

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
April 06, 2023, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, April 06, 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, Division of Student Life
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
Maya Fives – Student
Basil Iannone – Assistant Professor, Forest Resources and Conservation
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Ryan Klein – Assistant Professor, Environmental Horticulture
Bart Knowles – Major, UF Police Department
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability

Members not attending:

Fernando Alferez – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture
Carlos Dougnac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Lucas Majure – Assistant Curator, Herbarium
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Brandi Renton – Associate Vice President, Business Affairs

Visitors attending:

Rachel Mandell – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Milo Zapata – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Tom Feather – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Cydney McGlothlin – University Architect, Planning, Design & Construction
Savanah Partridge – Intern, Planning, Design & Construction
Kaylee August – Office of Sustainability
Laurie Hall – CHW
Caeli Tolar – CHW
John Burns – Arborist, SkyFrog Tree Service

Chris Kuonen – Brooks & Scarpa – Design Team
Derek LaMontagne – Student
Angelique Hennon – BATS
Iris Meeker – Walker Architects
Hillary Laskey – Student
Jeffery Huber – Brooks & Scarpa – Design Team

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Basil Iannone made a motion to approve the Agenda and the January Minutes.

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF – 679 Ronald McDonald House – Design Development

Milo Zapata

Milo introduced himself and stated he was before the committee for the Ronald McDonald House project. He was joined by Iris Meeker from Walker Architects, Caeli Tolar from CHW, and John Burns from SkyFrog Tree Service. John Burns is the arborist for the project. Milo reviewed the current Ronald McDonald house and the project site location. The Ronald McDonald House is moving into the Hope Lodge building and are undergoing renovations.

Iris Meeker went over the drivers of the project derived from the user group. They wanted to continue to serve families on a site that considers safety and service and promotes comfort, health and wellbeing. They also wanted a welcoming front door entrance, a universal design, and a place for philanthropy.

Caeli Tolar reviewed the landscape plan. She explained the existing site conditions, starting with some trees in a courtyard area. The project will require the removal of a Cabbage palm. John Burns from SkyFrog was asked to assess the remaining trees on site to see if there were any additional removals needed. John's report identified a few trees near the building that he recommended for removal.

John Burns provided detail on the condition of the trees on site that were recommended for removal or pruning. Two Bradford Pear trees that are slated for removal are in poor condition with parasitic mistletoe and Spanish moss filling the canopies. On The northeast side of the site, there is a Live Oak near the roofline so the canopy will be lifted and pruned. On the northeast side of the site is a Water Oak that has 60% dead tissue and is decaying due to Hispidus canker. Also on the northeast side is a Laurel Oak with a risk of failure due to the base and is suppressed forward over the healing/prayer garden.

On the southeast side of the building are three River Birch trees suppressed to the south with large limbs over the structure. The large limbs would need to be removed to protect the roof, and River Birch do not do well with large diameter cuts and were therefore recommended for removal. There is also Bald Cypress that will need to be removed due to its roots affecting the foundation and plumbing. There is a Drake Elm in poor condition and full of parasitic mistletoe and Spanish moss. A second Drake Elm is in good condition but is in the middle of the kids play area and outdoor space. This area will need to be wheelchair accessible, resulting in the need for the tree to be removed.

On the southwest side of the side is a Drake Elm slated for removal due to its proximity to drainage, grading and moving equipment. There was some shrubbery in this area that would also be removed, including crepe myrtles.

Caeli reviewed the welcoming front drop off entrance and explained where the Cabbage Palms will be replaced.

The committee asked if the project would come back to the committee. The project will come back with a landscape and planting plan and is before the committee at this time for the tree removals. The committee asked if tree mitigation could be used to remove invasive Bradford Pear trees. The committee stated the project is next to a conservation area and that natives should be planted when considering the planting plan. The committee asked if they are on the site they should go ahead and remove the Bradford pear trees because they are invasive trees. The committee also noted that they shouldn't put that burden on the project because of funding. The scope of the project doesn't include the additional tree removals.

The user group is wanting to move forward on the project and do a large cleanup so they can move into the new building. The project is wanting to pay into the tree mitigation fund for the replacement trees. The cabbage palms will be replanted on site, but the other trees will be paying the mitigation fees. The committee stated that since there is no additional landscape for the project the committee doesn't need to have the project come back to the committee. If there are landscape changes or additional tree removals, the project will come back to the committee to explain.

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

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried Unanimously

UF – 653 Architecture Building Reno & DCP Collaboratory – Design Development Cydney McGlothlin

Cydney introduced herself and stated David Wood was the Project Manager for the project. Jeff Huber and Chris Kuonen from Brooks & Scarpa were also in attendance, as well as the landscape architect for the project, Laurie Hall from CHW. Jeff Huber gave an overview of the project and explained the scope. The renovation of the existing building will bring it up to Florida code and provide some ADA improvements as well as some updated architectural finishes. The Collaboratory is a complete 3 story building addition.

Laurie discussed the existing site conditions and showed went over the tree impacts. The building was shifted away from an existing chilled water line which rotated the building to the east. Because of the shift, there were a few new impacts to the trees on the north side of the site. There is a 40" Magnolia that will need to be removed due to the building shift.

Additionally, a Live Oak that was planted in honor of a retired faculty member will need to be removed. It was originally going to be relocated, but due to cost it will now be replaced. A 26" Magnolia will also need to be removed. Laurie provided the complete list of trees for removal, showing a total of 61 trees required for mitigation.

Jeff reviewed the Collaboratory building. He explained that it will include the new maker spaces as well as the robotics lab. He discussed the open breezeway connecting out into the Architecture Lawn, and how there will be new sidewalks that connect to the atrium space. The project will also be connecting Inner and Stadium Road with pathways.

Jeff explained that there will also be landscaping improvements. They are proposing 11 new trees be planted on site and will also provide some shrubs and groundcover. A bioswale will be added so the space flows with the idea of an outdoor classroom area. He showed the plant palette proposed for the project. Most are in the Landscape Master Plan. There are three plants proposed that are not on the Landscape Master Plan but are suggested for the bioswales. The design team agreed to talk with grounds about the maintenance of the bioswale and only plant what is recommended. The Landscape department is also interested in creating spaces as well for experimenting.

The committee stated they had Dune Sunflower in plots, and they didn't have root mass when it was removed. The committee also stated they were not a favorite of the dwarf yaupon. The committee alternatively

recommended it would be great to see some standard yaupon. The design team made a note of all the recommendations.

The committee asked about the 40” Magnolia tree. The tree has lost a large limb and is in decline. The shift of the building caused this tree to be too close to the building footprint.

The committee asked about the bioswale and if it could be further explained. There is a design in progress to change the slope and grade to the lawn.

Ryan asked about the Magnolia and depending on the root zone impacted, it may be saved. The committee recommended a floating sidewalk or alternative to concrete. The design team explained that the sidewalk would be dropped so it would be in the root zone and the impact to the tree would be too great. Laurie Hall did not recommend preserving the tree. The committee discussed past projects that worked around trees to try to save them, and the ultimate construction impacts on those trees. Additionally, Grounds then must cover the cost of removing the dead trees and replanting them.

The committee asked if there could be an official assessment of the Magnolia tree. The assessment should be an impact assessment and the design team should look at alternatives. The committee asked about changing the design of the building to work around the tree. The committee said that if there is a tree that should be saved, it should be made part of the design of the project.

Motion: Adam Dale made a motion that the project returns to the committee with a presentation including alternative designs that preserve the Magnolia tree, as well as a formal tree impact assessment that assesses the need of the tree to be removed with the current design.

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

None

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Grounds Report

Tom Schlick

Tom said he did not have a Grounds Report. He explained there was a Magnolia tree near the Wertheim Lab that didn't leaf out and needed to be removed. He explained that there two Pecan trees would also need to be removed in that area and that he'd like for the committee to make recommendations on what to replant.

There is a tree at the corner of the Reitz Union that is declining and there is another one in a planter that will need to be taken out. The campus heritage oaks are declining, and we will need recommendations for these spaces. Many of these are focal points on campus.

The committee asked that Tom make a presentation or report on his future projects. Tom stated he would have a report for the next meeting.

Tom also discussed parking issues and trucks parking under oak trees. Parking over at the Entomology parking lot is also a problem associated with baseball games. Bart Knowles from UFPD stated he would get with his department and TAPS to be on top of that issue.

Derek stated they had analyzed trees in the Maguire Village. The Future Land Use was changed to parking and recreational use. Derek stated maybe this area could be for different uses. There are still residents in the buildings. There were about 237 trees evaluated by i-Tree ECO. The trees covered approximately 7 acres. He broke down the species and showed that they have been there for a long time. He also showed how the value of the trees decreases pollution from 34th Street. The oak trees store approximately 148 tons of carbon. There is a lot of value to these trees and the benefits for campus.

The University is planning to close the Village soon and the residents will need to move. Derek wanted to recap the November 2020 LUPFC meeting. There was a change to the Campus Master Plan that changed Maguire Village to active recreation. Committee member Creed Geer made a motion to approve the change to the campus master plan subject to a policy being added that prior to the demolition of graduate student housing at Maguire Village and University Village South, the university shall undertake and publish a thorough study of the impact of the loss of graduate student housing beds, efforts to mitigate those impacts, and the costs and benefits of the demolition and of alternatives to demolition reflecting the input of critical stakeholders. Derek stated, to date, the report that was requested and promised was never completed.

The timeline for the demolition is not set yet, so there may be a policy set up by the Land Use Committee in the future. This housing is coming offline in June of 2023 and the students are asking if there could be a pause on the decision of demolition. They would like to live in the building until the demolition project is starting. Linda Dixon explained that the future of the site is not known. In the future, it could be a new Baby Gator facility. The layout for this space is undecided. We don't know if we will be putting Academic Buildings on this site. The future zoning right now is active-recreation outdoor. It is about preserving the area for future use. Right now, there is no funding for redeveloping the site.

The projects will come back to the committee prior to anything happening on the site. The committee stated keeping trees along 34th street is a good idea. Housing is funded by Auxiliary and can't afford to save the buildings in this area. The cost in annual maintenance of the buildings is higher than the rent revenue. The committee asked if there will be replacement housing for the Graduate students. The committee stated we should do the study since that was the LUFPC motion promised.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:52 AM.