

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
April 03, 2025, at 9:00 AM
HYBRID MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, April 3, 2025 for a meeting hosted in the PDC Conference room and online.

Members attending:

Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability
Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Rachel Mallinger – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Ryan Klein – Assistant Professor, Environmental Horticulture

Members not attending:

Fernando Alferez – Assistant Professor, Citrus Horticulture
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Lucas Majure – Assistant Curator, FLMNH
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Cydney McGlothlin – AVP, Planning, Design & Construction
Gerardo Nunez – Assistant Professor, Horticultural Sciences
Monika Oli – Master Lecturer, Microbiology and Cell Science
Pawel Petelewicz – Assistant Professor, Agronomy Department
Brandi Renton – Associate Vice President, Business Affairs
Latrell Simmons – UFPD, Major, Support Services Division & Community Service Division
Nancy Chrystal-Green – Assistant Vice President, Student Engagement
Wesley Freeman – Student

Visitors attending:

Adam Hall – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Amanda Myers – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Greg Roberts – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Thomas Feather – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Tom Feather – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Laurie Hall – Sr. Landscape Architect, NV5
Jordan Benton – Assistant Director of Business Operations, Facility Services
Mel - Parrish McCall
Marley Concha – Intern
Chloe Miko – Intern

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

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

Second: Rachel Mallinger

Motion Carried Unanimously

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

UF-692-0723—Chemical Engineering Renovation & Remodeling

Presenting: Stephen Caron & Laurie Hall

Stephen presented the project to renovate and expand the Chemical Engineering building, a 54,000 square feet building, which is over 50 years old. The project includes adding a new main entry lobby and renovating the entire building. The landscape plan for the project was presented, which showed that there would be minimal tree impacts. However, two small trees on the north side of the building would be impacted. The committee discussed with Stephen and Laurie the possibility of replanting a Catalpa tree, which is a native species, as part of the mitigation.

Motion: Ryan Klein made a motion to approve the project as presented with the exception of replanting a Catalpa tree as mitigation.

Second: Rachel Mallinger

Motion Carried unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS

MP07468 – 686 — Reitz Union – Repair South Terrace Concrete and Seawall

Presenting: Stephen Caron & Laurie Hall

Steven discussed the construction of an access road for heavy truck traffic and the replacement of a sea wall and concrete terrace. He mentioned a challenge with the truck traffic and the need for a turning rate for a dump truck. Laurie explained the tree removals approved for the project and the need to correct a mistake with the previous approval. She also discussed the proximity of a 25-inch live oak to the site and the need for equipment to access the site. Gail asked about the retaining wall, which Steven confirmed would remain in place and be supported by driven piles due to the heavy traffic.

Laurie proposed the removal of a Live Oak due to its location and potential damage from heavy equipment. The tree was not in great shape and had the potential to be damaged further. The committee agreed to update the mitigation calculations to account for this tree and correct the previously approved mitigation. Ryan suggested revisiting the calculations for tree mitigation on campus, as the current rates are significantly lower than what would be charged in the city of Gainesville.

The committee discussed the challenges posed by ongoing construction projects. The participants and committee members talked about the need for quick decision-making and the potential for emergency meetings to address issues that arise between regular meetings. They also touched on the importance of public notice requirements for such meetings.

Motion: Rachel Mallinger made a motion to approve the project as presented.

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried unanimously

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

UF-644 Inner Road Improvements (Information)

Presenting: Tom Feather

Tom presented a tree issue related to the UF-644 project, which involved the construction of a new steam distribution system and roadway improvements. The issue arose when the contractor had to replace a retaining wall, impacting a nearby holly tree. The tree was braced during the construction process, but the wall is now back in place, and the service drive is being restored. The committee discussed the tree's condition and agreed that it should be removed and mitigated for. They also expressed concerns about the potential impact of the construction on the tree's roots.

Motion: Adam Dale made a motion to approve the tree removal and replace it with other native species further away from the wall using the 2 to 1 mitigation in compliance with the landscape master plan. The species selection and location of the new trees will be coordinated with Thomas Schlick.

Second: Ryan Klein

Motion Carried unanimously

Landscaping and Natural Resource Projects

Presenting: Thomas Schlick

The committee then reviewed tree removals for February, including several palms and other hazardous or dead trees. Tom Schlick mentioned upcoming removals of aging Shumard oaks on Buckman Drive and discusses recent replantings near Radio Road and 34th Street. Rachel inquired about replanting policies, and Tom explained that while there's no strict policy, they aim to plant more than they remove and focus on better tree placement.

Tom also talked the installation of conservation area fencing behind Alpha Gamma Row and Fraternity Row. The fencing will be 6 feet high and made of chain link to prevent dumping and protect the conservation areas. The project will involve clearing underbrush and removing accumulated garbage. The fraternity wetlands fence will be a summer project due to the amount of work required. The old fence must be removed and replaced, and the new fence will be 6 feet high to deter dumping. The project will also involve removing deer stands and a shed in the wetlands. The committee discussed the need for better enforcement of hunting on campus property and the possibility of installing security cameras or trail cameras. The committee also discussed the need for education campaigns to improve waste disposal practices among the fraternities.

Tom discussed landscaping and tree management issues at the cultural plaza and Buckman Drive. The committee discussed the removal of hazardous trees, the implementation of new landscaping plans, and the potential relocation of some trees. They also discussed the need for better signage and the consequences of littering in the wetlands area. The committee members expressed concerns about the condition of the trees and the need for more effective management. The conversation ended with a discussion about the removal of some trees in front of the Natural History Museum due to the expansion project.

The committee discussed a project feasibility analysis for repairing or replacing a damaged boardwalk near the Health Science Center. Jordan explained that the project is complex due to its location in a sensitive wetland area, but it's highly desired by the campus community.

Chair Report

Gail Hansen de Chapman

Gail reported on an emergency tree removal at the Wilmot Botanical Gardens, where three additional trees in poor condition were approved for removal during an ongoing construction project. The removed trees will be mitigated by planting new ones.

The committee discussed the process of increasing mitigation fees, with Linda explaining that the Vice President for business affairs must approve any significant changes. Ryan emphasized the importance of enforcing the policy and holding construction companies accountable for damaging trees. The committee also discussed updating the list of acceptable mitigation trees and the landscape master plan. Gail agreed to gather information and update the committee on these topics in the next meeting.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:26 AM.