

Chairman Scott Discon called the meeting to order at 6:02pm

The secretary called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Will Afton, Brien Croff, Scott Discon, Lee Frederick, Shawn Potter, Shelley Winstead

Absent: Christy Kervin (absent at roll call, present at 6:05pm)

Staff Present: Rad Dickson, Planner; Alex Weiner, Secretary

Minutes

Ms. Winstead made a motion to adopt the minutes from the August 7 meeting, Mr. Potter seconded, and all were in favor.

Before moving onto New Business Mr. Discon made a motion to open the agenda to add the following items: Mulch project, West Causeway project, Discussion of streaming the meetings, and discussion of hiring Jess Cole for the Longleaf Pine Savanna site. Ms. Frederick seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Discussion of the letter written by Commissioner Frederick to the city council

Ms. Frederick said this is important criteria being recommended to the city council. It is the responsibility of the commission to recommend things that they notice. She wants to add two bullet points under the fill headline pointing out the importance of preserving the soil profile. It is vital to the urban forest and for water infiltration. Red clay prohibits water filtration and leads to tree death.

Mr. Discon asked why not limit it to just under the house? Just add some restrictive language to only allow it under the structure, and not in the driveway.

Ms. Frederick said that scrape the soil off as well.

Mr. Discon asked why not have that re-added back after the project is done? Ms. Frederick said there is no need to remove the soil. They only need to add fill under the slab, but they get away with removing the soil and filling with clay.

Mr. Discon said they can modify the bullet point.

Ms. Kervin said it is hard not to remove some soil when you are grading an area. It has to be a balancing act; you cannot say no scraping at all. She suggested a percentage of the site be preserved.

Mr. Discon said they could re-affirm the CLURO text. Clay could only be used under the foundation and the soil could be stockpiled to be re-added after.

Mr. Afton asked what the enforcement was, Ms. Kervin also asked who does the enforcement.

Mr. Weiner said that Public Works does fill enforcement. Mr. Dickson added that they also test the soil for the clay percentage.

Mr. Afton said they could highlight the CLURO wording and add emphasis.

Mr. Discon suggested discussing the rest of the elements and coming back to this one.

Ms. Frederick said that this is just recommendations to the city council about their concerns. Things need to be tightened up. The greenbelt for the development across the street is gone. Mr. Discon added that the trees that are left are dying.

Mr. Discon said that should be reinforced as well. With new construction they run over the greenbelt and then it is gone.

Ms. Frederick said that was included under the first point. Strengthen, uphold and enforce no cut and green belt buffering allowing only natives for remediation planting.

Ms. Frederick said she would work on the second point.

Ms. Frederick said that there is nothing mandated for green infrastructure. The native canopy is a part of this. The bullet point that reads "Mandate that all new construction includes Green Infrastructure to the fullest extent in order to mitigate storm water threats to health, safety, and welfare of our residents.

Mr. Afton said that rain gardens are a good idea.

Ms. Frederick said they could mandate that new construction include a certain amount of green infrastructure.

Ms. Frederick said the last goal was to Initiate a program of Land Acquisition with a goal of removal of lands from commerce for Rewilding to support.

Ms. Frederick said she wanted to address four big ideas to let the city council know that the commission feels that it is time for a shift. She said they were appointed to protect the urban forest.

Mr. Discon said they cannot change the law but can make recommendations.

Ms. Frederick said they cannot make them change anything, but she is not sure if they are aware of the issues. There is nothing wrong with sending their recommendations.

Ms. Kervin said that New Orleans forces builders to adopt best management practices and is surprised that Mandeville has not done the same. This is important to bring up.

Ms. Winstead asked if they should suggest the adoption of best management practices, Ms. Kervin said they should. Ms. Frederick asked if that should go under the Green Infrastructure category, and Ms. Kervin said it should.

Ms. Frederick said there was no green infrastructure in the Sucette development. The City has power to control what the developers do.

Ms. Kervin asked if there were fines. Mr. Afton said they have to enforce them.

Mr. Weiner said that for any tree removed without a permit it is \$500 and for every 6 inches DBH that is removed, one replacement tree needs to be planted.

Ms. Kervin said it needs to be bigger. \$500 is nothing. Ms. Winstead suggested adding a fine amount.

Ms. Kervin asked if it was the same amount for all trees, Mr. Weiner said he was not sure off the top of his head.

Ms. Frederick said that this is meant to be broad. She does not want to water this down with finer points. She hopes to work with the city council.

Ms. Kervin suggested \$10,000 per tree removed and \$1,000 per day parked under a protected tree. It has to be a scary amount to deter people.

Ms. Frederick said they were not overstepping and needed to let the council know.

Buck Abbey, 1129 Villere: They are proposing something that needs to be done. They have to look at the reality. The commission has the authority to make decisions on the subject. They need to write a letter to the city council and get the message across. There were nine months of meetings about the Sucette project and at the end the council did not understand the zoning requirements for the project. He said to not go into a lot of detail and to place this in the landscape ordinance. Make it clear to the city and they would process it through the normal route. The letter should be general and then turned over to the Planning Department to refine, and then get stuff done. The Parish has done a lot with storm water work during the last 10 – 15 years.

Ms. Winstead said this was the proposal.

Mr. Weiner said that anything being proposed to the city council had to be in the form of a resolution.

Ms. Frederick said she would refine this and make it into a resolution.

Discussion of the Mulch Project

Mr. Croff said the idea came up about six months ago for a sustainable use for tree removal. He put some stuff on paper to maybe become a resolution to the Planning Department. *Mr. Croff read the draft proposal in the entirety which will be included at the end of the minutes*

Ms. Frederick said she likes it and asked if it would be included in the CLURO if approved? Mr. Croff said he hopes so.

Ms. Frederick asked if the City would provide the wood chipper? Mr. Croff said if the City concurs it would.

Mr. Discon said this would be a way to get mulch.

Ms. Frederick said that the tree cutters usually get a chipper after the work is done. It costs money to grind the stump and chip the tree.

Mr. Discon asked if it would be chipped into a truck, or if the City would come and pick up the pile?

Ms. Frederick said that smaller stuff goes into the chipper and larger stuff gets taken away. This would suggest stockpiling and giving to the City, but they cannot make them.

Mr. Discon said this is just another suggestion.

Mr. Afton said that there is currently a mulch pile at City Hall available to residents. Ms. Winstead added that it was available to all, but you have to do the work yourself.

Ms. Frederick said this could expand that, and make it more accessible.

Mr. Afton said that any City work could be mulched and added to the pile. Arborists are looking to get rid of mulch.

Mr. Discon asked if they were selling it? Mr. Afton said it was looked at as a waste product.

Mr. Discon asked how they get it off the trailer? Mr. Afton said a dump feature.

Mr. Croff said that he is not familiar with the current city equipment. He offered to have the City Arborist go and pick up the mulch from the sites, but is not sure if that would be too much.

Ms. Kervin said that if it was the City Arborist doing that it would currently be Mr. Weiner having to go and pick everything up. Mr. Croff suggested Public Works as an alternative.

Mr. Afton said that space would be an issue. There would be a lot of volume. Ms. Frederick said there could be locations on the east and west side of the city.

Mr. Discon said they were supposed to mulch the oaks on the lakefront, Mr. Afton said this could be used for that.

Ms. Federick asked if there was anything like this in the CLURO? Mr. Croff said that Section 9.2 was the landscaping regulations. Ms. Kervin said there was no recycling policy. This would be good to encourage.

Mr. Croff said he was not sure if this should be presented to the Planning Commission or the city council first. Mr. Discon said to do the same thing they were doing for Ms. Frederick's proposal.

Mr. Weiner said this would be in the form of a resolution.

Mr. Discon said they need to specify how the chips get to the destination.

Mr. Croff said he would speak with some contractors. Mr. Afton said he could help with providing a list of contacts.

West Causeway Project

Mr. Afton said that he, Mr. Potter, and Ms. Winstead all live in the west side of the City. The idea was to have some plantings that would mimic what was done on the east side. They drove up and down looking for planting areas. He is not sure where they would be allowed to plant due to line-of-sight issues. He came up with a material list but would need help from the City to see what can be done.

Mr. Discon said to get with Mr. Dickson to do a site visit and come up with a drawing. He added that they would need to get with GNOEC as well. He said they should focus on trees that can survive a drought and added that vitex and crape myrtles do well in heat.

Ms. Kervin said that yaupon looks nice as well.

Mr. Afton said that the goal is to make it look like east causeway.

Mr. Dickson said that they can go on a ride along to take photos and come up with a map.

Ms. Frederick said to go wild at the bridge.

Mr. Discon said they put some cypress and willow trees by the pedestrian bridge a couple years ago. They should get that area under contract and make it look natural but maintained. He said they could have Lucious do the plantings to save money.

Streaming the Meetings

Mr. Potter said it had been mentioned to see if the meetings could be streamed like the Planning and Zoning Commission meetings. He wanted to see if that was feasible and if there were any limitations.

Mr. Dickson said he would speak with the IT department and find out.

Mr. Discon said they could educate the public better and create awareness. Mr. Potter said it is difficult to get to the meetings and people are more comfortable with streaming now.

Longleaf Pine Savanna Site Stewardship

Mr. Discon asked if the plan was read into the minutes previously. Mr. Weiner said he would have to check.

Mr. Discon asked if they could vote on this tonight? Mr. Weiner said it would have to be advertised so they could vote at the next meeting.

Mr. Discon read the proposal sent by Jess Cole *This will be included at the end of the minutes*.

Ms. Frederick said that they still have to add the additional pines.

Ms. Frederick said they should give Ms. Cole two years. Mr. Discon said they could do a review after that.

Mr. Afton asked what they would be voting on? Whether to recommend this specific company or something more general? He feels awkward as this is a former commissioner. Ms. Frederick said that serving on the commission was a volunteer position.

Mr. Afton asked if this needed to be bid out. Mr. Discon said he would check.

Mr. Discon said that no one else has come forward. This is a good deal and Ms. Cole is very comfortable doing it. Ms. Frederick said she was very passionate about this and understands the area.

Mr. Afton just wants to make sure the rules are followed.

Mr. Discon said he will check on that. The commission only makes a recommendation, the Planning Director is in charge of the budget.

Mr. Discon asked how many trees were voted on? Ms. Frederick said it was 10.

Staff Update

Mr. Dickson said that the City will be doing a spring planting for the street tree program.

Ms. Frederick asked why a fall planting was not done? Mr. Dickson said it was due to budget reasons.

Public Comment

Buck Abbey, 1129 Villere: His wife asked him to convey a comment about educating the public. The idea to stream is the best tool to educate about the demise of the urban forest. The commission should also consider getting experts to give lectures about urban forestry and how to save it. He would like to get a forum put together and invite the public. To get people from the entire state you need someone who will attract an audience. The commission should ask the city council for \$10,000 to pay for people to educate on how to save the urban forest. The commission is doing a wonderful job and are working hard, they just need a little guidance. He also said they should not forget about the wetlands.

Danielle Fealko, 200 W Thistle: Here representing wild ones, and educational organization focused on native plants and landscapes. Crape myrtles are not native and can be invasive, the same goes for vitex. She would recommend proposing native trees to be planted.

Ms. Winstead said the vitex were for the pollinators.

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Ms. Fealko said the problem with non-native is that it is junk for pollinators. They do not have good nutrition.

Ms. Frederick said she loved button brush.

Ms. Kervin said they could do some native fringe trees. Ms. Frederick said the ones by the old Winn Dixie look beautiful. Mr. Afton said those were the non-native kind.

Ms. Kervin said the native variety did well in the drought.

Mr. Afton said they do native plants for the seedling giveaway.

Ms. Frederick said that button bush is good, Ms. Kervin said that was a shrub.

Mr. Discon said they can put it in the proposal and get with Mr. Dickson. It would be the same process as the Highway 190 plantings, which looks great. The wedelia is covering the area.

Ms. Frederick asked where this was? Mr. Discon said it was along Hwy 190. Ms. Kervin added that it was along Florida Street.

Mr. Discon said that project was contracted with a landscape developer and then was sent to DOTD for approval.

Mr. Afton motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm, seconded by Ms. Winstead and was unanimously approved.



Alex Weiner, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman
Parks and Parkways Commission

City of Mandeville Urban Wood Recycling Policy

This policy supplements the City of Mandeville's Community Tree Plan (CLURO 2.4.7.2.d), and the City landscape regulations (CLURO 9.2) to ensure the preservation and sustainability of the urban forest. The goal is to optimize the use of wood as a natural resource of the community, by utilizing trees that must be removed in the most efficient way available.

Environmental benefits are realized by diverting wood that would otherwise populate landfills and produce greenhouse gas emissions which are released through traditional disposal processes. Co-benefits include sourcing local raw materials for construction, maximizing benefit from trees being removed, and displaying urban wood products in the community. This tells the story of the City in which the trees matured and added to the community character. With this policy adoption, the City of Mandeville will be at the forefront in the nationwide effort to certify urban wood usage within City projects.

Tree Removal Utilization Plan

- Any trees that are removed by the City for reasons such as failure, disease, or decline or other reasons stated within the City of Mandeville's management plan are subject to be repurposed. This includes, but is not limited to, being milled into lumber, left in public spaces as natural architecture including wildlife habitat or crafted into usable products such as benches, picnic tables, new construction elements and / or other wood crafts/projects.
- The selection criteria for urban wood shall be made at the discretion of the city arborist or other designated city representative using current industry standards.
- Should wood not be eligible for repurposing into product, trees may be mulched or converted into other biomass products for use in the community.
- Suggested resources for wood processing can be found at urbansalvagedwoods.com, urbanwoodnetworkwest.org, usrwcertified.org, & urbanwoodnetwork.org.

Urban Wood Utilization in New or Modified Public Construction Projects Plan

- Use of the USRW North American Standards for Certification and Chain of Custody for Urban, Salvaged and Reclaimed Woods as set by USRW Certified

Woods and endorsed by the Urban Wood Network is recommended to ensure quality. <https://usrwcertified.org/>

- Urban wood should be considered in all city projects. To gain the maximized benefits of repurposed lumber from city trees, it is recommended that any new or modified public construction development that takes place within the city limits should include an urban wood element that is at a minimum cost of 1% of the overall project. This 1% is not in addition to project budget but can be included in items that would be necessary despite urban wood policy (i.e. locally sourced urban wood table vs harvested lumber table).
- This measure assures that the market for the City of Mandeville's urban wood is local (local being defined as within 500 miles or less per USRW certification, with lesser distance traveled preferred) and sustainable, maximizing the benefit of repurposed lumber from urban trees.
- It is suggested that urban wood utilization plans be approved by the City of Mandeville's planning department, if applicable. When approval is required, all project scope details shall be in accordance with all municipal construction and / or building code standards.
- Other means of quantifying urban wood usage in public/private projects are acceptable, such as incentive programs for contractors.

Mulch Recycling

- Mulch, as defined by CLURO 9.2.3, is any material that is used to cover the ground surface to prevent erosion, retain moisture, and protect plant material. The use of organic mulches reduces the growth of weeds, adds nutrients to the soil, and retains moisture over the roots zones of plant materials.
- Unless selected for other beneficial reuse, the City shall produce mulch from removed trees and other urban wood on public property.
- As a condition of permits for tree pruning and removals on private property, as described by CLURO 9.2.4.14, all permittees shall be required to produce mulch from the removed wood to be claimed by the City, unless selected for other beneficial reuse.
- The City shall offer the use of a mulch chipper/shredder to residents who are approved to remove tree(s) from their property.

- The City shall offer to pick-up the mulch from the properties where the tree(s) have been removed.
- The City shall designate mulch stockpile areas at the following city-owned properties:
 - ###
 - ###
 - ###
- Stockpiled mulch shall be made available to the following groups within the City of Mandeville:
 - The City Arborist
 - Community improvement organizations
 - Neighborhood associations
 - Schools
 - City residents (for personal property only).
- The City shall offer delivery of mulch to eligible groups who request it.
- Mulch shall not be made available for resale or for commercial use.

Longleaf Pine Pocket Prairie Maintenance Proposal
Jess Cole, Sweet Fern Landscapes

Dear City of Mandeville Parks + Parkways Board,

My name is Jess Cole, I was born and raised on the Northshore and served, briefly, a few years back as a member of the board. I own and operate a landscape design/install/maintenance company that specializes in native perennials and habitat restoration through means of sustainable methods. Aside from our residential + commercial native designs we work with landowners on a larger scale to encourage native plant and wildlife habitat through the means of meadow work, reforestation, invasive species irradiation and natural disturbance practices such as prescribed burning.

I would like to propose that we enter into a relationship with the city of Mandeville to maintain the current longleaf pine pocket savanna at the intersection of Hwy 190 and the Causeway Approach that was installed originally by Marc Pastorek's company Meadow Makers. The most important aspect of maintenance would be the annual burning of the meadow during its dormant season. Natural fire is absolutely critical to the natural history and continuing biodiversity of the longleaf ecosystem. I would like to propose three critical aspects of this maintenance plan:

- Perform an annual prescribed burn during the dormant season of the prairie
- Perform an annual fall maintenance visit (before the first frost) to remove invasive species that have volunteered themselves to the area
- Perform an annual assessment of the native wildflower habitat within the space and act accordingly on the encouragement of native species to the space... adding further seed or introducing new species when needed/ideal

The ultimate goal here would be to encourage, further, a thriving and highly biodiverse pocket habitat that could both prove to be self-sustaining (with minor human disturbance/control each winter) as well as provide to the community an explementary example of our cherished and formerly dominate ecosystem unique to the natural history of the city of Mandeville and the Gulf Coast as a whole. This habitat has largely been erased entirely but we are lucky to have wonderful small examples found in the Big Branch Nature Preserve and the Northlake Nature Center that provide habitat to some of our most endangered plant and animal species.

I have two Louisiana certified "burn bosses" on our restoration team that leads our burns. We are certified in both the state of Louisiana and the state of Mississippi. The maintenance plan would encompass the three above aspects and be accomplished within 2 – 3 annual visits by my team and I.

The first year would cost an estimated \$3100... this includes invasive species irradiation, careful selection/addition of seeds and the controlled burn. After the first year, ideally, the cost would be no more than \$1500. My thoughts are to get the area up to snuff this winter.... Weeded and additionally seeded to catch up from its lack of maintenance and the years following would largely be solely burning with minimal irradiation and seed encouragement needed as long as the burns are kept up. Ideally we would begin the first maintenance sweep late fall/early winter of 2023.

I would love to see my team be a part of this project, please let me know if there are budget restrictions that would make this proposal difficult.

I look forward to hearing from you. I can speak to the group in person if preferred. I can also be reached at:

[REDACTED]

Many Thanks!
Jess Cole