



Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board Subcommittee Minutes

February 26, 2025 at 9:00 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Stephen Pategas, Directory of Natural Resources & Sustainability Gloria Eby, Sustainability Manager Sara Miller, Park Services Manager Josh Nye, Sustainability Specialist Nicole Marshall, Public Works Engineer Shannon Monahan, Administrative Coordinator Victoria Tabor

1. Meeting Called to Order

Stephen Pategas called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

2. Discussion Item

Mr. Pategas announced that his board term is ending soon.

a. Landscape Ordinance

Mr. Pategas acknowledged that Ms. Eby provided great feedback. With Ms. Monahan's input, today's discussion will include landscaping and stormwater management, focusing on how to effectively use extra landscaping in stormwater areas, including tree placement and slope management.

Ms. Monahan emphasized the biggest key is integrating engineering and landscape architecture. Currently, these two elements operate independently. Typically, dry pond retention areas are designed to hold a specific volume of water without any obstacles. These designs often overlook natural landscaping. If landscaping is not considered in the design process, it's challenging to incorporate it later.

Another challenge arises in larger commercial areas with extensive impervious surfaces that do not direct water into retention or stormwater management areas. This results in significant amounts of water flowing off rapidly. What often happens with non-coordinated plantings in retention areas is erosion. Often, plants with shallow root systems are planted, only to be found later at the bottom of the retention area. It is about energy dissipation and selecting the appropriate types of plants at the outset.

There are many low-impact development and green infrastructure strategies available and newer development areas tend to use the language. However, incorporating such practices in a built-out area like Winter Park is difficult making it challenging to implement language that is both enforceable and realistic.

Ms. Eby addressed Ms. Monahan's concern about the area being fully developed. She explained that this situation falls under conditional use permits, particularly in commercial contexts. During the review process a task force team will establish specific

conditions. This is an opportunity to address redevelopment while considering factors such as stormwater management and sustainability issues.

An example was provided regarding the AT&T site, which was redeveloped from a former Popeyes chicken location. Current regulations state that if you are redeveloping a property—even if you keep the existing building and everything remains unchanged, there is a spending threshold (set at 50%) that, once surpassed, requires you to upgrade the property to meet modern standards. It is crucial to identify and clarify what these modern standards entail. The 50% threshold is specified in both the landscape code and the stormwater code.

In terms of conditional use, when a development proposal is submitted, the Technical Advisory Task Force conducts a comprehensive review of all aspects related to the development. Based on their assessment, they impose specific conditions on the permit for the applicant.

Ms. Eby was asked for the shoreline update. Half of the ordinance has been reviewed because it involves extensive cross-referencing. Ms. Eby suggested enlisting Mr. Nye's help to integrate the tree ordinance with specific sections identified in the landscape ordinance. There are some codes that are missing from Chapter 114, which pertain to shorelines; they need to complement each other. Chapter 114 was included as it relates to shorelines and waterfront properties to establish the proper cross-references. Previously, it referred to Section 58 of the land development code. Ms. Eby stated that canopy trees and shade trees are intertwined. Mr. Nye informed that he changed "shade" to "canopy" in the latest version of the tree ordinance. Mr. Nye encouraged Ms. Eby to share feedback regarding the tree ordinance. Additionally, he confirmed that a definition for a healthy tree was provided.

Mr. Pategas mentioned that it was noted to require a tree barrier detail in the landscape code. The language used in the landscape ordinance should align with that of the tree ordinance. Ms. Eby mentioned that there should be an exception for city work because one or two individuals commented that the protocol for placing barriers around trees was not followed. The staff is doing restoration work in the wetlands, not landscaping. There should be some sort of exemption related to environmental restoration.

Mr. Nye proposed including catch-all statements in several sections of the ordinances. These statements would grant discretion to the city arborist, parks director, or their designee, allowing for exceptions to be made. This approach would provide some flexibility in the application of the ordinances.

Mr. Pategas asked Ms. Monahan for her thoughts on slopes. Ms. Monahan explained that the city follows the guidelines set by the St. John's River Water Management District, which specifies a 3:1 side slope for dry ponds. Steeper slopes require either a handrail or blocking of pedestrian access.

Mr. Pategas confirmed that we could include in the landscaping code a maximum slope of 4:1 for planting. This means we do not want planting to occur on 3:1 slope, and we want to avoid any planting within the slopes of stormwater ponds. Planting to the edge of the slope would be encouraged.

Mr. Pategas inquired about the possibility of banning volcano mulching as part of a tree ordinance. Ms. Eby mentioned that she has revised the mulch section. He also pointed out a Florida statute related to water conservation and Florida-friendly landscaping, which states, "A local government ordinance may not prohibit or enforce any prohibition against property owners implementing Florida-friendly landscaping on their land." Therefore, it's important that we remain mindful of this Florida statute.

Mr. Pategas advised that he is still coordinating with Mr. Nye and Ms. Eby and invited Ms. Miller to contribute information regarding recycling to the landscape ordinance. Ms. Monahan will send her notes from today's meeting and plans to add more details in a future meeting. Ms. Eby stated that at the next KWPB&S board meeting, they will discuss Mr. Pategas' departure, outline next steps, and formalize the subcommittee with the board. She will also check with the City Clerk's office.

3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Board Coordinator, Bahiyyah Layton