



## MINUTES–Beautification Advisory Board

February 28, 2022

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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 Monday, February 28, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. Present were Margie Willis, Chair, presiding, Board Members, Elaine Gulati, Debbie Hughes, Pattie Robinson, and Matthew Lincolnhol. Also present were Jose Parrilla, Parks & Beautification Interim Manager, Michele Jones, Administrative Assistant. Absent: Committee Member Piper Smith

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Willis called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG AND ROLL CALL**

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

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **REGULAR ITEMS**

#### 1. Minutes of the October 26, 2021 Beautification Advisory Board Meeting

**MOTION: Board Member Robinson moved to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2021 Beautification Advisory Board meeting; seconded by Board Member Lincolnhol; motion carried unanimously.**

#### 2. Update on Centennial Park

Jose Parrilla gave an update on Centennial Park project. Mr. Parrilla stated that they finished landscaping underneath the bridge about a month ago using a lot of material from the nursery. Mr. Parrilla discussed the next phase underneath the bridge is finding a contractor to fix the asphalt and reseal it. Mr. Parrilla said they are waiting on some custom-made pieces to finish the playground and then they will be doing a poured in place surface that should be done by the end of April. Mr. Parrilla stated they are waiting on some electrical components for the amphitheater, and the anticipated completion is by May. Ms. Hughes asked about the soldier statue that was just recently moved and Mr. Parrilla said they plan on turning it around and a couple other statues will be placed around that area as well. Ms. Hughes asked if there will be a landscape plan and Mr. Parrilla stated that there is a landscape plan that was approved a while back that he will email it out to everyone and bring to the next meeting for discussion. Mr. Parrilla discussed the design and the plants that are in the plan. Mr. Lincolnhol asked if there was a landscape plan for the west side. Mr. Parrilla said that most of it is mature and will stay the same except for some areas where the playground will be. Mr. Parrilla stated that he will be replacing the hedge that's along 1<sup>st</sup> Street by the road and replacing the peanut grass with something else that is around the Fire Dance statue. Mr. Parrilla stated that after the playground is in, he



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will put a couple of oak trees back in to give it some shade. Mr. Lincolnhol asked what the surfacing will be, and Mr. Parrilla said it is the rubber matting- poured in place surfacing.

### 3. McGregor Boulevard Oak Trees

Chair Willis discussed pictures that she took of oak trees that are on personal property that are hanging over McGregor Boulevard that she would like to see what the city can do about trimming them. Mr. Parrilla stated that they started a program to start trimming some of that to make sure they are elevated for cars and sidewalks. Ms. Willis discussed that there is one with a huge branch that hangs across that she doesn't like. Ms. Hughes discussed how a lot of roads have trees that are a canopy that shade the whole road. Ms. Willis stated that McGregor Boulevard was established as the avenue of palms and that the oak branches hanging over are also dangerous. Mr. Parrilla discussed the problems of cutting trees back on just one side making it heavy on one side so he will have to look at it.

### 4. Palm Beach Boulevard Leaning Palm Tree

Mr. Parrilla discussed the leaning palm tree off Palm Beach Boulevard that was Ms. Robinson spoke about at the last meeting. Mr. Parrilla stated that the tree was taken care of a month ago.

### 5. Update on Centennial Park

Duplicate on agenda.

### 6. Update of Shady Oaks

Mr. Parrilla discussed the Shady Oaks palm field relocation project and where they have been relocating the palms in preparation for a football field. Mr. Parrilla stated that the last couple of months they have relocated 95 out of about 170 palms that consist of teddy bears, foxtails, and royal palms. Ms. Hughes asked if he replaced the teddy bear palms on 1<sup>st</sup> Street that were damaged by a car. Mr. Parrilla said that he replaced them along with two on Monroe Street that are now struggling after a cold front come in days after planting them.

### 7. Beautification Awards

Mr. Parrilla stated that the pictures of the awards that were given out in December for wards 1 and 2 are in the agenda packet. Ms. Willis passed out pictures with a list of homes in wards 3 and 4 for consideration of an award. Board Members looked over the photos and selected 2928 Lincoln Boulevard in ward 3 and 1392 Plumosa Drive in ward 4.



### 8. Relandscaping Sign Project

Mr. Parrilla discussed the relandscaping sign project that was discussed at the last meeting. Board members looked over the pictures of the different signs for consideration which included Riverside Park, STARS Complex, Shady Oaks, and the Welcome to Fort Myers entrance sign by the US41 bridge in North Fort Myers. Mr. Parrilla discussed the sign options and suggested not to start out with the Welcome to City of Fort Myers sign because of it being a big project. Ms. Gulati asked about how the funding for the project could work and if they could put up a sign or ask for donations. Ms. Hughes said we could ask some of the nurseries for some donations. Board members discussed about what site would be the best to start with and what locations have irrigation at the signs. Mr. Parrilla said he knows Riverside has irrigation, but he would have to check on if there is irrigation by the sign at Shady Oaks. Mr. Parrilla said he would clean the bed out, edge it and have mulch ready for them. Mr. Parrilla discussed the replacement of the wood signs with metal ones that are being done. Board members discussed what location would be the best to start on and would be most appreciated. Mr. Parrilla suggested starting at Riverside first and then doing Shady Oaks. Ms. Hughes asked Mr. Lincolnhol about what we could work with since he is good at design. Mr. Lincolnhol said that his general design is layering with textures and pops of color. Ms. Hughes asked for a plant list for she could talk to some of the growers she knows to ask for some donations. Mr. Lincolnhol agreed to come up with a design for Riverside Park once Mr. Parrilla sends him pictures and a sketch with the dimensions. Ms. Hughes asked about the soil and Mr. Parrilla discussed the recycled mulch that they use from Lee County Solid Waste, and he said that he also has some potting soil at the Nursery that could be used for the project. Mr. Parrilla said he will send Mr. Lincolnhol the information for the board can discuss the design at the next meeting. Ms. Gulati discussed the Welcome to City of Fort Myers sign and if a sign can be placed there for donations or if they could do a go fund me because that sign would make a biggest impact. Mr. Parrilla stated that the sign is on Lee County land and that he would have to check with engineering, get the codes, and do some research. Ms. Hughes discussed how she received a letter from Dean Park as an example for a donation and how the different Garden Clubs do fundraisers to donate money to different organizations. Board members discussed if anyone had connections with obtaining donations for materials that they could work on that. Ms. Gulati mentioned that if there is any material that they cannot get donated for Riverside Park that she is willing to donate since it's a small project.

**MOTION: Board Member Lincolnhol moved to initiate starting the front entrance sign landscape design at Riverside Park; seconded by Board Member Hughes; motion carried unanimously.**

### 9. Other Business

Discussion of the pictures that were taken of a palm tree hanging over Evans Avenue that is on private property and Mr. Parrilla stated that he will have to get with code enforcement.



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Ms. Robinson discussed Lincoln Boulevard and the residents wanting the medians beautified more than just the boulders and shrubbery that is around the palm trees at the corners. Mr. Parrilla discussed the old mahogany trees that are down the middle that are planted close together with large roots that would be a problem for planting anything there. Ms. Robinson stated that they don't want the boulders removed but just would like to see some color added to the landscape. Ms. Hughes discussed if annuals are done by the city or if a group of homeowners could come in and plant annuals that would give it color. Mr. Parrilla said that the city does not do annuals, but homeowners could come in and do that. Ms. Robinson stated that there is water there so there could be low maintenance plants that could be put down to beautify the area. Board members discussed what plants could be low maintenance and Mr. Parrilla discussed the problem with plants dying due to water restrictions. Ms. Hughes discussed if there is a lot of shade in that location and Mr. Parrilla agreed. Ms. Robinson asked if they would consider putting something in there since they are putting a lot of money into MLK Boulevard. Mr. Parrilla said he would look into it and discussed the MLK landscaping project, and that funding does not come out of Parks budget. Ms. Robinson discussed the trees needing to be trimmed at the corner of Brown Street and Lincoln Boulevard heading west because they are obstructing the view and is dangerous. Mr. Parrilla said he will take care of it.

Ms. Hughes discussed the crape myrtles that are on MLK that look dead this time of the year and seem to be struggling with the heat. Ms. Hughes discussed that the new plan is to keep them, and Mr. Parrilla agreed. Ms. Hughes asked Mr. Lincolnhol what he thought about it, and he said that the crape myrtles are always a deciduous tree. Discussion about how they seem to take longer to grow new leaves every year. Ms. Hughes stated that everything Parks has done so far looks good.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chair Willis adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m.