

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE REPORT

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To: The Board of Directors of Magnolia Square
Date: March 5, 2012
Submitted by: The Landscape Committee

The Committee

The landscape committee members and contributors are Barb Peacock, Sylvia Mitzakov, Manuel Costa, Carol Godward, Mary Macris, Wayne Jordan, Marg Jordan, Marie Dollighan, Carol Davis-Kerr, Mary Pardy, Jens Hansen, Muriel Connery, Peter Connolly, Shirley Bailey, Doug Brown, Helen Brown, Jim Cornell, Norm Moffitt.

The committee held meetings on February 7, 14, & 23 and March 5 and conducted walkarounds of the entire property on February 15 & 16, 2012. The committee held a planting day on March 3rd with donated perennials to help beautify the grounds. Members of the committee met with landscape maintenance companies on February 27 and March 1, 2012.

The Committee's mandate is as follows:

1. To prepare a report on concerns with the Magnolia Square landscape and recommendations for improvement, prior to the March 7th Board of Directors meeting.
2. To review proposals from landscape companies, check references and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding a preferred landscape company, prior to the end of March.
3. To continue as an ongoing committee to review and make suggestions to improve the Magnolia Square landscape. The committee will also evaluate the new landscaping company in the fall of 2012 and winter of 2013 and report its' conclusions to the Board.

Overview of the Magnolia Square Landscape

Many owners in Magnolia Square bought their condos because of the large magnolia and live oak trees and the beautiful landscape. Although the grounds are still beautiful, there are some problems that need to be addressed. Over the past few years, shrubs have died, invasive vines have taken over, grass is dead or dying and some gardens are untended.

The plants around the perimeter of the complex have become overgrown with invasive vines, such as air potato and kudzu, Brazilian pepper trees and carrot trees. If the vines are left to spread, they will eventually kill all the plants, shrubs and trees in their path. Along the south fence the oleanders have not been trimmed for the past few years and invasive potato vines and weed trees have taken over. Along the west fence, slash pines are covered with invasive vines. Along the East Bay Drive wall there

is an area where viburnums are growing and appear to be healthy, providing a screen from the road noise and exhaust. Along the east fence most of the viburnum are growing well except for an open section in the north-east corner. Invasive vines are spreading along the south end of the fence.

Some owners have planted trees, shrubs and plants in the beds beside their units and around their patios. While some gardens are attractive and well-tended by the owners, others are not being maintained. There is also a lack of uniformity throughout the complex due to the variety of individual choices of plants and shrubs.

It is winter and the grass is dormant, however there are many patches of dead and dying grass and areas where weeds have taken over. The grass in the north-east section of the complex has not been watered in over two months due to damage to the sprinkler system. There is an on-going problem with grass cutters damaging the sprinkler heads. In addition, the sprinkler system does not reach all areas of the complex.

Recommendations

Healthy plants require adequate water. The sprinkler system should be checked by the new landscape company and subsequently repaired and maintained by them.

It is important that we continue with the plan in the arborist's tree inventory report. In consultation with the new landscape company, contract to cut down dead pine trees and trim overhanging branches. Mulch and plant ground cover around the oaks and other large trees.

The City of Largo has cleared vines on their side of the Central Park fence and the west end of the library fence; the east end belongs to Progress Energy. We are responsible for clearing carrot trees, brazilian peppers and invasive vines on our side and the city is willing to work with us.

Plant tall shrubs in front of the East Bay wall to create a screen for traffic noise and exhaust. The committee recommends continuing to replant with viburnum, to create a unified appearance.

Neglected gardens in the complex should be dealt with before addressing the issue of unified gardens. Plant flowering perennials in bare places where plants have died and where possible plant shrubs that are native to the area. There are currently a number of shrubs such as hibiscus, azalea, crotons and ti plants that are growing well throughout the complex. Plants, such as ti plants can be spread through cuttings from existing plants.

Keeping in mind budgetary restraints, members of the landscape committee are willing to give their time to assist in upgrading the landscape. This includes raking, weeding,

putting down mulch and transplanting. On March 3rd the committee held a Beautify Magnolia Day which was organized by Sylvia Mitzakov, assisted by Carol Davis-Kerr. Some owners donated plants and others contributed a total of over \$400.00 towards the purchase of plants. A plan was drawn up in advance, plants were purchased and a dozen volunteers planted over 70 perennials throughout the complex .

It will take time and money to upgrade the landscape and regular oversight in order to maintain it properly. We need Management to conduct regular walks around the complex to identify and report landscape problems and take steps to rectify them. We need a landscape company that will also conduct walks around the property and report any issues that they identify to Management. The landscape committee members will assist whenever possible.

Immediate Priorities for 2012

1. Save and preserve the healthy plants that are growing.
2. Repair sprinkler system. Budget for expansion of sprinkler system to cover as many areas as possible where plants and grass is growing.
3. Contract with new landscape company to remove invasive vines, Brazilian pepper trees and carrot trees.
4. Remove plants and vines that are on the buildings.
5. Continue with the plan in the Tree Inventory. Remove the dead pine trees and prune overhanging branches.
6. Edge around oaks and large trees and cover with pine bark mulch.
8. Landscape committee members continue working group to assist in clearing and planting.
9. Clear weeds and vines along fence lines. Pick up and dispose of potatoes.
10. Clean up neglected beds that are not being tended by the owners.
11. Transplant where possible.
12. Establish guidelines for owners.
13. Establish a suggestion forum for landscape issues.
14. Representatives of landscape committee continue to liaise with new landscape company.

Proposals for the Future

1. Expand the sprinkler system to cover all areas where plants are growing.
2. Plant viburnum in open spaces along East Bay wall and north east corner of complex.
3. Plant shrubs to create a screen around the perimeter.
4. Landscape committee work with new landscape company to plan and prioritize improvements to the landscape.

Landscape Company

The following landscaping companies were invited to submit proposals. They were advised to itemize the various costs such as mow and blow, pruning, fertilizing and checking irrigation system so that the bids could be accurately compared.

1. Ameri-Pride
2. Total Landscape Care (TLC), which was Magnolia Square's landscape company prior to Ameri-Pride.
3. Valley Crest
4. Buccaneer Landscaping
5. Bay Area Landscaping
6. All Seasons Landscaping
7. Steves New Image Landscaping

An interview committee was formed, consisting of Barb Peacock, Peter Connolly, Marie Dollighan, Carol Kerr and Doug Brown. Proposals were received from three companies. It was decided that Valley Crest, being the most expensive and with references only from Tampa and Trinity, would not be interviewed. The committee met with Chris Witherington, President of Buccaneer on February 28 and Tommy Edwards, President and Buddy Bell, Supervisor at TLC on March 1, 2012.

Factors such as range of services offered, qualifications of staff, knowledge of landscaping issues, costs, size of company, references, proximity to Magnolia Square and ability to work and communicate with the company's representative were considered. It is the unanimous decision of the committee to recommend Buccaneer as the landscape maintenance company for Magnolia Square. The committee recommends the signing of a one year contract effective April 1, 2012. During the term of the contract, the committee will evaluate Buccaneer's performance and make a recommendation by February 1, 2013 regarding continuing the contract for another year.

The committee further recommends that we work with Buccaneer to develop a plan to repair and enhance the Magnolia Square landscape. Issues identified in this report will be discussed and any additional costs will be submitted to the Board for approval and budgeting.