

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

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, July 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
Ryan Klein – Assistant Professor, Environmental Horticulture
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Brandi Renton – Associate Vice President, Business Affairs
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability

Members not attending:

Fernando Alferéz – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Carlos Dounac – Assistant Vice President, 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

Visitors attending:

Rachel Mandell – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Keith Humphreys – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Tamera Baughman – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Cydney McGlothlin – University Architect, Planning, Design & Construction
Savanah Partridge – Planning, Design & Construction
Kaylee August – Office of Sustainability
Laurie Hall – CHW
Caeli Tolar - CHW
Will Marshall - Unknown
Julia Chapman – Architect for UF-396
Jordan Benton – Facilities Services

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

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

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF – 396 – FL Museum of Natural History TESI Earth Systems Addition – Advanced Schematic Design Keith Humphreys

Keith introduced himself and the project. He reminded the committee that the project site was previously approved by the committee with a request to reroute the road to save a live oak heritage tree in the middle island. The project scope has changed, and the road will not be reconfigured as part of the new design. Therefore, the tree in question will be saved and remain on site. Keith introduced Julia Chapman, the architect for the project, to present the new project design.

Julia introduced herself and added that Laurie Hall and Caeli Tolar from CHW were also on the call to go over the advanced schematic design and landscape plan. Julia provided an overview of the project location in the Cultural Plaza and the existing conditions. She showed the project footprint boundaries and explained how the project will be split into two new additions. One will be an approximately 3,300 SF addition at the front of the building, and another 7,400 SF addition spread across two levels for office and conference room space in the northwest corner. There will be some utility work required in the center of the road near the front of the building which will be repaved once the utilities are completed. The building shape will be changing to add space for a gallery, gift shop, and other public functions. There will be an added terrace space for school groups and visitors to use as outdoor learning space.

Caeli explained that the design team are doing their best to have minimal tree impacts. Most of the impacts will be toward the front of the building and near the terrace area. There are two Washington Palms that will be impacted by the new building addition expanding to the east. There is a patch of Cabbage Palms that will be impacted because they are within the building footprint. Toward the southeast where the terrace is proposed there are Laurel Oaks and Loblolly Pines that will be impacted and replanted with similar native species. The rear addition will not impact any trees. In total, the project will be mitigating 30 trees and will replant 11 trees. The total mitigation fee is \$4,750.

The project will be pursuing FGBC Gold certification. The project is in the Hogtown Creek basin but is still within the UF Master Stormwater Permit. The intent is to utilize the existing stormwater pond at the corner of 34th street and the Museum. The project team has also provided several LID principles for additional stormwater treatment. The Museum is interested in having areas where the project can have some native plantings and rain gardens that can be used as an educational tool.

Caeli reviewed the proposed site furniture. The user group asked that the material for the pavement be made with recycled components, but all materials and furniture will be the Landscape Master Plan standards. Caeli went over the plant palette proposed for the project which focuses on using all native plants. The Museum was also interested in pollinator plants, and they have proposed some plants species that are not in the Landscape Master Plan.

The committee asked about the plant palette and were wanting to tie in the plants from the pollinator areas and LID areas throughout the landscape. The committee asked if the project was trying to match the wildflower meadows in the NATL area. The committee asked if the NATL boardwalk connection was part of the project. It is not in the current scope. The committee asked about the stormwater pond and where it was located. The committee asked about the furniture and if there will be umbrellas in the picnic area. There will be a terrace overhang to provide shade. The committee asked about the choice of plantings. The museum user group gave the project team a list to help match what they are looking for.

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

Second: Melanie Nelson

Motion Carried Unanimously

UF – 675 – Disability Resource Center – Programming

Tamera Baughman

Tamera introduced and explained the project had come before the committee prior, but in a different location. UF Leadership changed the proposed location to the surface parking between the Florida Gym and the Bryant Space Center. The proposed building is slated to use a portion of the site and allow room for a future UF Testing Center Addition. The DRC has grown greatly over the past few years and is now serving over 6,000 students presently. This will come thru as a future land use amendment. The proposed area has approximately 45 existing spaces. Because most of the spaces will be impacted by the new building, the design team is looking across the street to enhance the parking area there to accommodate some of the lost spaces. The building will be approximately 12,000 square feet and 2 stories. Design intention is for the DRC to compliment and fit in with the aesthetic of nearby buildings in this area of the Historic District. Tamera showed the existing project site and what is on the site. There will be tree impacts associated with the project, but the specifics are unknown until the project moves into schematic design.

The committee asked that the project provide a survey of the impacted trees and a status of their condition to report. The committee also asked that the design be centered around preserving the heritage trees. The project will come back to the committee with a detailed presentation of the impacts and tree removal requests. The committee also stated that the Landscape Master Plan will impact the streetscape to comply with the Master Plan. The project will work with Transportation and Parking on impacts to parking and try to reconfigure other existing parking areas to provide additional parking spaces. They will also look to the east to explore if there is more parking potential in that area. The committee stated the Hamilton Center will be moving into the infirmary. The project will be mindful in ensuring the landscapes work together.

Motion: Adam Dale made a motion to approve the project as presented but request the Design Team plan the building footprint to avoid impacts to as many trees as possible, particularly the heritage trees. Also, plan for the Testing Center design to have minimal impacts.

Second: Tim Martin

Motion Carried Unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

MP08096 Campus Landscape Design Enhancement Plans Project #4 – Design Development

Melanie Heflin

Laurie Hall from CHW introduced herself that she would be presenting today since Melanie was unable to attend. The project is part of the Landscape Enhancement Plans project focusing on enhancing the landscapes in certain parts of campus to bring them into compliance with the Landscape Master Plan and improve their condition.

The Buckman Drive project addresses the aging trees in the area and planning for the future of the corridor from Stadium Road to University Avenue. The project suggests a phased approach for replanting the tree canopy, starting with removing the hollies and the hazardous Shumard Oaks. The project will also update building signs

consistent with the new wayfinding standards. The tree placements will have the large canopy trees at the curbside and small, lower-growing flowering trees set back away from the curb.

Laurie provided the conditions of the existing trees on the street. Some of the Shumard Oaks along this drive are at the end of their life span and will need to be removed. The committee asked about the poor condition of some of the trees and Laurie explained that it looked like species and age was the reason for their condition, not damage. The committee wanted the design team to look at the shade of the trees in the area to try to keep the shade as much as possible along the corridor and on the buildings.

Facility Services will be conducting the work and Tom Schlick stated some of the work will need to be done during Summer and Christmas break. The project will take a few years to complete depending on how much is done, and because of the phased tree removals. Once new trees are established, others will be removed. The species selection will be coordinated with Facility Services and will also follow the Landscape Master Plan. The streetscapes will be Live Oaks or Bluff Oaks, and the committee also suggested White Oak. Laurie showed the plant palette of plants and shrubs for the area.

The committee asked if the design plan will come back to the committee and Laurie stated this was the only time it is coming before the committee. The committee asked about the heat load on the buildings if these trees are removed. The committee agreed with the phased removals to help mitigate the shade for the pedestrian walkways. The committee wanted to make sure that what is chosen to be put in the area in front of the Chemistry building not affect the utilities underneath or the future maintenance. Cydney asked that there be a zoom meeting to create a communications strategy for this project. The committee will coordinate with Linda and Melanie for their plant suggestions.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to approve this plan with a reminder that Grounds will meet with us before each phase of implementation of what will be removed and then replanted.

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried Unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Landscaping and Natural Resource Projects

Jordan Benton / Tom Schlick

Jordan introduced herself and stated she will present today on behalf of Facility Services. She will be the communications personnel for grounds at committee meetings and will present information on upcoming projects along with Tom.

She reminded the committee about the heritage oak tree on the northwest corner of Reitz Union discussed at the last LVL meeting for removal. This was to address safety issues in a heavy traffic area for students. The tree was compromised during construction in the area, grade change and hydrology. There were additional tree removals performed due to waterlogging during recent rain events. The west side of the Reitz Union had some enhancements to add deterrents to block vehicles from cutting across the grass. This project will act as additional traffic control to ensure safe navigational practices.

A fencing addition is going in at Ficke and IFAS meadows. The location is along Memorial Road to provide protection to the pollinator plants and have a clearly defined space. Facility Services has partnered with IFAS to have fencing installed along the IFAS meadows, which is also on Memorial Road. IFAS will purchase the materials and Facility Services will handle the installation. In this area, 25% of the Ficke meadows are in an archaeologically sensitive zone and there will be an archaeologist on site during the installation.

There will be a bridge addition to provide safe pedestrian navigation over the swale in Ficke meadow. It will be installed at the grade of the existing vegetation, so it is not intrusive to the area.

Jordan discussed the Landscape Enhancement Projects that provide conceptual designs for specific locations on campus. These projects will be a phased effort, and eight are currently in design. The design work for these enhancements will be done by CHW, implemented by PDC, and the labor will be done by Facility Services. We will come to the committee during each phase to show LVL the progress.

Facility Services is also working on enhancing the flower beds around campus to add color and texture. The committee asked that Grounds keep up on the invasive species list. Grounds stated they even look on the 'do not plant' species list and try to stay away from those as well.

On the corner of Newell Drive and Inner Road, there is a heritage live oak tree that has lost large limbs. Facilities Services is bringing in an arborist to assess the tree. The tree has a 6' crack in the tree. The tree is over 100 years old, and it is damaged. There is rotting from the inside of the tree, and it has a sparse top canopy. Jordan said that an assessment will be conducted and provided to the committee prior to its removal.

UF Urban Forester Position

Timothy Martin

Tim stated he wanted to speak about the future of a UF Urban Forester position on campus. The UF Urban forests and trees are an integral part of campus. He said we should think of our forests and trees as critical infrastructure on campus. There is no full-time position on the UF campus as an Urban Forester. There was a position prior to the 2000's and it was cut for budget reasons. UF is the only SEC top 10 University that doesn't have this position.

The committee stated this is an important need on campus because a tree inventory is needed for evaluation and replacement costs. This position can work with everyone on campus to develop, implement and monitor an Urban Forest Management Plan and Conservation Area Management Plan. This person should have professional experience in this field of study. The position should require a degree in Urban Forestry or Forest Management and be an ISA Arborist certified. The position could be housed in the Sustainability office, Planning, Design & Construction, or Utilities and Energy Services. This is a mission critical position and needed on campus. The committee asked about giving supporting documentation of how this position could benefit campus. The committee considered coming up with bullet points of how this position could benefit the University as a whole. To maintain the University's Top 5 status, this is infrastructure that needs to be invested in.

Motion: Tim Martin made a motion to request the VP Business Affairs or other appropriate administrator create a full-time salaried TEAMS position with the title Urban Forester. It should be listed with the qualifications of at least one degree in Urban Forestry, Forestry, or Natural Resources Management and a certified ISA Arborist. The position could be housed in the Office of Sustainability, Planning, Design, and Construction or Utilities and Energy Services. Appoint a search and screening committee to fill the position ASAP.

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chair Report

Gail Hansen de Chapman

Gail stated there were only a few things to note. The committee is losing two committee members because they have accepted other positions. Brian Keith and Basil Iannone will not be attending any more of the meetings. Gail will investigate getting new members added back as soon as possible.

The committee asked about the trees being cut down at the O'Connell Center and the verdict is no one knows who did that project. It would be nice if that information could come before the committee.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:02 AM.