

Parks and Parkways Commission
April 2, 2018

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

Present: Scott Discon, Marilyn Osborne, Lee Frederick, Anne Marie Fargason, Karin Crosby, Eric McQuiston and Nancy Clark

Absent: None

Also Present: Catherine Casanova, Landscape Inspector

Ms. Clark moved to adopt the minutes of March 5, 2018, seconded by Ms. Crosby and was unanimously approved.

New Business:

1. Caladium Bulb Sale Date

Due to a conflict at the Trailhead, the sale date was changed to April 28th.

2. Live Oak Tree Registry plaques

A location map had been received from Mr. Adamiak, and it was discussed to place plaques on three major trees to create a walking tour. Ms. Crosby said the previous signs had disappeared because the City had stopped cutting around the plaques. It was stated that Town of Madisonville used granite plaques, but there were concerns that it could disappear under the mulch. Ms. Osborne suggesting placing the map on the City website with the GPS coordinates. Ms. Frederick still wanted a tree marker on a few trees. Mr. McQuiston said LSU highlighted their trees with a concrete monument with a brass plaque. It was decided to have the grove and lean tree.

It was discussed that the cost of the plaques would be included in next year's budget and the commission would investigate having an app with a QR code. The map could be placed on the City website that could be printed. Ms. Frederick asked that printed maps be available for the citizens not using their phones. Ms. Clark would investigate pricing.

3. Update Florida Street Streetscape Planting

There had been 80 live oak trees planted along the businesses on Florida Street. The second phase will be planting of the grasses. Mr. Discon had received three more applications for Floorco, Pelican Snowballs, and Mandeville Self Storage. The area was marked and needed to be planted. Ms. Casanova would follow up with Mr. Perkins about preparing the grasses plan.

4. Discussion of Florida Greenway

Mr. Discon said the idea was to get a momentum on the Florida Street project. There was a discussion with DOTD proposing medians that any action by the commission should be considered to be postponed. Ms. Crosby asked when the DOTD plans were published to request plantings. Ms. Casanova said when there was extra money DOTD would do planting. Mr. McQuiston said with a highway within one mile of a school that would open doors for grants. He suggested waiting for DOTD to present the project for public comment and state the commission was representing the citizens who wanted to maintain the quality and character of Mandeville.

Mr. Discon suggested adopting a resolution to get the momentum moving forward. Ms. Crosby said the commission needed more information to discuss the idea. Ms. Casanova asked what was a greenway to the commission. The Baton Rouge Greenway was an area to connect parks to open spaces so it had a definition. Mr. Discon said it could be parkway. Ms. Casanova said a parkway was a DOTD designation. Mr. McQuiston said a greenway was a naturalized non-vehicular use linking parks and trails with linear parkways. A parkway was anything. It was not about what you called it, but having the push behind it. There would be a need to work closely with a civilian type of council or website to gather interest.

Ms. Osborne would spearhead this project with Mayor Villere since she was working on pathways. Mr. McQuiston said the City of Kenner's project was out of a concern of lost population and

they wanted to bring back young families. The idea was to create a boutique city. They asked targeted people what they wanted to see in their city. Overwhelmingly the answers were parks, bike path, and walking paths. The City of Kenner removed the center lane and created green areas. All projects had a maintenance budget that was untouchable in an interest bearing account.

5. Causeway Underpass Update

Ms. Casanova presented that the plan was expected in the next week.

6. Marigny Avenue Update

Susie Hardin, Marigny Avenue resident, asked for an update on this project. Ms. Crosby stated that the City was in discussion with Cleco to remove the topped trees. The proposal was to plant an edible garden under a 20' height to prevent Cleco from future top pruning. The edible garden would contain fruit and citrus trees as well as shrubs. The City was waiting for Cleco approval and a copy of the conceptual plan was posted for viewing in the Planning Department. When Cleco approved the plan then it would be sent to the neighbors. Susie Hardin asked why should Cleco have a comment. Mr. Discon said at each intersection on the four corners of the sidewalk live oak trees would be planted to continue a canopy down the street. They would not grow into the wires being placed by the sidewalks. Some of the trees that would remain was determined on a block by block basis. During the first few year of replanting, the area would appear more barren until there was more mature growth. Ms. Hardin said many of the existing trees were volunteer trees. She agreed with the removal of the trees down the middle of the median, but why plant edible fruit? Ms. Crosby said the commission wanted to establish a naturalistic aspect for the wildlife and it would become an educational experience for the children. It was hoped that it would help with the pollinator species like huckleberry and persimmons. ~~Ms. Frederick said there would be a path in the middle of the median and signs for an educational destination.~~ Ms. Crosby said the commission wanted to tie it into Tyler Thomas Park.

Ms. Hardin said edible fruit and the hodge podge of the combinations that could be more problems than it was worth. She liked the educational concept, but how often would it happen? The educational concept could happen at City Hall. Marigny Avenue was one of the two streets with a median, was named after the founder, and it should look grand and nice. She had pictured the canopy of the live oak trees and vista to the lake. About 15 trees ago someone planted a tree in the view so there was no clear vista to the lake. Ms. Clark said years ago planning the corridors that an oak tree should not be at the end of Lakeshore Drive. Ms. Hardin said the grand landscaping should not be edible fruit. Central Park in New York had small flowering trees to walk through. One species of tree would be beautiful, and it would make an impact. Maintenance would be easier to cut the grass around small trees with spacing. Ms. Clark said the planting was a block to block idea. The species depended on the amount of sun on each block. Ms. Frederick said there was a pattern and it would have a feel that Ms. Hardin wanted. All trees made flowers before fruit at different times of the year.

Ms. Hardin asked if it would look like the 500 block. The sago palms would be removed. Ms. Crosby said there would be repeaters for cross pollination. The commission wanted the community to be able to pick fresh fruit. Ms. Hardin said she did not think it was an appropriate planting for that avenue. It should be clean, consistent and dramatic in a small way making a statement and be easy to maintain by the City workers. There would be a major problem with raccoons.

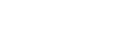
Mr. McQuiston asked what kind of maintenance was budgeted for the tree planting. Ms. Casanova said it was budgeted for a 1-2 year watering and bare maintenance. Mr. McQuiston was concerned about that. Ms. Hardin said there were numerous plans and studies of this median. Ms. Clark suggested Ms. Hardin look at the plan and write down her concerns and suggestions. Ms. Hardin said looking at the Monroe Street entrance, it was simple and consistent. She suggested filling in the bottom with giant liriope and it would be green and not have to be weeded or maintained. It would be a statement. Ms. Frederick said there was maintenance on that garden. Mr. Discon asked Ms. Hardin heard about the project. Ms. Hardin saw everyone walking down the street.

Ms. Hardin was concerned about a freeze, die off and replacement. Ms. Frederick understood the point, but it was a different perspective of wild birds, pollination, honey bees and an environment area. Ms. Hardin said it was a great idea, but not for Marigny Avenue. Ms. Frederic said it was to create a pattern. Ms. Crosby said went several commission members and staff walked block by block to make a

determination of the groupings. Ms. Hardin asked about neighbor input while walking the neighborhood. Ms. Crosby said Ms. Church was not in favor because it would increase traffic. Ms. Hardin said a neighbor did not want the median beautified because they did not want foreigners to come which were people across the highway.



Mr. Discon suggested looking at the plan and discuss it with Ms. Crosby about some solutions. Ms. Clark said Monroe Street was planted for speed so planting a monoculture of white crepe myrtles made sense. Ms. Crosby had suggested slowing people down on Marigny Avenue with pedestrians and bicycles for an interactive area. Mr. Discon said there was a proposed path down the center of the median which would be open down the street. Ms. Hardin had previously suggested that. Mr. Discon said the first phase would be tree cutting.



Jeff Bernard, 321 Marigny Avenue, concurred with much of Ms. Hardin's discussion. He had seen the plan. He had lived on Marigny Avenue for 25 years and had seen the vestiges of old landscaping, of repetitive patterns of azaleas, low junipers and cedar. A traditional plan would have been to see the canopy of the oak trees. Cleco ruled and he remembered asking how much it would cost to bury the powerlines. Cleco was resistant to burying the lines and the cost was prohibitive. He remembered Buck Abbey's plan with a different canopy pre-Hurricane Katrina. There was a water halo with a canopy over with a vista to the water. There were few streets that ended at the water and where people could see the water all the way down the street. He suggested planting freeze resistant trees that Cleco would not cut, and he loved the perspective of traditional and the interactive approach making a statement of recognizing the unique ecological place that contained wild life and the ability to grow many plants. He asked to do a soft touch of less variety and some type of repetition. The City could then build in after with planting larger plants or trees. Ms. Clark said there was a plan was to plant the corners with live oak trees to avoid the power wires. Mr. Bernard said it was tricky, but he was glad that it could be done. People's natural affinity was for symmetry. Ms. Hardin said it was restful.



Erin Bernard, 321 Marigny Avenue, said she would prefer to see less variety and species that would withstand freezes.

Ms. Catherine said she had been following up with Cleco to determine an answer.

7. Discussion of additional tree species protection

Ms. Clark said the Metairie Club Garden Conservation Area Plan had been provided to the commission for review. Ms. Frederick thought the ideas were wise, but asked why was the preservation restricted to specific species. She wanted to broaden the language for more native species. Mr. Discon said the restrictions went by the diameter of the tree and not the species. Ms. Frederick said she understood there were specific lists. Ms. Clark was in agreement to pursue an extension to the list of protected trees. She asked how the new residential restrictions were enforced. Ms. Casanova said a percentage of the side yard in relation to the front yard. Ms. Clark asked as an example for a fence permit application that the setbacks were protected from anything but hand clearing. Ms. Crosby stated that only applied to commercial properties and along the Tammany Trace. Ms. Casanova said there was a required underbrush permit.

There was a discussion to adopt a new resolution to make the language stricter. Ms. Crosby suggested protecting the cypress trees, and Mr. Discon said the pine trees should be protected. Ms. Clark suggested the need for consensus on more protection and to discuss the species. The document included how to protect trees during construction, fines and where did the fines go. Mr. Discon suggested the commission members email language to Ms. Spranley to assemble it for review.



8. Discussion of project for LNPS's Grant Application

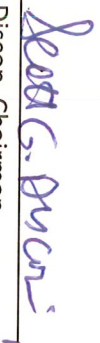
Ms. Crosby said the commission applied for this grant a few years ago to install a wildflower garden by the cemetery. She suggested tweaking that application for submittal. It was discussed that two \$500 grants would be granted and the submittal deadline was July 31st. Ms. Frederick had suggested the commission reviewing a map of all City owned properties, identify the plant species that were supported and installing appropriate bird houses. The grant was about flora which the species could be planted to encourage the birds. The commission needed to review the specifications of the application. Ms. Clark suggested setting up a talk about native plants with a giveaway. Ms. Crosby also

suggested that Neighborhoods could be considered as it an underutilized City park which would have more impact on the City. Ms. Crosby said the application must include a way to promote the goals of the LNPS. Ms. Casanova said the application asked what funding would be committed for the rest of the project and there was no committed funding.

Ms. Fargason moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Clark and was unanimously approved.



Lori Spranley, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman
Parks and Parkways Commission