

MINUTES
University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee
March 10, 2022, at 9:00 AM
Facilities, Planning & Construction
ZOOM MEETING

The University Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee (ULVLC) met Thursday, March 10, 2022 for a Zoom meeting online.

Members attending:

Gregg Clarke – Director of Operations, Facilities Services
Adam Dale – Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department
Linda Dixon – Director, Planning, Design & Construction
Gail Hansen De Chapman – Environmental Horticulture - Chair
Basil Iannone – Assistant Professor, Forest Resources and Conservation
Brian Keith – Associate Dean, Library Administration
Tim Martin – Associate Professor, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
Melanie Nelson – Associate Professor, Medicine
Tom Schlick – Assistant Director of Grounds, Facilities Services
Matt Williams – Director, Office of Sustainability

Members not attending:

William Barber – Assistant Director, UF Police Department
Donna Bloomfield – Grounds, Facilities Services
David Conser – City of Gainesville – City Arborist
Carlos Dognac – Assistant Vice President, Planning, Design & Construction
Andrew Smiarowski - Student

Visitors attending:

Rachel Mandell – Sr. Planner, Planning, Design & Construction
Melissa Thomas – Administrative, Planning, Design & Construction
Sam Schatz – City of Gainesville – Urban Forestry, City of Gainesville
Tom Feather – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Milo Zapata – Project Manager, Planning, Design & Construction
Frank Javaheri – Director of Construction, Planning, Design & Construction
Cydney McGlothlin – University Architect, Planning, Design & Construction
Dustin Stephany – Sustainability Coordinator, Planning, Design & Construction
Jacob Pruitt – UPD – Sitting in for William Barber
Elisabeth Manley – Owner & Principal, Manley Design
Laurie Hall – Landscape Design, CHW
Kaylee August – Office of Sustainability

I. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

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

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

A committee member mentioned an email inquiry that he had gotten about documents posted on the committee website and the Campus Master Plan. Several other members stated they had received the same inquiry. Linda stated that inquiries on a topic that may come to the committee for a vote should be discussed in the meeting but if it is an administrative question, it can be sent to her. Almost always, the presentations given during the committee meeting are the ones posted ahead of time. However, if a presentation is updated at the meeting, the new final presentation will replace the existing one on the website. The member agreed to forward the email inquiry to Linda for her to address.

II. MAJOR PROJECTS

**UF – 396 Florida Museum of Natural History Thompson Earth Systems Institute Addition –
Programming** **Cydney McGlothlin**

Cydney introduced herself and stated she was presenting the Florida Museum of Natural History Thompson Earth Systems Institute Addition located in the cultural plaza. The goal is to make the plaza a greener space and this project will contribute to that goal.

Cydney presented the site for the addition. The proposal is to remove the building from the welcome desk forward and place the addition in this area. The current building design is two stories and about 20K square feet, but that may change.

Currently on the site there is an island east of the main entrance that has 16 palms and a live oak. On the path heading toward the butterfly rain forest there are 14 palm trees and bamboo. There is a 22" live oak in the area as well that may be impacted. Next to the building there are 3 palms that may also be affected. Cydney stated that she did not know definitively which trees will be impacted but wanted to bring them all to the committee at this time.

One of the project's objectives is to create a presence in the Cultural Plaza. The user group wants to have the building physically represent the Museum's mission. They are looking for earth systems to be represented in the architecture of the design. The project will be coming back to the committee at the schematic design phase and then again at design development. An important note is the building will be designed so that there are no shadows casted onto the butterfly rain forest.

The committee asked about moving the footprint south. Cydney stated this may impact the Phillips Center. The committee also asked about the palms and oak trees that would be impacted by the new drop-off area. The committee suggested rerouting the road to allow for more green space. The committee asked if the green space could be designed as a function lawn with appropriate drainage infrastructure. Cydney stated that she would work with grounds to have that incorporated into the lawn.

Linda stated the blue boxes on the cultural planning slide of the presentation represented potential projects. They may be a building, an amphitheater and green space. The area has potential to plant the mitigation trees for the project because the green space will need shade.

The committee asked about the butterfly rainforest and the project team is working with the user groups that deal with the rainforest to make sure there are no impacts. The committee asked for the reasoning behind the project. Cydney explained that each area needs their own drop-off for the entrances. The committee asked if the road could be designed so that at least one of the oak trees could be saved. The committee asked if the palms could be relocated either on campus or in the green space of the cultural plaza. The committee was understanding that the survival rate of relocated palms on campus are not high.

Motion: **Tim Martin made a motion to approve the project as presented with a note to reroute the drive to save at least one of the live oak trees.**

Second: Basil Iannone

Motion Carried Unanimously

UF – 3964 PK Yonge (Storm Drainage Supplement)

Keith Humphreys – Elisabeth Manley

Elisabeth stated she was in front of the committee to present the tree mitigation plan of 22 additional trees for recent construction at PK Yonge. She provided an overview of the project concerning the storm drainage and campus improvement projects.

In July there were additional tree removals required for the new PE building. The committee's motion required that the project replant 22 trees on PK Yonge's campus and that the project team return to the committee with a planting plan.

The user group and design team met on PK Yonge's campus to look for opportunities around the new construction to replant trees. The proposed tree species are all from the selections list in the Landscape Master Plan and focuses on a mix of canopy and understory trees. In the area to the north along Depot Avenue will be live oaks and five red cedar trees will be planted near the existing apartments. In the court area a new bluff oak will be planted, and a live oak will be added in the drop-off loop. In the southern area of campus, the drop-off loop will have a new canopy and the project will be adding a river birch and a tulip poplar. There were opportunities to add Chickasaw plum trees along the edge of the middle and high school buildings. The new trees will be taken care of through establishment.

The committee asked about the irrigation of the trees and Elisabeth explained the contractor will hand water them through establishment and assumed they would use a water truck or gator bags. Jacob Pruitt from UFPD asked for a copy of the landscape plan to ensure that the camera placements on the PK Yonge campus would not be blocked by the tree canopies.

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

Second: Adam Dale

Motion Carried Unanimously

III. MINOR PROJECTS – No Business

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Tree Report

Tom Schlick

Tom stated this month slowed down in tree removals, but the crews have been working on tree trimming around light poles, especially in parking lots. He explained that this was the time to get that taken care of because of spring break. The landscape improvement team will be working on gateways and around construction projects that are completing soon. Tom explained they are gearing up now to try and get the materials to handle these areas and are trying to use natives as much as possible. The committee asked how many plants come from the UF Grounds greenhouse and how much comes from outside vendors. Tom responded that they only have a half an acre to work with and that because of budgetary reasons they get most supplies and materials from outside industries. The committee discussed the increase in prices and how supply is limited.

Dustin introduced himself and stated his role is to work on any new construction or major renovation to help make sure that it is energy efficient, water efficient, providing healthy indoor air quality, and developing sustainable landscapes around the building. He was in front of the committee to share a new rating system, SITES, that is specifically for the outdoor environment. Dustin stated that UF has the most sustainable building certifications than any other public higher education institution, totaling 92 Green Building certificates.

Dustin provided an overview of the SITES rating system designed to distinguish sustainable landscapes, measure their performance, and elevate their value. This initiative is supported by the Landscape Master Plan. There are prerequisites that each project needs to meet. Anything above those prerequisites gain points and if enough points are collected, the project will fall under either a “certified”, “silver”, “gold”, or “platinum” level certification. The PDC policy requires projects to have at least a LEED Gold level (or equivalent) certification.

The goals for SITES are transform the market through design, development & maintenance practices, create regenerative systems & foster resiliency, enhance human well-being & strengthen community, and ensure future resource supply & mitigate climate change. Dustin went over the guiding principles of SITES. He showed the subcategories of SITES and the scoring system. There is a total of 200 points and the project has to get at least 100 points to receive gold. Dustin showed the scoring of the gateways to show where we are now in the rating system with those projects.

SITES is unique compared to LEED in that it requires testing the soil and protection zones for trees and vegetation. UF compost will be used in these projects and receive credit for doing the soil amendments. The program gives credit for relocating trees as well as working with local supplies to highlight various sustainable practices in mining, manufacturing, and growing plants. The program requires a more detailed definition of who the site users are and encourages wayfinding to help navigate throughout the site, including places to converse with others and areas for mental restoration and relaxation. Preconstruction meetings are required to ensure the construction team is aligned with the project’s goals, such as outdoor air quality. A section within the program focuses on maintenance practices and the team is working with both Refuse and Grounds on the University’s maintenance practices, 10-year goals as well as methods for reducing the University’s carbon footprint. The committee asked about the carbon impact of maintenance equipment. Facilities Services is looking into reducing their carbon impact, especially in the Historic District, by purchasing electric landscape equipment. Currently a few pieces of equipment have been purchased and are used, however, more equipment will need to be purchased in the future.

By going through this program, a series of insights were shared based on the different project phases that projects go to this committee.

- During the programming phase projects could conduct a more thorough site assessment to help influence the design. Use this time to identify opportunities or impacts to consider for the project and encourage 3rd party Sustainability Certification.
- During the schematic design phase, the committee could ask for project specific sustainability goals. Asking sustainability questions early may assist the projects in achieving the established certification level goal. The committee asked if someone collecting the data needed for us to ask these questions. Dustin stated that we do collect the data on the projects for stormwater quality and quantity looking at pre and post precipitation rates. The committee asked if Dustin would like them to include these calculations in the presentations from project managers when presenting to Lakes, Vegetation, and Landscapes. Dustin said it could be useful to look at this type of data earlier in the process. The committee asked about the nutrient dynamics that is running off the landscape. Dustin explained that LEED doesn’t investigate the soils testing for phosphorous or nitrogen levels. Research is showing that retention ponds don’t seem to be working so the concern is the runoff of the nutrient levels. Pre and post soil testing provides an opportunity for projects to better understand their environmental impacts and also provides insight on whether soil conditions are outside of the ideal growing compositions for selected plants.
- In the design development phase, project teams should make sure that the plant palates follow the Landscape Master Plan. Projects should try to plant native ground covers and consider mulching practices under canopy cover, maximize shading and minimize the use of asphalt. It is important to understand the heat island effect and consider accounting for the carbon impact of removing trees. The

committee asked about using mulch in the landscape and the impact on native bees. The committee discussed that native bees use the ground cover for nesting and so using mulch in moderation could have value.

Future projects should discourage up lighting. Any opportunity for decreasing sky glow would decrease the light pollution coming from UF's projects. Dustin explained that there are opportunities to better promote sustainability awareness and educate staff on campus. He said the university could benefit by hiring an arborist on campus for guidance and protection of trees. We could benefit by having pre/post soil testing to better understand our soil conditions across campus. Dustin suggested that as projects come through the committee, project teams could sign pledges affirming their awareness of sustainability goals and willingness to support these goals. Also, it would be beneficial for all projects if the committee could visit project sites.

The committee was concerned about the light pollution and would like to see future projects take that into consideration. The committee asked Linda what the procedure would be to have this be a requirement. Dustin stated his job is to make sure that the sustainability goals discussed in project design is what actually takes place.

The committee encouraged a monitoring system. Facility Services is working on training a team on commissioning projects to try and do some of that monitoring. After the yearlong warranty phase of the project is completed, the building gets turned over to Facility Services. Landscaping should be monitored as well by grounds.

Pursuing SITES certification on projects has a cost associated to it and keeping that certification we will require funding. Facility Services discussed that buildings change, and they reprogram spaces continuously. Landscape and building components change all the time. The committee discussed putting the presentation on the agenda for the Infrastructure Council.

Chair Report

Gale Hansen de Chapman

Gale wanted to talk about the draft copy of the Tree Mitigation Policy she put together and how most of the comments were more related to an Urban Forest Management Plan. She discussed her desire to make the Tree Mitigation Policy simple, which would also make it easier to use. She asked that once the committee members review the draft plan and e-mail their comments to her.

The committee questioned if they could require projects to replace trees on campus through the mitigation fund or on site. It was discussed that this could depend on the project site design and whether there is room on the site for the trees.

It was identified by the committee that there is some language in the policy that is too vague. They also discussed the need to know how tree mitigation funds are spent on a monthly basis.

The committee mentioned the cultural and educational values of trees and how some trees do not only have a dollar value but may also be a landmark. A better campus tree inventory should be maintained to provide records.

The committee also wanted to consider pavement and it's impacts on trees and roots. They also discussed the need for timely reporting to LVL of an unforeseen tree removal. Having a campus arborist would help UF understand the importance of tree canopy for all of campus, not just a specific project. The position should be filled by an urban forester with ISA Arborist Certification.

Another topic of discussion was how the conservation areas would be a great location for educational labeling. These areas are used by faculty for their classes as outdoor teaching labs.

The committee reviewed the process for how projects budget for tree mitigation fees and how the project pays for it. There needs to be some predictability for what the mitigation fee may be. Gail asked for the comments

for the draft tree mitigation policy within the next two weeks. This would give her time to compile the feedback to talk about at the next committee meeting.

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