

**Parks and Parkways Commission
February 6, 2017**

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

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

Absent: None

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

Adoption of the Minutes January 9, 2017

Mr. Adamiak presented on page 6 that he and John Crane had cleaned the Bunny Trail. Ms. Clark moved to adopt the minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Frederick and was unanimously approved.

Presentation

Adam Perkins, RLA, ASLA Member, LRPA, working with the LA DOT in conjunction with our Florida Streetscape

Mr. Discon had contacted Mr. Perkins to help the board with the Florida Streetscape program. He understood that the plan for the planting between the sidewalk and the street must be professionally drawn to be presented to DOTD.

There was a discussion that the Wildflower Garden was looking good. Mr. Perkins had spoken with Mark Pasternak, who had installed the garden, and he had indicated that the project was close to a burn schedule toward the end of the month. The burn would be similar to a grass fire with small flames, and he was hoping it would be over in an hour. The timing would depend on the wind and the rain. The goal was to have nothing left and within a week there would be regrowth. The trees would look singed so a press release should be sent out. In the end there would be 10-15 core plants. The species would include little blue stem, Indian grass, liatris, gay feather, and black eyed susans. Ms. Frederick asked getting an article in the St. Tammany Farmer. It was also suggested to call WWL TV since they had a local office.

The discussion continued with Mr. Perkins presenting a similar streetscape program that he had drawn for the City of Hammond on Morrison Boulevard. The area had large parking lots with little vegetation and no place to plant in the DOTD right-of-way. The City of Hammond had approached most of the property owners offering a choice of six types of trees. With Mr. Perkins preparing a mapped plan, it made it a real project. Letters were signed to partner with the City by providing tree maintenance, agreeing to a servitude for planting and being prohibited from removing the trees. At the end of the project there were 250 trees planted with there being a large right-of-way. The area was tighter in Mandeville with the powerlines. Ms. Frederick said the biggest restrictions with some areas was to location restrictions. Mr. Discon said he thought the board should vote to have a plan prepared to have in hand to present to the businesses. Mr. Perkins suggested if there was not a location for a tree then plant some other plant or shrub. Ms. Clark suggested identifying plants and holding a public meeting. Ms. Crosby suggested planting on the City side of Florida Street and then convince the Parish to participate. Mr. Deano had said since Florida Street was considered an overlay district and the planting would be located on private property, the Parish businesses could be approached. Ms. Frederick suggested planting both sides of the street at the same time. Mr. Perkins said it would be best to plant all of the area for aesthetics. Mr. Discon suggested the board approve a motion to create a plan and present it to the City Council for support and budgeting of the project. Mr. Perkins said the City of Hammond had received an Urban Beautification Plan grant. America in Bloom was also a grant program. Mr. Discon said the board did not want to be contingent on waiting for a grant.

Ms. Clark moved that the board request Adam Perkins study the Florida Street Corridor similar to the City of Hammond Morrison Boulevard project and report to the board with a plan addressing the north and south side of the Florida Street area between the sidewalk to the street with low growing vegetation and identify private property area where the street tree program could be planted, seconded by Mr. Discon. The area would include East Causeway Approach at the wildflower garden to Jackson Avenue. There was a question of how to maintain the watering for the trees and grasses and Mr. Perkins said the sidewalk to the street planting would not need watering. The agreement should include a two year maintenance by the owners. There would be some mortality. The City would plant and establish the trees for the first season, and the property owners would agree to do the maintenance. The standard trees planted were 2.5" dbh and 12' tall. Ms. Frederick suggested planting grasses where a tree could not be planted, and Mr. Perkins suggested creating a balance of shrubs where a tree could not be planted. Mr. Discon was concerned about the soil conditions. Mr. Perkins said there were field changes in the Hammond project. He suggested including soil remediation in the budget for some areas. He also suggested including species in a general way with large shade trees. The vote was unanimously approved. Mr. Perkins said his cost would be a percentage of the project. He would email a proposal to attach to the memo. His proposal would include a base map preparation, preliminary design, and graphics.

Opening of the Agenda:

1. Bunny Trail/Kierr Family Garden pavers
2. Other resolutions for tree and native preservation – impervious surfaces and their effect on existing trees
3. Trailhead landscape and lighting project for the parking lot of the market

Ms. Clark moved to open the agenda for the three items, seconded by Ms. Crosby and was unanimously approved.

New Business:

Follow up on Tree Giveaway

It was announced that most of the trees were distributed with the plums being the most popular species. Ms. Crosby suggested creating larger labels with planting instructions to be attached to the trees for next year.

Adoption of Resolution 17-02

Ms. Gleason said she thought the resolution was pushing the regulations too far. The reduction to a 3" protection diameter was where the tree preservation should be. The greenbelt was not all native vegetation and soil. Ms. Crosby was also concerned about being overly restrictive. The 3" diameter may be too small. Ms. Clark suggested negotiating the size. Mr. Adamiak said looking at the current regulations, the Ochsner clinic site had cleared the greenbelt. Ms. Crosby said this was similar to Bippo's Dental Clinic removal of the live oak tree. The property was not located in the City limits, but it was the same situation. Mr. Adamiak said there was 100' between two live trees on the Ochsner site with nothing in-between. The two issues were the tree diameter and the natural vegetation. Ms. Frederick said there was a bigger picture of preserving the native vegetation and habitat. Her example a wax myrtle smaller than 3" could be removed and the removal could cause damage to other trees and vegetation. Ms. Crosby agreed it would be a bulldozer taking it out. Ms. Gleason suggested including language that no mechanized equipment could be used in the greenbelt, only hand removal or mowing. This would still allow for a stump grinder. Ms. Crosby asked about the distance of the curb of the street to the building and it was answered to be 25'. Ms. Frederick said the idea was to preserve the

natural habitat in the greenbelt. Ms. Gleason said Rouses did a good preservation job. She was concerned about being business unfriendly with such a change from the existing regulations. Mr. Adamiak said the Ochsner clinic property was clear cut and the natural habitat was gone. Ms. Clark said there must be provisions for the monument signs. She asked Mr. Perkins about the visibility of signage, but retaining the vegetation. Mr. Perkins said DOTD had regulations within the right-of-way and they only allowed a 30" plant height in the right of way. DOTD would regulate Florida Street and GNOEC would regulate the Causeway Approaches and GNOEC was more tree friendly. Ms. Crosby asked what was the distance from the curb to the property line. Ms. Gleason said the street side of the ditch was the property line. Ms. Crosby said there would be a green space off of the road and the greenbelt would be located for 25' into the property. Mr. Discon said the board did not want the existing green area torn up and replanted with the design that did not fit the community. East Causeway Approach was the next area to be developed and the Ochsner clinic had a nice section of trees that would be gone.

Ms. Crosby said she felt within the 25' greenbelt that 3" tree preservation was too restrictive. Ms. Casanova said on the Ochsner site the 6" trees were dying or dead and needed to be removed. Many of the trees were on the edge and the construction would have created a hazardous tree condition. Ms. Crosby suggested providing a list of the existing native species and a list of what native species would be replanted. There should be species replacement for species removal. Ms. Frederick said she did not think the contractors should be able to remove the native vegetation and then replace it with non-native plantings. The 3" regulation would save the wax myrtles, yaupon, and parsley hawthorne and the regulation would not hurt the businesses. Ms. Crosby said a bulldozer did not discriminate on vegetation. Ms. Clark said she liked Ms. Gleason's suggestion to include the type of machinery. Ms. Casanova stated that no tree removal or land clearing could begin until the building permit was issued. Ms. Frederick said at the present 6" regulation all of the understory trees would be removed. Mr. Perkins said 3" was larger than what he would specify in a new installation. If the intent was to keep the native plants much of the vegetation would be destroyed in the understory at a 6" regulation. Ms. Frederick was concerned at 3" there would still be a large loss of native species.

Mr. Adamiak suggested having Ms. Casanova tag the trees that the board wanted to keep. Ms. Casanova said a list of protected species would hold more weight in protection. With the discussion, Ms. Clark suggested Ms. Casanova create a list of species and types of mechanized equipment that would be allowed. Wild cherries, mulberries, live oak, sweet bay magnolia, and arrow-wood were a few of the suggested species. Ms. Frederick said 25' was a small area and she was in agreement with clearing an area for sign visibility. Mr. Discon said the 3" diameter did not protect the underbrush. Ms. Gleason said it could be protected by hand clearing or using small equipment. Ms. Crosby suggested bringing a mulcher on site so the mulch could be used to protect the trees. Ms. Gleason said there could be the adoption of some technical steps.

The board agreed to rewrite the proposed language to keep all vegetation and provide a list of trees, shrubs and groundcover to be protected with the 25' greenbelt. Ms. Casanova said the rear of the Ochsner site was a no cut zone and was never touched. There would be planting in this area. The board was in agreement with combining the greenbelt and buffer zone language for the same restrictions to apply on the entire property. The property periphery would be a no cut zone and there should be some language to protect the access points and signage. Any dead trees to be removed must have a mulcher/shredder on site to retain the mulch on the site. There was a further discussion about removing invasive trees and shrubs. This should also include poison ivy to be removed, but not mulched. It was decided that Ms. Casanova and Mr. Adamiak would work on updating the language for discussion at the March Parks and Parkways Commission meeting.

East and West Causeway Planting/Bayou Chinchuba

The planting would wait until after Mardi Gras. GNOEC had asked for two changes on two medians in a curve with a concern about site visibility. The trees would be relocated. Ms. Crosby asked about planting low shrubs in the area where the trees were being relocated. It was suggested to wait until the Sculpture Garden was developed to install the shrubs. The Bayou Chinchuba area would be planted at the same time as the Causeway Approaches. The Wildlife and Fisheries requirement was for the City to remove the Chinese tallow trees.

Cemetery Update

The City was working to implement the existing plan. Ms. Crosby asked about the buffer zones. Ms. Clark said there should be some planting against the fences, and the Leyland Cypress looked great but the bamboo was pushing against it. The site plan indicated the trees would remain with the new plot area. The board requested to include the entrances in the planting plan, and the planting of Lady Bank roses at all four entrances would be an easy installation. The entrance should be raised 3", there should be new signage, and the gates should be repaired because they were not closing properly. The new signs and archways should match the Trailhead side. It was requested to ask Johnny Mayronne to address the area outside of the gate with planting. It was suggested that Ms. Clark and Ms. Crosby meet with Mr. Mayronne for a plant list.

Wildflower Garden on Highway 22

The installation of this garden was on hold with the citizen response to the wildflower garden on East Causeway Approach. Mr. Adamiak said the Mandeville Wildflower Garden was used as an example of what cities should be doing in a recent symposium that he attended. It was a matter of keeping the perimeter clean and mowed so people would know it was a manicured space.

Ms. Fargason said she had looked into signage. Ms. Crosby sent Ms. Scott the signage and she liked it. However, the sign was wood and there was concern about rot. Northshore Sign and Graphics could create an 18" x 24" sign - Wildflowering Mandeville, Butterfly Garden by Parks and Parkways Commission with a 3 dimension bird or flower for a cost of \$35 per sign made out of aluminum. Mr. Adamiak said Ms. Scott had stated the City was developing a sign standard. It was suggested that there would be six signs.

Update on Marigny Avenue Fruit Trees, Signs and Design Drawing/ Tyler Thomas Park

Ms. Crosby asked for a drawing of Marigny Avenue to develop a plan with Ms. Gleason. She suggested flowering cherries that were consumable, blue berry bushes, crabapple, mayhaw and fig trees. Each median could be planted with a different fruit tree. Ms. Crosby also suggested planting blueberries along the Lamarque Street fence line at the Tyler Thomas playground.

Tree Trimming on the Lakefront

Mr. Discon asked about the trimming of the live oak tree with the brace. Ms. Casanova said the tree had rolled out of the original brace. The top of the tree was trimmed to reduce the weight. Ms. Crosby asked if signage asking people not to climb on the tree could be installed. Ms. Casanova also said the area would be mulched after Mardi Gras.

City Hall Sign Landscape and Yard

There should be a landscape plan for City Hall to make it look nicer. There was a discussion that the sign area was planted with caladiums each year, and wax myrtles or a more native planting would be good landscaping. Ms. Frederick said there had been previous suggestions of planting bottle brush with the caladiums in the front of the sign. It was also suggested to plant vitex on the side of the bottle brush. There was a suggestion that roses around the gazebo would make a nice appearance.

Bunny Trail/Kierr Family Garden Pavers

Mr. Adamiak spoke with Mayor Villere and the City would be purchasing the brick pavers.

It was requested to include Trailhead landscape and lighting for the parking lot of the market on the March agenda.

Staff Update

- Two trees by Antibes East were to be removed. A sweet gum and pine tree were damaged and would be replanted.
- Public Works Department was installing new water lines and the area would be sodded. The project was snaking the area to save the trees.
- The x's would be removed from the trees.
- Two live oak trees on the lakefront were removed and replanted at the same location.
- Keep Covington Beautiful was holding a program.

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



Lori Spranley, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman

