

CCSE Grounds and Tree Care Committee Meeting Notes

Date: Monday, July 13, 2015

Time: 3:00-4:00pm

Location: 109 TF, Transportation Building, 1351 S Morgan Street

Present: Pablo Acevedo, Roberta Mason-Gamer, Carly Rizor, Cindy Klein-Banai, Radhika Venkatraman.

Discussion

1. Sub-committee Goal Settings:

Cindy Klein-Banai and Venkatraman had come up with a draft template on subcommittee goals after the meeting with the Chancellor. Acevedo led the group to review the goals, and formed discussion around the feasibility of each goal.

Goal 1: Storm Water Control

- Rizor expressed concern of quantification of the current level to decrease future run-offs.
- She also mentioned budget issues for this goal.
- Cindy talked about the permeability of the soil/turfs, she also mentioned about the efforts of Prof. O'Connor to quantify the retention and also the use of EPA Storm water calculator.

Goal 2: Water Retention

- Rizor mentioned her meeting with Wanda Perry for the excavation of parking lot 1 to create a permeable layer to collect water. It has been decided to proceed with only Lot 1B due to budget increase in excavation (8 ft). Lot 1 A will be re-asphalted as of now.
- Cindy mentioned efforts to get the CalSag Grant for green infrastructure near the ComEd site.

Goal 3: Parking Lots

- Acevedo spoke about the issues of putting up solar panels in the parking lot, and expressed concerns of damages during heavy snow and its removal.

- Cindy mentioned use parking spaces as temporary revenue source and using those funds for sustainability causes, Acevedo injected about the University Policy that would not allow this arrangement.
- Alternate utilization of the parking spaces were discussed, some of the ideas were as follows – seating space, bike parking, Oasis, Solar Paneled picnic tables, bike safety training area etc.

Goal 4: Irrigation

- Rizor pointed out that native plants do not survive in the extreme weather, hence not many natives are planted even in the grove. Biodiverse plants that attract pollinators are important but some of them don't survive the brutal winter.
- Acevedo mentioned large amount of salt application (often Sodium, Mg and Ca salts) are deleterious on plants. Rizor agreed and said they move lot of plants further inside from the sidewalks and roads to avoid salts on them.
- Acevedo mentioned about the new salt called GreenAir that hopefully will not be as harmful as others on plants.

Goal 5: Trees

- Rizor spoke about the Bartlett's venture of tree inventory, performing risk assessment and tree tagging activity. Their database will contain 24 different attributes for tree condition and is up-to-date on tree canopy coverage. They have until now provided nearly 160-180 recommendations for improvement and tree maintenance. She mentioned that many Ash trees have been infected and have been acted upon quickly to restore them/remove them as required. The ones that will be inoculated will be inventoried simultaneously.
- Acevedo spoke about tree diversity in the campus.

Goal 6: Canopy Coverage

- Rizor spoke about Bartlett's recommendation for soil quality and proper fertilization to maintain plant health.
- She mentioned proactive pruning of trees throughout the campus and re-placement of trees that were removed.

Goal 7: Landscaping

- It was agreed to combine Goal 4 Irrigation along with this goal and make it as one.
- There was a discussion about the use of rain barrels. The challenge is that most of the gutters on the east side drain internally to the building.
- Pablo noted nearly 1000 Gals/day of water on average is used for the water trucks. Rizor mentioned during a span of 32 weeks at least 2.5 times a week these trucks are used for irrigation.
- Rizor mentioned use of 'Gator Bags' on some trees during summer.

2. Additional Discussions:

- Cindy wants to send invites to all committee members for the Summer 2015 SIP Poster Presentation.