

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee
December 05, 2024, at 9:00 AM
HYBRID MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee (LVLC) met Thursday, December 5th, 2024, 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
Fernando Alferéz – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture
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
Wesley Freeman – Student

Members not attending:

David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Gerardo Nunez – Assistant Professor, Horticultural Sciences
Brandi Renton – Associate Vice President, Business Affairs
Lucas Majure – Assistant Curator, FLMNH
Cydney McGlothlin – AVP, Planning, Design & Construction
Monika Oli – Master Lecturer, Microbiology and Cell Science
Latrell Simmons – UFPD, Major, Support Services Division & Community Services Division
Jordan Benton – Director, Facility Services
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services

Visitors attending:

Rick Falcon – Administrative Specialist, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Jennifer Meisinhelder – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Stephen Caron – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Alex Gauthier – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Thomas Feather – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Jamie Lindsey – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Phillip Seay – Grounds Superintendent, Facilities Services
Derek LaMontagne – Visitor
Laurie Hall – VP Infrastructure Florida, CHW
Gary Cummings – CHW
John Williamson – RMF Engineering Inc.
Ruth Perry – RMF Engineering Inc.
Chris Carlson – Assoc. Director, Facility Support
Chloe Miko – Student Intern
Marley Concha- Student Intern
Damian Oakes – Student
Austin Britton – Student
Max Banach – Student
Isha Khan – Student
Megan Laffey – Student

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Rachel Mallinger made a motion to adopt the agenda and approve the November minutes.

Second: Ryan Klein

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF-664, UF-644A & UF 644B

Reitz Union Lawn/Inner Road Improvements

Presenting: Tom Feather

Tom presented the project, which includes infrastructure improvements and the conversion of inner road from one way to two-way travel. The focus was on the planters in front of Broward dining, with the design team led by John Williamson presenting the proposed plan. Gail raised a concern about the invasive plant status of Liriope, which was on the approved plant list for UF. Gail also commented on the possibility of not removing all the boulders from the landscape and Ruth Perry agreed with the idea. The committee agreed to have the design team further discuss this with the Florida friendly landscaping program.

Motion: Rachel Mallinger made a motion to approve the project, pending further discussion with the Florida Friendly Landscaping program on the invasive status of Liriope and the possibility of using a native alternative.

Second: Ryan Klein

Motion Carried unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

IF-24049 W.W. Glenn Teaching Building

Presenting: Laurie Hall

Laurie discussed the removal of three trees for an IFAS facility project, with two of the trees being loblolly pines and a small sabal palm. The removal was necessary due to the project's requirement for on-site stormwater treatment. The trees were not heritage size, but a replacement of two for one was planned. The stormwater ponds would be used as a

demonstration and teaching area, with native shrubs and ground covers to be planted on site. Ryan suggested that heavy equipment should be used cautiously around the retained trees to avoid root damage. Gail and Rachel discussed the possibility of enlarging the area for the pond, but it was determined that it was not feasible due to existing infrastructure and topography.

Motion: Ryan Klein made a motion to approve the project as presented with the request of careful protecting the tree roots. Depending on how close the tree roots are cut, they would need to be cut by hand instead of using heavy equipment.

Second: Rachel Mallinger

Motion Carried unanimously

MP-07381 – Nuclear Field Building Renovation

Presenting: Stephen Caron

Stephen presented a project for the renovation of the nuclear field building, which encountered unforeseen site conditions and required the replacement of the sanitary sewer main. Laurie Hall discussed the need to trench through a sanitary sewer line, which would impact four additional trees (26" Swamp Chestnut; 16" Sweet Gum; 18" Pignut Hickory; and 9" American Holly). Laurie recommended the removal of these trees due to the trenching depth and the potential damage to them. She also mentioned that the removal of these trees would require 10 new trees to be planted as mitigation, but due to the site's limited space, it was likely that mitigation fees would be paid instead. Gail and Derek LaMontagne raised concerns about the number of trees being cut down and the potential for alternatives to minimize tree loss. Laurie explained that the project had previously gone through the LVL committee and that alternative methods like directional bore were not viable due to unforeseen field conditions. She also agreed to note the need for better tree protection during construction.

The potential impact of trenching on the leaning Swamp Chestnut Oak near a building was discussed. They recalled a previous decision to save the tree, but now it's uncertain due to the needed sanitary sewer work and trenching. Ryan suggested that the tree should be at least 8 feet away from the construction site for its survival. Stephen Caron reported that the project Superintendent confirmed there is only 10 feet of separation between the new building and the existing tree with the sewer line between them.

The committee also discussed the reported removal of other trees in the area, which hadn't gone through the committee for approval. Derek mentioned a Heritage longleaf pine and a

large oak tree that were removed without committee approval. Gregg Clarke reported that there had been a water leak requiring an emergency repair and the trees in question were impacted by that line. He said Facilities Services got a public information request about those trees so he can provide the documentation if needed.

Motion: Ryan Klein made a motion to approve the project as presented and ensure protection of any other trees.

Second: Rachel Mallinger

Motion Carried unanimously

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

Presenting: Stephen Caron & Alex Gauthier

Stephen presented a proposed project to remove all buildings and structures at a site located in Maguire Village and University South Village, adjacent to Bledsoe Drive and Hull Road. The project, which is expected to begin demolition in late January or early February, involves the removal of hazardous materials such as asbestos and lead. The team also discussed the preservation of trees on the site, and the recommendation to remove 32 trees that are in poor condition and/or close to buildings that will be demolished and one tree that is an invasive Camphor. The team reported on arborist assessments of the site trees and agreed to provide the arborist reports to the committee for further review.

Gail, Laurie, Linda, Stephen, and Ryan discussed the future of the site after the buildings are demolished. Linda reported that the Campus Master Plan identifies the site to be used for recreation, including fields, parking, and support facilities. Linda mentioned that the early childhood collaborative project, as identified in the Campus Master Plan, could be the first to be implemented, but no immediate plans were ready for review. She noted that any projects to happen on the site after demolition will come through committees to review as usual. The committee discussed the need for a tree preservation plan. They also discussed the possibility of new species being planted as the site is developed. Ryan expressed concerns about tree protection during the demolition process and suggested that the site should be closed off to the public during the construction phase. The design team agreed to meet onsite with Chair Hansen de Chapman and member Ryan Klein, in separate meetings, to discuss tree protection and removals.

The committee discussed the plan for the hazardous material crew to start ahead of the demo team at the site, with the intent to take the whole site. A concern was presented about the potential for wind shear to bring down more trees after the removal of hard

structures. They also discussed the need for better protection of the trees they are retaining and the importance of marking out and putting up barriers around the tree protection zones. Max Banach asked the amount of time the buildings have been vacant, with Nancy suggesting she could follow up outside this meeting with the requested information. The committee discussed the potential demolition of buildings and the removal of hazardous trees on the site. Derek expressed concern about the potential loss of memorial trees and the lack of transparency in the decision-making process. He also raised concerns about the timing of the demolition, suggesting that it should not proceed until all alternatives have been considered. Laurie clarified that this project is being presented to request approval of tree removals and not demolition of the buildings on site. Gail and Laurie agreed that hazardous trees would need to be removed but emphasized the importance of preserving memorial trees if they are not deemed hazardous or a threat. Linda asked for anyone with information about specific memorial trees on site to share that information with the design team and committee. She noted that these trees may not be protected if no one knows about them.

The committee discussed the removal of hazardous trees near the buildings, with a focus on those that are too close to the structures or in poor condition. The committee also discussed the potential for additional tree removal in the future and the need for a detailed report before cutting down trees that are hazardous. The importance of preserving memorial trees was emphasized, and the committee agreed to protect the garden and surrounding area. The possibility of repurposing playground equipment and other materials was also mentioned. Lastly, Derek raised concerns about the premature removal of trees two years ago that were not properly mitigated, and the committee agreed to revisit this issue.

Derek expressed the need for greater involvement of graduate students in local housing and facilities meetings. He asked for public access to the LVL meeting Zoom link, to which Linda and Gail mentioned a previous incident with the public interruptions of an LVL Zoom meeting, but Gail agreed to consider this request. A discussion about the removal of trees near buildings ensued, with Ryan and Rachel expressing concerns about the potential for damage during demolition and the need for alternative mitigation strategies. The conversation ended without a final decision on the matter. The committee discussed the removal of hazardous trees close to the building during the demolition process. They agreed that more information was needed, including photos and the condition of individual trees, before deciding. The committee also discussed the potential risks to construction crews of tree failure during the building demolition process. The committee also discussed the uncertainty of the site's future use and the potential need for tree pruning in the future. They noted that there would be greater risk from the questionable trees if public access to

the site will be allowed after demolition. Conversely, if the site remains secured with fencing, the need to remove the hazardous trees may not be as great. The conversation ended with the need for further information before making a final decision. Frank Javaheri made a recommendation for the committee members to walk the site with Laurie to inspect all the trees in question in order to be properly informed to make a final decision in the next meeting. Gail suggested more site signage to explain what is happening in the project before it begins.

The next meeting was moved from January 2nd to January 9th due to the holidays and to accommodate site visits by Gail and Ryan to ensure there is adequate information for a proper decision before demolitions begin.

Motion: Rachel Mallinger made a motion to approve no tree removals until more information is provided, with future tree removals to be presented to the

committee. **Second:** Ryan Klein

Motion Carried unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Landscaping and Natural Resource Projects

Presenting: Thomas Schlick

No report

New Member Orientation

No new members were present. Orientation postponed for the next LVL meeting.

Chair Report

Gail Hansen de Chapman / Adam Dale

No report

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at

11:27AM.