

To Jamie Brown, Public Works Director

Through Dave McGrew, City Horticulturist

From Lake Worth Beach Tree & Landscape Board

November ????, 2023

Subject: Beach Complex Landscaping Inspections on Sept. 20 & Oct. 13

T&LB Member Ginny Powell conducted an inspection of the lower beach complex landscaping on Sept. 20. This was in response to Jamie Brown's notice at the August T&LB meeting that a decision had been made to hard prune some of the landscaping at the beach in order to maintain sight lines. The board was not happy about a hard prune, but acknowledges that it is sometimes necessary.

As of the Sept. 20th, the plants looked pretty nice and were not over pruned. At the Oct. 13th inspection, Ginny and Dave saw that all of the silver buttonwood had been hard pruned to about 2' tall. It was a little shocking, but we saw some new growth emerging. Other issues need attention and are noted below. All were identified in Lisa Hammer's report dated Oct. 25, 2021 and same pictures apply - see pages 1-9. The city paid for this report to use as a tool to improve beach landscaping. Current condition and recommendations are:

General

1. Irrigation – during the Sept. inspection, the irrigation came on. Many heads appeared to be broken or knocked askew & many were not working. Need to assess and repair the system as it will need to be functional for proposed re planting. Per Felipe Lofaso, irrigation system repairs and maintenance are done in house.
2. Remove dead plants, weeds, trash, invasives and volunteer seedlings throughout
3. Some existing plants (from original design) look bad & have a lot of dead wood – may be able to re-hab by cutting out dead wood.
4. Replant entry way in front of sign with groundcover – dune sunflower or other groundcover. Also add groundcover to roundabout at top of hill adjacent to restaurant
5. After cleanup add fresh mulch for now or let beds go more natural with pea gravel, crushed shell or existing sand similar to the Yates Burle designs (ask Ben about this)

South End

1. Remove 2 sand live oaks in the south end that are near death
2. Remove small Geiger tree that was planted too deep
3. Remove croton
4. In some beds with a single tree, the tree may look OK, but most of the groundcover (lots of Muhly grass) is dead or dying. Needs general clean up.

5. Remove suckers from pigeon plum
6. Remove trash, weeds, invasive plants & volunteer seedlings – see Lisa Hammer report. Ex: Washingtonia palm, purple fountain grass, Chinese fan palm, pea vine
7. Gumbo limbo trees look better probably due to all the rain over the summer. Need light pruning to remove dead twigs and branches. Be careful not to overlift.
8. Around entryway with sign – remove trash, weeds, dead plants, some invasives & volunteers. Remove old oleander in front of sign & replace with dune sunflower for some instant color.

North end

1. Simpson stopper hedges are coming back in some area but it still appears that they are over pruned. Dave said landscapers must keep plants pruned well away from the concrete parking bumpers. There are still many missing plants - presumed dead & removed?
2. Many of same general problems as south end. Need to remove trash, weeds, invasive plants, volunteer seedlings, etc.
3. Clean up area facing A1A and replant with groundcover for some color
4. When bus stop was installed, they removed coco plum and put in a stormwater swale with gravel and muhly grass. Looks terrible now. Ginny and Dave suggest:
 - i. remove muhly grass from within the gravel swale
 - ii. plant more muhly around the edges of the swale
 - iii. create paths with gravel where the stormwater now drains from the parking lot into the swale. Right now these paths are just eroded soil.

With the tourist season coming, it would be nice to get this work done ASAP so that visitors and residents have a positive image of our city. The beach complex is our crown jewel and it would be nice to see the landscaping reflect that.

The T&LB recommends that the city accomplish the above recommendations using city staff, the city's contractor or a special contract, if necessary, with guidance and direction from Dave McGrew & Scot Ropp. The board seemed amenable to doing some limited amount of cleanup. Dave will look into any concerns about liability. **MY BACK IS OUT AND I CANNOT PARTICIPATE – asking a lot of T&LB to do it – none of us are young anymore.**