

**MINUTES**  
**University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee**  
**January 09, 2025, at 9:00 AM**  
**HYBRID MEETING**

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee (LVLC) met Thursday, January 9th, 2025, for a meeting hosted in the PDC conference room and online.

**Members attending:**

Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair  
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services  
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction  
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability  
Rachel Mallinger – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department  
Nancy Chrystal-Green – Associate Vice President, Division of Student Life  
Ryan Klein – Assistant Professor, Environmental Horticulture  
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department  
Monika Oli – Master Lecturer, Microbiology and Cell Science  
Latrell Simmons – UFPD, Major, Support Services Division & Community Services Division

**Members not attending:**

David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist  
Gerardo Nunez – Assistant Professor, Horticultural Sciences  
Brandi Renton – Associate Vice President, Business Affairs  
Lucas Majure – Assistant Curator, FLMNH  
Cydney McGlothlin – AVP, Planning, Design & Construction  
Jordan Benton – Director, Facility Services  
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services  
Fernando Alferéz – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture  
Wesley Freeman – Student

**Visitors attending:**

Rick Falcon – Administrative Specialist, Planning, Design & Construction  
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction  
Francisco Oquendo – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction  
Robert Hatker – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction  
Stephen Caron – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction  
Alex Gauthier – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction  
Andrew Meeker – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction  
Thomas Feather – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction  
Jamie Lindsey – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction  
Judith Russell – Dean of University Libraries, UF libraries  
Peter Miller – Library, Facilities Planning Office  
Patrick Reakes – Senior Associate Dean, UF Libraries  
Matt Mueller – UF Business Services  
Derek LaMontagne – Visitor  
Samuel Schatz – Arborist, City of Gainesville  
Laurie Hall – VP Infrastructure Florida, CHW  
Elisabeth Manley – Kimley Horn  
Sarah McCown – Kimley Horn  
Rick Trenchard – Freigh Farms  
Max Banach – Student  
Maryvonne Devensky – Visitor

**I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes**

**Motion:** Ryan Klein made a motion to adopt the agenda and approve the December minutes.

**Second:** Rachel Mallinger

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**II. MAJOR PROJECTS**

None

**III. MINOR PROJECTS**

**MP-09071- Gator Corner Dining, Freight Farm**

**Presenting:** Robert Hatker & Matt Mueller

Matt Mueller presented a proposal for a Freight Farm project, a hydroponic farming system that would grow local produce, primarily focusing on lettuce with the potential to expand to other vegetables. The project would be overseen by Chartwells, the university's dining services provider, and would provide opportunities for student internships and educational outreach. The estimated cost of the project was around \$165,000, with the university's Office of Sustainability and Business Services covering the costs. The project has no tree impacts.

**Motion:** Monika Oli made a motion to approve the project as

**Second:** presented. Rachel Mallinger

**Motion Carried unanimously**

**MP-08811 – Library West Garden Terrace Renovation**

**Presenting:** Andrew Meeker

Andrew discussed the proposed renovation of two garden terrace spaces adjacent to the main entrance of Library West. The aim is to transform an underutilized space into a more inviting area for students and faculty. The current landscaping is aged and overgrown, and the project seeks to reimagine and reuse the space. Sarah McCown then presented the design principles for the site plan, emphasizing the need for a seamless connection to the adjacent campus improvements and aesthetic connection to Library West and the Plaza of the Americas. She also outlined the general improvements, including ADA accessible

seating, hardscape matching the existing standards, and the relocation of a sculptural element. The project aims to enhance the existing character while protecting existing improvements.

Elisabeth and Sarah presented a proposal for the removal of 16 sable palms and the planting of 2 river birch trees as part of a project at Library West. The project requires a 2-to-1 replacement equivalent of 30 additional trees. Two options were presented for mitigation: a payment of \$7,500 for mitigation replacement trees or the removal of two existing medjool palms in the Plaza and replanting with 6 canopy trees. The project aligns with the landscape master plan and includes improvements such as landscape edge filtering, Florida-friendly species, and ADA-compliant tables. The colonnade will not be removed at this time due to lack of funding and the need for additional reviews. The space is intended to be used at night, with existing building lighting and pedestrian lights providing sufficient illumination. The committee discussed the removal of palms and the proposed seating areas. They also considered the use of native alternatives to the holly fern, with Rachel suggesting a species that tolerates wetter soil. Elisabeth clarified that the landscape areas would not be a swale for stormwater but would have area drains for drainage. Gail raised a question about the shade for the holly fern, and Elisabeth confirmed it would be shaded by the colonnade. Ryan suggested revisiting the species of river birch due to their adapted hardiness zone and potential for looking ratty in warmer and drier conditions. He also suggested that LVL should revisit the amount of money for mitigation in the policy. Adam agreed with Ryan's suggestions and added that they should ensure the chosen species fit well in the space.

The committee discussed the design and placement of trees in the Plaza space. Adam suggested using smaller magnolia trees and possibly connecting the planters for better tree health and stability. Sam proposed using different species for each corner and middle planter, with smaller trees on the corners and larger ones in the middle. The team also considered the addition of flowering plants and fruit trees but expressed concerns about maintenance and potential issues with bees. The idea of using pollinator-friendly native plants like the white fringe tree was also suggested. The team agreed to further consider these suggestions and select a tree species in consultation with Tom Schlick in UF Grounds.

**Motion:** Rachel Mallinger made a motion to approve the project as presented with the second mitigation option in consultation with Tom Schlick, and to request the River Birch be replaced with native plants, like the Native White Fringe tree or the Native East Palatka Holly. If these are not an option, then use the non-native Vitex or Bottle Brush.

**Second:** Monika Oli

## **Motion Carried unanimously**

### **MP-09130, MP-09139, MP-09143 – Maguire and University Apartments**

#### **Presenting: Stephen Caron, Alex Gauthier & Laurie Hall**

Laurie Hall presented the project, which is a continuation of the last LVL meeting. The project's scope includes demolishing existing buildings and taking down adjacent trees that are deemed in poor health or hazardous, while trying to retain certain trees.

The committee discussed the need for tree protection plans and the potential for manual digging to save certain trees. Ryan suggested using some of the mitigation money for structural pruning to reduce liability and promote better tree growth. The committee agreed to retain the large live oak and the sycamores, and to ensure tree protection zones extend to the drip line. They also discussed the need for sturdy fencing and high-visibility signage around tree protection zones.

Laurie mentioned that the demolition would be phased, with tree protection extending as they move out of an area. Ryan proposed having someone monitor the site to ensure no damage to the trees. The committee also discussed the recycling of materials from the site, with Stephen Caron mentioning that they have met with recycling companies to repurpose materials. Derek LaMontagne expressed concerns about the removal of trees in the past and the lack of a clear plan for the site's future use. He also requested the project be postponed. The committee agreed to define the memorial garden's outline and protect it. Alex clarified that the decision to demolish the buildings was made by the University Board of Trustees and that they do not have the power to postpone the demolition. Nancy expressed her understanding of the security concerns and her willingness to help.

**Motion:** Ryan Klein made a motion to approve as presented with the exception of retaining and protecting one live oak and the sycamores. A portion of the mitigation money is recommended to be spent for structural pruning on retained trees. The memorial garden is to be protected and fenced to insure it does not get affected during the demolition. The committee also recommended penalties to the contractor if found to be going into protection zones or damaging retained trees.

**Second:** Rachel Mallinger

**Motion approved with Monika Oli opposed.**

#### **IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **Landscaping and Natural Resource Projects**

##### **Presenting: Thomas Schlick**

No report

##### **New Member Orientation**

Linda presented the orientation providing an overview of the committee mission, procedures, and website.

##### **Chair Report**

##### **Gail Hansen de Chapman**

Gail announced her plans to resume efforts to gain support for an Urban Forester Conservation Land Manager position. Ryan and Rachel were asked to provide information on peer institutions with similar positions

**There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 AM.**