

**Parks and Parkways Commission
July 10, 2017**

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

Present: Scott Discon, Lee Frederick, Karin Lorenz Crosby, Anne Marie Fargason and Nancy Clark

Absent: Maggie Gleason

Also Present: Louise Scott, Planning Director and Catherine Casanova, Landscape Inspector

Adoption of the minutes June 22, 2017

Ms. Crosby moved to adopt the minutes of June 22, 2017, seconded by Ms. Clark and was unanimously approved.

Update on Live Oak Legacy program

Rich Adamiak requested this item be deferred until the August agenda when he would an update.

Cemetery Update

Ms. Scott said the staff was working with Mr. Mayronne to put a plan together. Mr. Mayronne had brought in another group to develop the specifications which would be at a cost. The City was determining if they would spend the money or go another route. A new mausoleum would be constructed with the footprint to be cleared. The memorial garden would be planted to the front, and the landscaping would be preserved. The memorial wall would be placed among the trees and Mayor Villere was negotiating to purchase Charlie Lang's house to incorporate into the cemetery. In addition, before the plan could be completed, the exit to Foy Street must be established. If a purchase was not successful then the City would try to obtain a servitude. It was suggested if Mr. Lang would not sell to consider the purchase of the old Piffany Oaks.

Causeway Mulch update

Ms. Casanova said Chris Lange with the Public Works Department had a shortage of DOC workers and could not move any the mulch until the next week. If there was extra mulch, it would be placed on the sandy areas around the bridge.

Oak tree donation

Mr. Discon said Kurt Frosch owned a property two blocks off Florida Street and wanted to remove an oak tree located in the middle of the lot to construct a house. He asked if the City was interested in moving it to a City location. There were concerns about moving it at this time of year and the size.

Budget discussion

Ms. Scott presented the budget breakdown presented to the City Council.

- RCI - grass cutting
- Alternative Services - manicured maintenance
- General contract labor - Street Tree program and miscellaneous plantings
- Consulting Arborist - Malcolm Guidry
- Landscape Architect consulting - commercial development review - Franklin Kyle & Associates and others in the community were used

General maintenance - administrative costs, tree removal, hazard trees, parks, playgrounds and rights-of-way and \$50,000 was budgeted for this item. In researching this line item it was shown the previous actual expense was:

2014	\$35,000
2015	\$40,000
2016	\$17,000

A larger amount was budgeted in consideration of any storm events. The information is included in an annual report provided to Tree City USA.

Projects

- Kierr Family Garden - \$5,000 to continue maintenance and implementation of the tree plan
- Cemetery – based on an early estimate from Johnny Mayronne
- Street Tree Planting – with the last order the expenditure was close to \$30,000 with 250 trees planted to date this fiscal year
- Misc. Beautification projects - Tammany Trace/Cemetery and three parking lots especially at Girod/Claiborne Streets
- Girod Street Phase 3 was Monroe Street to the Trailhead. The City would try to sign the contract soon and the money would be used from this year's budget and the Phase 4 budget would be the same amount.

New projects:

- Highway 190 Tree Planting – Mr. Perkins provided the budget numbers
 - Master plan
 - Bid documents trees only
 - Implementation tree planting only
 - Maintenance

Mr. Discon met with Mayor Villere and Ms. Scott this day about this project. Mayor Villere wanted to develop part of the project in-house. From the sidewalk to the street there would be few trees. Mayor Villere was in agreement with grasses. He requested Ms. Casanova use the Streetscape project to plant the trees. He told Mayor Villere that people did not want to take care of the trees. Ms. Scott had said most of the trees were planted with a one year guarantee and the City would determine what would happen in the second year. Mayor Villere thought Ms. Casanova was trained to review the soil for remediation. Mayor Villere had previously told Mr. Discon to choose two projects. Mr. Discon did not want to get rid of the Marigny Avenue or Highway 190 projects. The project that might have difficulty moving forward would be the Causeway Public Art because of a \$75,000 retainer. Ms. Scott stated that the Scope of Work and budget was sent to the City Council. Mayor Villere said he would like to put \$100,000 in the budget, but the project started moving away from landscaping to public art. Mr. Discon and Ms. Scott had discussed presenting the information to the board to remove the public art and go back to the original landscape plan. He spoke with Ms. Sica after the presentation and she felt it was not a Mandeville type of project. Ms. Scott said her impression was that the City Council was not impressed with the presentation. They would rather have an RFQ of other organizations that might do this work.

Ms. Scott said all of the projects were put together in a spreadsheet forwarded to Frank Oliveri, Finance Director. He and Mayor Villere had a discussion and determined a budget amount for the projects. She was waiting to be provided that budget figure. There were also other items in the Parks and Parkways budget. Mr. Discon suggested the board discuss the projects with the City Council members.

Ms. Crosby suggested removing the public art part of the project, repair the irrigation and replant the Causeway area in phases. Large trees, walks and benches were part of the original project. Ms. Frederick suggested designing the landscaping around the

focus points and there could be future public art. Ms. Scott suggested not incorporating public art and only focus on the landscaping for aesthetics. Mr. Discon said it looked better with just the mulch. Ms. Clark said there was flooding to the businesses from Tropical Storm City and there would be objections to spending \$100,000 for public art.

Ms. Crosby said there was a plan with areas that art could be incorporated by leaving empty areas for a future date. There was a discussion about channeling water from the bridge into a rain garden. Mr. Discon had discussed these options with Carlton Dufrechou of incorporating water and Mr. Dufrechou had requested landscape plans before January 1st. It was suggested to ask Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to put on an education project about cleaning up the water before it hit the lake.

Mr. Discon said there were lilies growing in the Four Corners and asked for it to remain and it had become a rain garden that was unmanicured. Ms. Crosby suggested planting some other plants. There had been a previous discussion about whether a rain garden at the Four Corners would be destroyed with the highway project. It was asked if DOTD would be required to approve a rain garden at this location. The City would have to maintain it, but it would be less expensive. LPBF might be a good partner for a rain garden.

The board was in agreement with leaving the plan as presented. It could be broken down in phases on Highway 190 as needed. It was decided to resend a new letter to the businesses and follow up with telephone calls. Any planting would be on the private side of the sidewalk. Mr. Discon suggested driving with Ms. Casanova to determine areas that could be planted. He also suggested coordinating with Cleco to remove some of the trees on Marigny Avenue for the edible garden.

Opening of the agenda:

Ms. Crosby moved to open the agenda to discuss the Marigny Edible Garden, seconded by Ms. Clark, and was unanimously approved.

Ms. Crosby presented the plan was designed block by block indicating the mature size of the plantings. Most of the planting would be shrub size with the largest plantings being 35 x 20 which were Japanese plumbs. It was discussed that blueberries, pears and plums must cross pollenate; persimmons must be female; and the existing loquats would remain by Monroe/Marigny Streets. There was an established rain garden.

Ms. Clark asked about the soil and Ms. Casanova said the soil appeared to be good. The Lakeshore Drive area was curbed. There would be pears, blueberries and figs planted in this area. Ms. Crosby said in the plan it was trying to give contrast in color as well as texture. Ms. Casanova said the species were the most readily available and lowest chill hours. They would also be disease resistant as well as saltwater tolerant. There would also be identification markers.

Ms. Crosby moved to open the agenda to discuss the Tyler Thomas Park, seconded by Ms. Frederick and was unanimously approved.

Ms. Crosby and Ms. Frederick suggested planting larger fruit trees facing the ballfield. In the area between the fence and the playground they suggested blueberries, pears and plums with the edges staggered with blueberries. There were larger patches between the sidewalk to plant fig trees and blueberries. Ms. Frederick asked about available funding. Mr. Discon said the plan must wait until the budget meeting and then the board could discuss it further.

It was decided to place this item on the August 7th meeting agenda. Ms. Scott said she would add this project to the submitted budget under miscellaneous beautification

projects. Ms. Crosby said there was water on the site for irrigation. Ms. Scott said there may be funding before August 31st. Ms. Casanova said it must be determined how many trees would fit the area and could the Public Works Department handle the mulch maintenance. Ms. Frederick said she would talk with the community about taking on the mulching and maintenance.

Staff update

A live oak tree must be removed in the 600 block of Colbert Street. Dr. Guidry and she inspected the tree and the City had been put on notice to remove the tree as hazardous. It was a 36" live oak tree that had a severe lean. Ms. Casanova suggested using a portion of the tree as art. The tree was located on the ditch line and that was why it must be removed. East and West Causeway planting – the vitex has been received and was being planted. The trees were being watered with a water truck. The Japanese Magnolias would also need to be planted.

Tree City USA Growth Award. Ms. Casanova stated that the City had received this award for seven years and she would like to push for ten years to receive a special award. The Tree City USA was installed at the Causeway Bridge. It was discussed that the walking path along Marigny Avenue could be points. A tree care workshop could get provide points. Ms. Casanova asked for suggestions to develop a few programs before years end. The City only needed 5-10 points. The Wildlife habitat was the wildflower garden and could be used for point. Publication for the Street Tree Program could also be used for points. Ms. Crosby suggested having Cleco help install blue bird, mason bee and bat boxes. The question was whether Cleco would allow to be installed on utility poles.

Mr. Discon asked about the planting of an oak tree on the corner of Lakeshore Drive since there were no trees between the sidewalk and the street. Ms. Scott said trees were about to be planted. The owner had created a privacy fence with southern magnolia trees. Mr. Discon requested a tree be planted in the same spot. Ms. Casanova said the tree would be under the power lines. Mr. Discon said trees would not be visible and he would like to see a streetscape. Ms. Scott said she would look at the site to see if there was a place to plant a live oak tree.

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



Lori Spranley, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman
Parks and Parkways Commission