

Parks and Parkways Commission
January 7, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Discon and the secretary called roll.

Present: Scott Discon, Lee Frederick, Marilyn Osborne; Eric McQuiston and Karin Crosby

Absent: Anne Marie Fargason and Nancy Clark

Also Present: Louise Scott, Planning Director; Catherine Casanova, Landscape Inspector, Council Member Laure' Sica

Opening of Agenda:

Ms. Crosby moved to open the agenda for the presentation of the West Beach Parkway planting by Franklin Kyle, Tyler Thomas Park Edible planting, and Commission support of designating Pottery Hill as "Landmark" on the Historic Survey, seconded by Ms. Frederick and was unanimously approved.

Presentation of West Beach Parkway planting

Franklin Kyle, Kyle & Associates, was contracted by the City to review the median area of West Beach Parkway from Monroe Street to the lake. He reported there were many existing trees in the median, and the nodes were lacking in planting. It appeared there had been previous attempts at planting this area, but they were not maintained. There were also power poles to add into the plan layout. The live oak trees were the strong points as well as the water oak trees. Closer to the lake there were have hackberries and bushes that were cut to keep them out of the power lines. The neighbors had requested plantings on the street edges.

The end nodes should be the beginning point. Driving from Monroe Street there was an opening that should contain substantial planting because it was where the road split and was very visible. Looking at the rear side of the end node planting with the dipping median, he suggested installing a low brick wall on the back side being 1' above the curb. Because of the median dip there was a need to keep the soil in the planting area sloping toward the intersection. Coming to an intersection, you would see an old brick wall to define the area. It was difficult to do a planting that looked good from both sides and have a definition. By placing the landscaping inside of the brick wall there would be a benefit going to it and coming from behind. He was hopeful to have moss grow on the wall. He suggested old brick or a brick made to look old. The wall would start 8' inside of the curbing with the soil halfway up the wall and sloping toward the street. Ms. Frederick asked about planting in the "bowl" area. Mr. Kyle said his proposal was only on the nodes. The last median before the lake was only 10-12' wide and this area would be planting with crepe myrtles or a flowering tree alley with the power lines and small width.

There would also be access points for maintenance and grass cutting with aprons to prevent damage to the curbs. While he drove up and down West Beach Parkway, he determined the rear side needed a solid appearance to provide two different views at each intersection. Ms. Crosby asked if the crepe myrtle tree could substitute with a Fringe Tree. Mr. Kyle said it could be any species as long as it was no taller than 20'. Mr. McQuiston liked the brick wall and the choice of planting in the raised bed, but he did not think the wall would be visible. Mr. Kyle said from the front it would not be very visible, but it would be seen at the next intersection.

Ms. Frederick said she had hoped to do planting in the low areas. Ms. Scott said Mr. Kyle's scope of work was to address the nodes and that project could be included in the next year's budget. Ms. Crosby suggested a rain garden similar to Marigny Avenue with Turk's Cap. Mr. McQuiston said he liked the wall and suggested a rear higher wall with lighting. Ms. Scott said the neighbors were looking for signage on the first wall.

Mr. Discon suggested duplicating the same appearance on Marigny Avenue to have matching entrances off Highway 190 and at the lake. Mr. McQuiston said it was place making and creating a palette of materials identifying the City. It would create a sense of space that was identifiable. Otherwise, Mandeville was no different than any other small town in Louisiana.

There was a consensus of the commission that the concept was a good idea and it should move forward. Ms. Frederick asked Ms. Clark to also comment on the plan.

Tyler Thomas Park Edible Planting

Ms. Casanova said the plan was completed. She modified Ms. Crosby's plan to fit into the space. Ms. Scott said Cleco would remove the Marigny Avenue trees and the City would order the trees for both this and the Marigny Avenue project. The plan included fig, citrus, blueberries, satsumas, and pear trees. The plan should be provided to the pastor for his review. Ms. Crosby said the planting broadened the perspective, provided continuity to the park and fresh fruit to the community. Mr. Discon asked about having the concrete benches installed at the same time as the planting. Ms. Crosby said there were existing wooden benches without backs. Ms. Scott said she would try to get three benches installed. There was a suggestion to install the seating across from each other for conversational areas around the play area. Ms. Frederick asked to assure the planting was heavily mulched.

Commission Support of designating Pottery Hill as "Landmark" on the Historic Survey

Council Member Sica stated there was an ordinance on the City Council agenda to designate Pottery Hill as a Landmark site. This ordinance was not under the Parks and Parkways purview, but she was introducing an ordinance to rezone Pottery Hill as Open Space for a possible future park. She would request that ordinance be forwarded to both the Parks and Parkways and Planning and Zoning Commissions for a recommendation and would probably be placed on each commission's next agenda.

Ms. Scott said the City had purchased Pottery Hill and was listed on the Natural Register which paid homage to the history. The rezoning ordinance would further protect the area, provide protection of the area and create a canoe launch. The marker was ordered, and the bollards and rope was installed. Ms. Sica said these were steps to insure the property's preservation. If the property was ever sold, there would be a historic designation and zoned Open space to prevent building. Mr. Discon said he saw the Historic District Preservation Commission had unanimously supported the Landmark designation. He asked why not have the Parks and Parkways Commission provide a recommendation with a portion of the budget used preservation. Ms. Scott said the ordinance for action at Thursday's Council meeting pertained to the Historic Resources Survey with properties located in the Historic District documented by a historian. There were satellite properties not included in the survey and as they were included, it would provide the Historic District Preservation Commission authority to review any items that fell in the commission's purview. The ordinance was introduced adding Pottery Hill to the survey. If for some reason any portion of the property was sold, any development would be the purview of the Historic District Preservation Commission. The second ordinance would be to change the zoning. Ms. Sica said there would be no discussion of a property sale on Thursday's agenda. Mr. Discon said he thought Jeff Schoen, representing Josh Buchholz, made an argument for his client to purchase a portion of the site. Ms. Sica said Mr. Schoen had made an argument at the Historic District Commission's meeting for the City Council to sell a portion of the property. Ms. Scott said if Mr. Schoen had approached the City

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Council about purchasing a portion of the Pottery Hill site, the City Council must approve an ordinance for Mayor Villere to enter into a purchase agreement. There had not been an ordinance introduced. Ms. Sica was trying to preserve the property.

Ms. Crosby asked with the property being different parcels, would the rezoning incorporate it as a whole. Ms. Scott said the unimproved Monroe Street and Parcels A and B would all be zoned Open Space. At this time, the property was 30' lots with alleys and that would not be resubdivided.

Ms. Crosby said at Thanksgiving her family visited Poverty Point being a World Heritage site because the Tchefuncte people dated back to the same time as the Egyptians. Pottery Hill was the same timeframe. It was a historic location and was the only one in existence on the Northshore. It would be a shame for any portion of the property to be resubdivided. She hoped it would remain City property. Ms. Scott requested Ms. Crosby formulate the ideas for the rezoning ordinance recommendation. She suggested incorporating it into the schools for education of the Indian culture for the community.

Mr. Discon asked for the City to edge the area around the bollards and ropes. The Buchholz family was arguing that the area was unkempt. It would look nice with the installation of the marker. Ms. Crosby asked if the property was rezoned as Open space could there be funding for maintenance. Ms. Sica suggested making it a budget request. Ms. Scott said when the sign was installed there would be maintenance. The City wanted canoers to access the area, but not to back up the trucks into the water.

Ms. Osborne asked if the property could be designated as a park and not just Open Space. Ms. Sica said that would be a discussion for the commission. Ms. Frederick said she was looking for more protection. Ms. Scott said she would discuss this with the City Attorney.

New Business:

Adoption of Commission Chair and Vice Chair

With two members being absent, the commission deferred the action until the next meeting.

Florida Street Streetscape plantings

Ms. Casanova said she continually visited the Post Office, but the Post Master did not return telephone calls. Mr. Discon asked the commission members to meet with businesses to continue to promote the tree planting.

Marigny Avenue Edible Forest

There were existing trees that would over shade the live oak trees so live oak trees would not be planted on each corner. The trunks would be outside of the sight triangle so the Fire Department would not have an issue. Along Marigny Avenue there were 13 tree spaces and the staff would move forward with the plantings.

Review of City contracted spaces

Mr. Discon said the back side of the Trailhead facing General Pershing was not maintained like the remainder of the Trailhead. The parking lot was not part of the Trailhead property although it was zoned Town Center. This was the City right-of-way and the staff would request it be maintained.

The parking lot on Claiborne Street was having a new landscape plan developed with the parking spaces to be delineated. The commission agreed the planting should be native species and be easier to maintain.

Ms. Crosby said the blue Welcome sign by Heavens Drive was planted with only grasses and she asked what the contractor was being doing since they were charging \$280 per month. Ms. Casanova said annuals were also planted. Ms. Crosby said the flower bed on Heavens Drive was not being maintained and she suggested splitting the cost for each bed to be maintained every other month. Ms. Casanova said Mr. Kyle was developing a plan for that garden and it would be placed under the maintenance contract. The Welcome sign on the east side needed to be repainted and refurbished. Ms. Crosby said the bed off of the Causeway Bridge had trees growing through the pampas grass by the bumper. It was noted this garden was under the Causeway's maintenance.

Status of Causeway project

Ms. Scott said Dana Brown had provided a summary and the estimated budget for the entire project was \$1.3 Million. Ms. Scott needed to further discuss the project with Mayor Villere. Phase 1 far exceeded the City's budget of \$50,000 for the plan. Ms. Scott said the commission could go to the City Council with a plan, but the cost was excessive. Ms. Crosby said the City had spoken with Carlton Dufrechou about the project, but Ms. Scott stated they would not be participating in any of the costs. Mr. Discon suggested creating the plan in-house. Ms. Scott suggested meeting with Ms. Brown to simplify the plan. Ms. Brown's plan indicated there would be six phases which included technical components that the staff could not handle.

Mr. Discon asked why did the Public Works Department get \$1-2 Million dollars for projects versus providing the cost to create a public park. Ms. Scott suggested making a presentation to the City Council for funding. Mr. Discon did not think the brick intersections were necessary, but the City had spent the money.

Ms. Scott said she would have Ms. Brown present the plan to the City Council. Mr. McQuiston asked if there was a maintenance cost, which was unknown at this time. Ms. Brown's office had contacted the Causeway to obtain the utility surveys and had been told they were unavailable. The commission asked why should the City pay for the survey and Ms. Scott said the City wanted to do the project.

Four Corners Landscape as a 2019 project

This would be the area at North Causeway and Highway 190. Ms. Crosby said the commission had decided to wait for the construction on Highway 22. Ms. Scott did not have any information on that contract. Mr. Discon said he envisioned a water garden which would require stopping cutting the grass in the ditches to be natural. The commission could designate areas for natural water gardens with frogs living in there. The City could plant irises and cat tails for it to be natural.

Staff Update

- Lakefront pruning- walkways completed with the determination that some branches were too big and nice to cut. Some of the moss was removed to get a better view for proper cuts. Ms. Casanova and Dr. Guidry would meet this week to review the pruning.
- Recent wind storms - one tree on Monroe Street and another between Claiborne Street and Lakeshore Drive had a tree come down.

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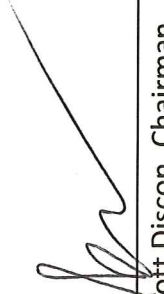
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Ms. Osborne moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Crosby and was unanimously approved.





Lori Spranfey, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman
Parks and Parkways Commission



