

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD

<https://zoom.us/j/83110285038>

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14th, 2023 – 10:30 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	D 22	J 23	F 23	M 23	M 23	J 23	S 23	O 23	N 23	D 23	APPOINTED BY:
Carolina Estefan-Chahine	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Lago
Anne Boynton-Trigg	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	Vice Mayor Anderson
Elizabeth Parnes	P	P	P	P	P	E	A	P	P	P	Commissioner Fernandez
Sara Lane Conde	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	A	P	P	Commissioner Castro
Nancy Leslie	P	P	E	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	Commissioner Menendez
Amy Dash	P	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	City Manager
Vacant	E	P	P	P	P	P	A	-	-	-	Board-As-A-Whole

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
(-) – No Appointment
(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

Deena Bell-Llewellyn, Assistant PW Director, Greenspace
 Sayleen Arocha-Quian, Landscape Designer, Greenspace
 Pilar Wiese, Recording Secretary, Greenspace

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 a.m. The roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

The board reviewed the November 9th, 2023, minutes. **A motion was made to “Approve the minutes of November 9th, 2023”** The motion was seconded, voted upon, and adopted unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS:

- **EVENT PLANNING 2024:**

Farmer's Market 2024 – Presentation has been confirmed for January 27, 2024, to talk about swale planting; Ms. Bell will do the presentation. Ms. Boynton-Trigg asked members if they had a chance to review the swale package. She asked if artificial turf is allowed. Ms. Bell said that artificial turf has always been allowed in the joints of paving and driveways; artificial turf is not allowed as a lawn substitute in front yards or in swales. Artificial turf is allowed in residential properties where it is not seen from the street, in rear yard or on the side if it is hidden well by landscaping. Ms. Boynton-Trigg said that she understands that the options for planting on the swales are plants, gravel, or grass. Plants cannot be higher than 30 inches as long as you plant the entire swale. Ms. Bell said that the reasoning is that if you are going to improve the aesthetics of the swales, you do not want to see little spots of grass and landscaping. The intent is to pick the material to aesthetically look cohesive, a nice design so if you are going to use crushed stone for parking area, you must plant the rest of the swale. You cannot have spots of stone and grass and plant here or there. It has to be a cohesive design. Plants cannot be taller than 30 inches for visibility reasons. Landscape design goes to the Greenspace division for review and approval. Ms. Boynton-Trigg has a question about restrictive covenants. Ms. Bell explained that swales are public property. The covenant means that if you plant in the swale, the resident is responsible for maintaining the planting. It also says that if the city has to come in for any reason to rip it up to repair infrastructure, you hold the city harmless for that and the city is not responsible to fix it. Residents are responsible for putting it back the way it was, in most cases. There are special exceptions to that. For example, if there is a huge sewer line break and city's public works need to dig up on the swale to replace the sewer line, then the city will probably fix it. Trash pits are allowed in the city and within the swale design and when redesigning the swale, they need to consider where they want to place trash pits. Residents do not have to have a trash pit if they do not want it. Lawn debris can be taken out by the gardener or placed in the driveway but there is a risk of the being damaged by the crane's claw. Trash pits are not allowed to be closer than 5 feet from the trees. Ms. Bell said that the Communications office will be contacted to have the presentation in E-News and she will forward email to board members.

Arbor Day 2024 – Ms. Leslie said that the Garden Club will make a donation for the cost of the tree and will contribute with the plaque for the tree. She had asked garden club members to send her ideas of location for new tree. She received one for the vacant area at Toledo Street and Bird Road and Alva Avenue. Ms. Bell intervened saying that there is a plan for a city park. The plans are still in conceptual

phase and the park will not be ready for April, but to keep it in mind for future years as it is a big open space. Entrance at Granada and 8th Street was discussed, and Ms. Bell asked members to look at the site for their consideration.

Beautification Awards 2024 – Submission of nominations for the Beautification Awards will be due at the March 14th, 2024 meeting. Zones have been assigned as follows: Liz Parnes (Zone 1). Nancy Leslie (Zone 2). Sara Lane Conde (Zone 3 & 4). Carolina Estefan-Chahine (Zone 5). Amy Dash (Zone 6a-north), and Anne Boynton-Trigg (Zone 6b-south).

- STATE OF ROAD AT THE INTERSECTION OF OLD CUTLER AND RED RD.: Ms. Estefan-Chahine informed the board that a draft letter wrote by the Transportation Advisory board members needed to be voted on for their approval. The Transportation Advisory board meeting will be in the next days, and she plans to draft a similar letter for the Landscape Beautification advisory board to be voted on too at the January meeting.
- BOARD-AS-A-WHOLE VACANCY: Ms. Boynton-Trigg said that Mr. Kurt Schubert was supposed to attend the meeting but because of the storm he could not and apologize. He is very interested in the position and would like to attend the next board meeting.
- UPDATE ON CITY PROJECTS:
Tree Succession 2023: Ms. Bell said that this is the city's yearly large scale tree planting. Greenspace division replaces trees that are dead or had been stricken by lightning and requests from residents to cover empty spots. Once a year the project goes out to bid. There are already 100 trees on the list and the total cost of the project is \$177,000. Project had gone to commission approval and is ready to be awarded to the contractor to start planting. Greenspace has been working with residents on the tree species, to see if appropriate for the size of the area. We encourage diversity of species, different sizes of trees, and good big size native trees. We buy in bulk to economize on buying large number of trees at a good price. The Commission allocates \$200,000 every year for this project.

Coral Gables Library: Ms. Bell said that the county is still working with their landscape architect to finish their design for the grounds. She said that a brand-new connection to city water that stores the irrigation will be installed to abandon the old well that has saltwater intrusion. She will bring the plans when they are okay. The Garden Club would like to be involved and help with the butterfly garden area once the renovation is completed.

Ponce de Leon corridor: Ms. Bell said this is a major project that has been funded. Construction will start from Menores Ave. to Eighth St. and from Eighth St up to Flagler St. The medians and the right-of-ways along Ponce will be redesigned.

US1 medians: New funding has been received to replace landscaping along US1 medians from Douglas to Red Road. Ground covers and low native plants will be planted.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 11:40am

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON
THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2024, 10:30 AM