

**City of Apalachicola Tree Committee
Meeting Summary
April 19, 2023, at 4 p.m.
Battery Park Community Center**

1. Attendees.

Sam Berkheiser, Committee member,
Scott Davis, Committee member,
Anita Grove, City Commissioner, and
Dennis Winterringer, Committee chairperson and preparer of summary for this meeting.

2. Summary of Committee's March 22, 2023, meeting (Winterringer).

The Committee approved without revision the attached draft summary of the March 22, 2023, meeting.

3. Departure of Code Enforcement Officer (Winterringer).

On Monday, Code Enforcement Officer Kenneth Turner resigned. New Code Enforcement Officer P.J. Erwin starts next Monday.

Before the latest hiring and in less than 4 years (dating to the summer of 2019), there have been eight persons in the Code Enforcement Officer position: Wilbur Bellew, Revena Ramsey, T.J. Lemieux, Kevin Newell, Joe Richey, Angela Creamer, Glen Jenkins, and Kenneth Turner.

4. Live oaks planted on February 4 at Franklin Square (all).

All three trees are sprouting new growth. With the exception of next week when Mr. Winterringer will water, Mr. Berkheiser will water the trees as needed.

5. Lafayette Park (all).

a. Maintenance (Winterringer).

The Parks and Recreation Committee (Donna Ingle) is coordinating with the City Manager and Marie Marshall whose Historic Apalachicola Foundation (HAF) will pay for:

- Painting the gazebo,
- Repairing trip hazards in the uneven brick walkways and filling with brick the spaces in the walkways where six crepe myrtles were removed,
- Replacing wooden ties around the park perimeter with granite curbing,
- Installing pervious, durable rock or pavers in the parking area on Avenue B adjacent to the playground, and
- A sign for the double-headed sabal palm on the bay side of the park near the entrance to the pier (wording provided by Mr. Davis).

b. Digital maps (Davis).

Attached are two digital maps – base map and existing tree layer – that Mr. Davis and his workmate Josh Hall created by locating park features on the ground using geographic positioning system (GPS) equipment.

The base map accurately shows the locations and lengths of wooden ties. That information will be used by HAF (as assisted by Creighton Brown) when it orders the granite curbing.

The tree map will be used in the Tree Committee deciding where to propose planting new trees.

c. Parking areas – durable, pervious surface options (Berkheiser).

The Parks and Recreation Committee and the Tree Committee have discussed the need to recommend durable, pervious surfacing options for the playground parking area and the parking area on the west end of the park that the city will develop (south of Avenue B where 15th Street ends). Part of the west area is currently being used by the adjacent single-family residence for access and parking. The Parks and Recreation Committee is recommending that the city reclaim this area for city use as park parking.

Mr. Berkheiser has information on a plastic grid that can be installed and filled with rock about 3/4 inch in diameter. He'll provide that information to Mr. Winterringer, who will share it with Parks and Recreation Committee members.

d. Landscaping plan (all).

Prior to the next meeting, Messrs. Davis and Berkheiser will talk and come to the meeting with a list of suggested plants.

(1) Criteria for selecting plants to be used.

The Committee agreed on the following criteria for plants that would be included in the proposed landscaping plan.

Perennials (trees, shrubs, and grasses), no annuals (because of extra care and maintenance that would be needed).

Native or naturalized species (no non-native exotic or invasive species).

Low maintenance species.

Species requiring no or low supplemental irrigation.

Tree species.

- A variety of species – not a preponderance of one species such as live oak.

- Because of proximity to Apalachicola Bay, tree species that are resistant to hurricane-force winds.

Species attractive to wildlife (birds, pollinators (bees and other insects), and butterflies).

Variety of plant colors, textures, and bloom times.

Species suited for north Florida, cold hardiness zone 8b, and to light, soil, and moisture conditions at the site. (Need to sample soils and sprinkler system water and get analyses before selecting plants.)

Identification and locations of undesirable plants to be removed (e.g., oleanders and volunteer mulberry trees along pathway from Avenue B to gazebo; volunteer palms in semicircular beds around gazebo.

(2) Tallahassee Nurseries landscaping plan (attached) – adopt any proposed plantings?

The Indian hawthorn shrub row proposed along the walkway on the south side of the park would die because this species is adapted to acidic soils and the park soils are very likely to be alkaline.

(3) Miscellaneous.

Hot, dry south slope – milkweed for monarch butterflies (velvet-leafed milkweed (Asclepias tomentosa)); gopher apple (Geobalanus oblongifolius), a thick, low-growing ground cover to suppress other vegetation growth; and Simpson’s Stopper (Myrcianthes fragrans), a small tree or large shrub.

West-end parking area – vegetative barrier between parking area and next-door residence. Mr. Berkheiser says that a parking space needs to be at least 18 feet deep and the area to pull in and out of the spaces needs to be 24 feet wide. Accordingly, an area 60 feet wide area would be needed if two rows of parking spaces were on opposite sides of a 24-foot wide pull-in, pull-out area.

Semicircular areas around gazebo - remove two of three live oaks or retain? Removal of these highly-visible trees could draw the public’s ire. Possibly a certified arborist should look at them.

6. Next meeting.

May 16, 2023, 3 p.m., at the Battery Park Community Center.