

**Parks and Parkways Commission**

**October 2, 2023**

**Page 1 of 3**

Chairman Scott Discon called the meeting to order at 6:03pm

The secretary called the roll.

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

Absent: Christy Kervin

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

Minutes

Ms. Winstead made a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 11 meeting, Mr. Potter seconded, and all were in favor.

New Business

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

Mr. Discon said there were a couple of changes he had for the second item with regards to the moratorium. Ms. Frederick said that was fine.

Mr. Discon said to remove the language at the beginning and just have it start with "Complete a...".

Ms. Frederick said the idea was to take a good look and put a moratorium until they can get it right. They can take out the first part and add "Complete a review of native landscape, soil, and terrain with all necessary amendments".

Mr. Discon said the first bullet point can be left the same and recommended adding a new sentence that red clay fill only be allowed under the foundation.

Ms. Frederick said that the CLURO currently states that. People put it all over the property and trees die. Ms. Frederick said to only have construction fill under the structure foundation as stated in the CLURO.

Mr. Dickson asked what if there was a concrete driveway? Mr. Discon asked if they put it in the driveway. Mr. Dickson said that they usually like to have something down when they pour.

Ms. Frederick said they can get the details later. Does it specify anything in the CLURO? Mr. Dickson said that Public Works are the ones involved with the fill. Mr. Discon said he would prefer if it is all gravel.

Ms. Frederick said that the CRS program incorporated these items. The City could get points for their rating. The City is currently a Class 5 and the lower you go the more of a discount you can get on flood insurance.

Mr. Discon said they could reference it as a goal.

Mr. Weiner said that the City currently participates in the program and gets credit for 16 out of the 19 credit areas. The only credit areas that the City does not get credit for are the levee requirement, dam requirement, and mapping areas that have not been mapped by FEMA yet.

Ms. Frederick said she is not sure the City is addressing all of the categories.

Ms. Winstead asked when this would be presented to the council. Mr. Discon said that it would be written up as a resolution and then voted on at the next meeting.

Mr. Discon said they can reference CRS and the NFIP in the language.

## **Parks and Parkways Commission**

**October 2, 2023**

**Page 2 of 3**

Ms. Frederick said there is a closing paragraph where there needs to be a partnership with the commission. They need to be connected.

Buck Abbey, 1129 Villere: Is there mention of the purpose to protect and rebuild the urban forest? Ms. Frederick said there was. Mr. Abbey said he thinks it should go through the Planning Commission first as any CLURO changes have to go through them. Mr. Abbey asked if green infrastructure was defined. Ms. Frederick said it was.

Mr. Abbey said this was important to do and must be presented perfectly. There will be a lot of opposition from the development and real estate community. The commission needs to think of the opposition.

Ms. Frederick said it is up to the commission to set the standard. Mr. Abbey said he agrees with what the commission is doing. The town does not understand. Landscape Architects have been bringing ideas to the public since the 1800s. The commission needs to be very clear about what they are trying to do. He recommends a resolution to study these topics. Ms. Frederick said no, they are going to put this out there and get stuff done.

Mr. Abbey said that the urban forest is in decline and the City is not doing much about it. Somebody has to be in charge of how it looks. They have to get back to how it was. They need to get the public behind planting on private property.

### **North Causeway Service Road Landscape Project**

Mr. Discon said that there is a tentative drawing, and that Mr. Discon has done some due diligence with DOTD. The plant selections are still in progress. There are some phone lines and an easement that they have to stay off so it will prevent them from mimicking the pines across N Causeway. They have discussed spruce pines and fringe trees.

Mr. Afton said that fringe trees can get to 50-60 feet long term.

Ms. Frederick suggested southern red cedar. Mr. Afton said that they prefer dry climates, but they will still grow. He added that the eastern red cedar is the native variety.

Mr. Discon asked how tall they get. Mr. Afton said they get about 12-15 feet. Mr. Discon said they need low plants so those would be perfect.

Mr. Dickson said he could not get a straight answer on what is allowed and what is not. Whatever is planted would probably get topped so keep that in mind. Mr. Afton asked if that was part of the installation process, Mr. Dickson said they are under powerlines so once they reach a certain height they are topped.

Mr. Discon said they could plant on the edge close to the Highway. There would be a definitive plan at the next meeting.

### **Pine Savanna Site Stewardship**

Mr. Discon said the area was already under contract.

Ms. Frederick asked how long it would be under contract, Mr. Dickson said he was not sure. Mr. Discon said he would talk with Ms. Bartholomew.

Ms. Frederick said that Ms. Cole could do everything except for burning.

Mr. Discon said that they still need to plant the 12 trees. Ms. Frederick suggested that Ms. Cole could plant them.

Mr. Afton said that longleaf pines are hard to grow in containers. Ms. Frederick said that Ms. Cole could find a source.



Mr. Dickson asked what size they would have to be to survive the burn. Mr. Afton said there is not a specific size needed. He added he would see what he could find.

Mr. Discon asked how they survive the burn, Mr. Afton said he was not sure, but it was not all pines, just the longleaf.

Buck Abbey, 1129 Villere: He is worried that they are asking and expecting too much. He is not sure of the extent of Ms. Coles ability to deal with the project. He asked if anyone had been to the site recently. There are three dead live oaks and three dead pines. There has to be a program when a company is hired. If they are not trained, they will not work. He said that a plan was needed three years ago. It is foolish to do something without a plan. They need to find what the company can do. The problem is the space. It is not a pine regrowth area. A plan is the first step.

Ms. Frederick asked what the company name was, Mr. Potter said it was Sweet Fern Landscaping, Meadow Creek Natives. Ms. Winstead said it was based in St. Francisville.

#### Staff Update

Mr. Dickson said there was no update at this time.

#### Public Comment

Ms. Frederick asked who was inspecting permits to remove trees. Mr. Dickson said that he was reviewing commercial permits and Mr. Weiner was reviewing residential permits.

Mr. Afton said that he looked at the choices for the street tree program and was looking for native replacements for the non-native choices.

Mr. Discon asked if Mr. Afton looked to see which trees were popular for the last event. Mr. Afton said he did not have that data, he was just looking at natives.

Mr. Discon asked if they could look up the number for the last plantings, Mr. Weiner said he could look that up.

Mr. Afton said he would look at the inventory to make sure that the species were available.

Ms. Frederick said that people like fruiting trees. There are usually lots of the larger trees left over after the arbor day giveaway.

Ms. Winstead said there is a tree by Mary Queen of Peace that the Master Gardeners approved for an educational project. Mr. Afton said it was an official volunteer project and will be used as an education tool to teach how to care for a mature tree.

Ms. Winstead motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:41pm, seconded by Mr. Croff and was unanimously approved.



Alex Weiner, Secretary



Scott Discon, Chairman  
Parks and Parkways Commission