper is very easy to walk on and suggested another plant be used. The design team responded that there will be lighting, signage, and cameras to keep pedestrians from climbing. The Director explained they were considering a barrier be put there to deter pedestrians from walking or climbing in the area. She said they could talk to the landscaping team to revisit the planting choices. She also explained that they were wanting plants that don't flower and have an evergreen look. The committee asked that steel edging be considered. The original suggestion was to use concrete or brick to match the other materials in the area. Grounds stated the concrete or brick would be better from their perspective. Parsons Juniper was suggested because it can grow higher and is a better deterrent. Additionally, it was added that brick and concrete are more cost effective.

The Harn Museum team explained that the goals of the project are to make the space more inviting and aesthetically pleasing. They have measures in place to protect the sculptures from corrosion from the irrigation systems. The added lighting will enhance the area and they believe that people will be less likely to climb on the sculptures as a result. Grounds suggested against using granite chips listed on the hardscape plan since because they become a maintenance issue. The Director responded that it's contained to the base of the sculptures. In the past, the sculptures were in grass and standing water. The chips around the base should protect them better. Grounds requested to see the irrigation plan once it's prepared.

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

Second: Bart Knowles

Motion Carried Unanimously

MP07341 – Reitz Student Union Social Space

Andrew Meeker

Andrew introduced himself and stated he was before the committee to discuss a project with the Reitz Union team and representatives from CHW. The project is for a 0.5-acre social space on the north side of the Reitz Union and is seeking approval for the advanced schematic design concept. This project is to design a gathering space for students, visitors, and staff. The scope includes landscaping, lighting, and the addition of site furnishings to the area to create a functional outdoor space that expands the useable footprint of the Reitz Union. The goal is to unify the aesthetics of the outdoor space to enhance the student experience.

The project is located along the northwestern edge of the Reitz Union. The design team is aware of the extensive utilities and has been intentional in drafting the landscape design to avoid costly utility impacts. The project intends to preserve the existing heritage trees and will aim to have minimal disturbance within the driplines. The social space will provide ADA access. The project will keep the existing furniture but create more formal seating areas. Pergolas will be installed to provide different seating spaces.

The committee asked if the hardscape would stay the same. Andrew responded that the hardscape would remain the same. He also said that the trees on site would be protected to ensure that the driplines are not damaged. Andrew explained that a deck feature had been considered, but that they are considering an alternative material to ensure that the trees would not be impacted.

The project will reintroduce string lights throughout the area to help with lighting and safety. The project will return to the committee for the Design Development phase approval. The committee asked if the project would tie into the space across the sidewalk. The design team responded that trees could not be planted in this area due to the utilities and access requirements.

The students are encouraged about this space because it is heavily utilized and there is a need to make it bigger. The committee requested that this project consider how it could tie into the area across the fire lane, even if it is only shrubs or benches. The committee expressed that it may look odd if that side is left blank. Linda reminded the committee that the sidewalk is an emergency lane. Andrew said that he would talk to the design team. The committee expressed that the project should be cohesive and tie into the surrounding areas of the Reitz Union lawn.

Motion: Basil Iannone made a motion to approve concept of the project as presented with a consideration of how to tie in the area across the fire lane, but approval is not tied to other projects but would encourage the design team to think about how this project would transition into other surrounding spaces.

Second: Brain Keith

Motion Carried Unanimously

Stephen introduced himself and stated he was before the committee to present the repair of the south terrace concrete and seawall at the Reitz Union. Stephen explained that the scope of the project is to repair and replace the metal seawall and the concrete lower terrace. He showed the project location at Liberty Pond and the South Terrace. One of the challenges is accessing the lower terrace. One way to access the lower terrace is utilizing the existing sidewalk. It may impact the conservation area because of the need for additional space to accommodate the equipment. CHW presented the landscape impacts into the conservation area and the tree mitigation.

Laurie Hall of CHW reviewed the potential tree impacts. Including an Elm tree not in great shape. Laurie asked if the committee would consider a less than 30-gallon trees to replace the existing trees. The replanting of the existing trees and plants should be native because of the conservation area. The committee wanted to know if there is any other way to access that area. The committee wanted to better understand the existing vegetation at Liberty Pond.

Stephen explained the deterioration of the seawall and the equipment needed to reconstruct it. The proposed access route to the lower terrace was the least disruptive way to reach the lower terrace with the equipment needed to perform the required construction. The project is proposing smaller equipment to reduce disruption to the conservation area.

The committee asked, “What steps could be made to make sure this issue doesn’t happen again to this conservation area?”. The Engineering team stated the existing seawall is on the end of its life cycle. A coating can be added to the proposed metal seawall which will slow the deterioration/corrosion process. When excavation was performed for a different project, the contractor identified settling under the existing concrete terrace. GSE performed geotechnical bores. The engineering team reviewed many options and alternatives to complete the repair of the seawall and access to the project site. Utilizing the existing concrete sidewalk was the option identified with the least disruption.

The committee asked if there was a replanting plan for this area. The committee suggested the policies of the conservation areas be looked at and to follow the planting standards. The committee discussed the different trees in the area and what may be impacted. The committee asked about the fountain that was part of a prior project and if it is part of this project now. The fountain project is on hold because of the need for this project.

The committee stated they wanted to better understand the inventory of species being impacted by the project and the environmental impacts. Laurie suggested meeting to go over the species in the conservation area on site. Laurie also wanted approval on the removal of the Live Oak close to the sidewalk. The committee considered organizing a special meeting to discuss the species being disturbed and a replanting strategy.

Motion: **Brian Keith made a motion to approve the project with the scope being repairing or mitigation of the structural integrity of the seawall and any expansion of the scope come back to the committee because it is adjacent to the conservation area. A special meeting is being considered by LVL to consider the plants, species, and replanting in this conservation area.**

Second: **Basil Iannone**

Motion Carried Unanimously

Alex introduced himself and stated he was presenting a project spearheaded by Doug Soltis. The project is to relocate, or demolish and rebuilt, the kiosk at the north side of McCarty Woods to the established trailhead near the parking lot and build a new, smaller kiosk off Newell Drive.

The committee asked about the ownership of these areas. Matt Williams asked about funding sources. The committee suggested that this project be tabled until the new standards and systems are in place. Rachel Mandell responded that any new standards would come before the committee, and that a project like that is not in the near term. She added it is important to move this project along to protect and highlight the restoration efforts of the volunteer groups. The committee agreed that the project can relocate the existing kiosk and the new one could be built to bring attention to the new planting areas.

Motion: Brain Keith made a motion to approve the project of relocating the existing kiosk and the addition of the small kiosk move forward.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Grounds Report

Tom Schlick

Tom stated he was going to be talking about Bat House Woods. There is a 10-foot-wide area that was routinely kept clear for utility egress for maintenance on the conservation side of the fence. There is a manhole in that area and access for maintenance is necessary. Grounds would like approval to cut back that egress as well as create a 10' wide cleared buffer along the entire inside length of the fence for maintenance. This maintenance egress path will also provide support for future exotic vegetation control efforts. Grounds would go in and remove invasive and exotic saplings and small vegetation.

The area is in the conservation area and that is why Grounds is bringing this to the committee. Some committee members met on site to discuss having open transparency and communication. The area needs to be addressed because the longer we wait the more of a problem the areas become. Grounds would like to work with the committee to make this happen. The committee agreed for Tom to move forward.

Chair Report

Gail Hansen de Chapman

Gail stated there is a schedule conflict with a few committee members and suggested moving the monthly meeting. Rachel said she would send out a poll for everyone. Gail also said that there will be more conversations on the Tree Mitigation policy. Brian asked that an agenda item about some trees removed during the break be added to the next month. Matt Williams informed the committee that senate nominations were coming up for people rotating off.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:12 AM.