



MINUTES–Beautification Advisory Board

January 24, 2023

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The Beautification Advisory Board of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session at Oscar M. Corbin, Jr. City Hall 2200 Second Street, on Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. Present were Margie Willis, Chair, presiding, Board Members, Zane Stoneman, Elaine Gulati, Debbie Hughes (arrived at 4:06 p.m.), Piper Smith (arrived at 4:04 p.m.), Mathew Lincolnhol, and Pattie Robinson. Also present were Jose Parrilla, Parks & Beautification Interim Manager, and Michele Jones, Administrative Assistant.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Willis called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG AND ROLL CALL

Chair Willis led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and roll call was taken by Ms. Jones.

OATH OF OFFICE

Gwen Carlisle, City Clerk, administered the Oath of Office for Zane Stoneman, appointment term effective September 19, 2022, through September 18, 2025, Margie Willis, reappointment, term effective October 3, 2022, through October 2, 2025, and Pattie Robinson, reappointment, term effective January 3, 2023, through January 2, 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Pridgen, descendent of the Vivas family, spoke to board members about waiting on Baker Barrios to come back with the master plan for the landscape design that will include pathways for Vivas Palm Park. Mr. Pridgen stated that most of the funding is coming from Alzeta, with other contributions from Palm Co. and some others that are coming in as well. Ms. Hughes asked if it will be a passive park and Mr. Pridgen confirmed it was. Mr. Pridgen stated that Alzeta is working with Naples Botanical Gardens on the project with palm selection. Mr. Lincolnhol stated that they need to take in consideration when the building goes up that the conditions will change. Ms. Hughes asked how tall the building will be and if the statue will be staying there. Mr. Pridgen stated it will be 12-stories and that the statue will stay. Mr. Pridgen discussed the Paratrooper monument needing repairs done and where some of the funding would come from. Discussion about the large Ficus tree that is there and that it would be better to have a smaller tree in that location. Ms. Hughes asked about how big the house was that was at that location. Mr. Pridgen stated it was a 2-story house and showed board members some old photos that he had of the location.



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REGULAR ITEMS

1. Minutes of the August 23, 2022 Beautification Advisory Board Meeting

MOTION: Board Member Lincolnhol moved to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2022 Beautification Advisory Board meeting; seconded by Board Member Willis; motion carried unanimously.

2. Update on Centennial Park

Jose Parrilla stated that the park is now open from dusk to dawn due to no electricity yet due to Hurricane Ian. He stated that the playground is open with only a couple of items that still need addressed. Mr. Parrilla stated that they had to relandscape underneath the bridge again and repairs were done on the pavilion. Mr. Parrilla discussed the damage to the park and stated that the city is lining up contractors for repairs that are needing to be done. Mr. Lincolnhol asked about the fountain and Mr. Parrilla stated that a couple months ago it was damaged by a drunk driver so the Public Art Committee will be using the insurance money to get it repaired. Mr. Parrilla also stated that there is another issue with a leak underneath the concrete that needs to be addressed.

3. Update on MLK

Mr. Parrilla stated that they have two more islands to complete and then they will probably go back to replace some of the Crepe Myrtle's and then mulch all the islands to complete the project.

4. Update on Royal Palm Avenue

Mr. Parrilla discussed the Royal Palm Avenue project that was scheduled to start in October but is now delayed due to Hurricane. Mr. Parrilla stated that the Royal Palms that are in the power lines will be replaced with Christmas Palms/Adonidia Palm. Mr. Parrilla stated that FPL hasn't contacted him yet since the storm so it could be a while before the project starts.

5. Beautification Awards

Mr. Parrilla discussed the Ward 5 beautification award that was chosen in August for 3895 Harold Avenue. Mr. Parrilla stated that the homeowner contacted him before the storm and wanted to wait a couple months for he could complete his landscape project. Mr. Parrilla discussed he will get back in touch with the homeowner to see what day would be best to present the award and he will let everyone know.

6. Update on Nursery Relocation

Mr. Parrilla discussed with board members that the City Nursery has relocated to the City of Palms Stadium off Broadway. Mr. Parrilla stated that the last couple months



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they have been busy moving what planting material he could to the stadium and that the city is currently looking at possible sites for a Nursery. Mr. Parrilla discussed the layout of the new location and where the plant material and fertilizer are located.

7. Rotary Clock Landscape Project

Mr. Parrilla stated that he moved a couple trees that were discussed at the last meeting before the storm hit and the clock is fully functional. Mr. Lincolnhol discussed the three landscape drawings he completed, with the third one being the most involved with having a crushed shell pathway and that it's the shape of the rotary symbol. Board Members discussed the plaques on the clock, plant materials, height, and spacing. Mr. Stoneman mentioned using growth regulator on the plants. Mr. Lincolnhol said that we may need to take a look at the irrigation if there are annuals. Ms. Hughes said that she could check with American Farms about getting 52 Pentas. Mr. Parrilla discussed the future plans of having a driveway for food trucks and his concerns if going with the shell and annuals with the cost of upkeep. Ms. Robinson stated her concerns of picking something that will last and do well with the traffic for we are not wasting money. Mr. Lincolnhol stated that whatever design they would like to chose that we would need to coordinate it with the Rotary Club and get their approval. Ms. Hughes discussed that the Rotary Club has mentioned wanting color around the clock and the possibility of them upkeeping the flowering plants. Ms. Smith said she likes the walk around design of the third drawing and that if everyone likes this design, they could discuss the plant materials that makes the most sense later after we get everyone's approval. Board Members discussed liking the Japanese Boxwood, Pentas, Peanut Grass, and Helen Johnson Bougainvillea. Mr. Lincolnhol discussed if going with the Bougainvillea instead of the Pentas we could change the spacing from 18" on center to 30" to 36" and it would save on quantity maybe cutting it in half. Mr. Lincolnhol said that he can reach out to the Rotary Club to present the plan to them. Mr. Parrilla stated he could work on the irrigation plan. Mr. Stoneman stated that he could also help with the irrigation.

MOTION: Board Member Lincolnhol moved to approve the third landscape drawing with the circular design, with the modification of plant material later when it comes time; seconded by Board Member Hughes; motion carried unanimously.

8. Other Business

Ms. Robinson discussed needing some type of irrigation on Lincoln Boulevard for there can be some kind of beautification done. Mr. Parrilla stated that there is irrigation on Lincoln Boulevard. Discussion of previous meeting on the topic that discussed the area has Mahogany Trees with a lot of shade and what has been planted there in the past. Ms. Robinson stated that she would like for them to take a tour because something needs to be done with Lincoln Boulevard from Ford Street to Palm Avenue.



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Gina Sabiston, Chairperson for the Historic Preservation Commission discussed that Councilman Bochette has been encouraging her and other Chairs of the different boards to work together. Ms. Sabiston stated that one of areas the Historic Preservation Commission oversees is McGregor Boulevard where she needs their help. Ms. Sabiston showed before and after photos of McGregor Boulevard and discussed how some of the trees are impeding upon the road and the current Royal Palms are no longer uniform. Discussion about how the trees had a lot more space to grow before they widened McGregor which have now caused the trunks to be wavy. Ms. Sabiston discussed concerns of the Oak Trees that are by City Walk and that the canopy could take over the tree. Ms. Sabiston discussed maybe having inter committee meetings to discuss possible change of the code where there are no trees with large canopies planted within so many feet of a Palm. Ms. Sabiston said that is where we need your help in speaking out to preserve the vista of the boulevard. Ms. Sabiston suggested if they see any new projects for McGregor come up on City Council agenda or any other committee, to go speak on the palm tree. Mr. Parrilla discussed how it's better to plant a smaller Royal Palm for it can grow into the space rather than planting a large field grown palm. Mr. Parrilla stated that he will need to look into the code and Ms. Sabiston said that she knows the minimum size at planting is ten-foot trunk. Ms. Hughes asked how we should proceed with educating homeowners on what the road is supposed to be. Mr. Parrilla said that he can reach out to Liz Bello-Matthews to see what she can come up with. Ms. Sabiston stated that she has done graphic design for 22 years and that she could work with Ms. Bello-Matthews. Ms. Sabiston discussed that she could do the historical standpoint with before and after pictures and that the board could work on the care of the trees and why it is important. Ms. Smith mentioned the brochure that Ms. Bello-Matthews discussed at a prior meeting about mailing them out with the utility bills. Ms. Hughes mentioned that Councilman Bochette mentioned about sending something out to his ward. Ms. Sabiston said that she will check with him because she helps him with his flyers. Mr. Parrilla said he will reach out to Liz Bello-Matthews.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee member Lincolnhol; seconded by Committee member Robinson; to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 p.m.