



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Town Manager's Office

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 6, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Public Works Committee Meeting was called to order on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. virtually via Zoom. On roll call, all committee members were found to be present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Lindsay led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Member Zeidman and seconded by Chair Lindsay to approve the Agenda. On roll call, the Motion passed unanimously.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS - None

V. GREEN INITIATIVE / FICUS REMOVAL PROGRAM STATUS

H. Paul Brazil, P.E., Director, Public Works

Mr. H. Paul Brazil, P.E., Director of Public Works introduced Paul Colby, Facilities Maintenance Division Manager who gave an overview of the progress regarding the Town's Green Initiative. He reported that the Town continues to follow the previously established program as it pertains to the treatment of certain pests and fertilizations. He stated that the infection rate for the Royal Palm bug seems lower this year than previous years and there are no visible signs of the Royal Palm bug at the Town nursery, where no treatments for Palm bug have been administered for the past 3 years. As to the ficus replacement program, all the ficus hedges have been removed from Lakeside Park and are being replaced with silver buttonwood, sea grapes, and different types of grasses. There are a few pump stations that still have ficus hedges, one of which is the D-8 station at Country Club Road and Slope Trail. Mr. Brazil stated that this one is being pointed out as it will be extraordinarily difficult to shield this station from the neighboring properties. Jason Debrincat, Senior Project Engineer, showed a slide of the actual pump station area. He explained that the pump station is hidden behind the

hedge. Chair Lindsay suggested conferring with Susan Lerner, Pan's Garden horticulturist who keeps native demonstration hedges on premises to help interested parties determine which hedges might be a good fit for the property. Mr. Colby reported that he does consult with both Susan Lerner and the Garden Club, whom he consulted on replacement species of the ficus hedge at the Police Dept. and the installation of a butterfly garden. The hedges were replaced with native silver buttonwood. At the North and Central Fire Stations, the ficus hedges were removed and replaced with cedar trees and silver buttonwoods respectively. At the Australian park, the hedge was replaced with Clusia. When the Phipps Ocean Park project begins all the ficus hedges in the park will be removed and replaced with natives.

Member Zeidman commented that the plantings at the Police Department. were really beautiful.

Mr. Colby reported on the status of the landmarked Phipps canopy north of the Fire Station.

During the summer a bucket truck survey was performed and unfortunately more Hypoxylon Canker (HC) was discovered. A previous infestation of the Armillaria Mushroom root rot was found to be inactive at that time and the Whitefly is being managed with current treatments. However, one or two trees will be lost per year due to the canker. Mr. Brazil clarified that it is the whitefly that weakens the canopy trees making it more susceptible to attacks by the Hypoxylon Canker (HC). Chair Lindsay related that this past summer she and several other Garden Club members, observed white fly infestations on replacement the F. altissima trees. She then asked if another tree might be selected that is less susceptible to the whitefly. Director Brazil agreed that the town could make a change after some projects (undergrounding, drainage improvements) in the area are completed. Chair Lindsay mentioned that the Garden Club might be very interested in assisting with this project. Director Brazil explained the prices for the different types of replacement trees/plantings and stated that the canopy is landmarked so any deviation from the current species would have to be approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Patricia Strayer, Town Engineer, stated that the undergrounding project would not begin in that area until about 2023, but the Phipps Estates will begin in 2022. Mr. Brazil explained that during the undergrounding and drainage projects, tree wells could be installed but it would make sense to install trees after the undergrounding is completed.

A tree tagging inventory has begun and almost all of the Town trees (cocoanuts, royals, date palms, foxtails) at Dean Wrightsman, Phipps, Bradley, and Peruvian parks have been tagged and numbered as a part of this program. At the completion of the renovation of Lakeside Park, those trees will also be numbered and tagged.

The Town is reviewing the possibility of utilizing growth regulators as part of the Green Initiative Program. The most obvious benefit would be the labor and fuel savings in reduced trimmings, which would reduce the carbon footprint. Currently, the trees in Town Hall Square and other areas of Town are trimmed quarterly. This was suggested

by a landscape designer and it is understood to be a widely used practice. The committee members requested more research and information on this practice as they both had concerns about using chemicals or hormones that retard growth. A commitment was made to the residents that the Town would try to reduce chemical applications and eliminate them where possible. Chair Lindsay requested and staff agreed that more research be done and brought back to the committee for further discussion.

Public Comments

Rene Silvin, 422 Australian Avenue, Palm Beach, spoke regarding considering an administrative approval of the plan by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Chair Lindsay spoke about reinstating the incentive program for removal of the ficus hedges. Member Zeidman said she was shocked to see that there was a lot of material from residential properties so she thinks that we should incentivize people to remove the hedge. Director Brazil mentioned that his initial concern for the program was the impact to the budget but the Town Manager assured him that the budget would be supplemented if necessary. He stated it was not necessary as the overtime work was voluntary and only eight households were done during the program last summer. He mentioned he did not foresee any operational problem. Regarding administrative approvals, Chair Lindsay suggested that Mr. Brazil confer with staff and bring it back to the Committee at a later meeting.

Chair Lindsay mentioned the experiment which was conducted at the Town nursery on Palmo Way and the good news of almost three years of no treatment of the palm bug and no palm bug infestation. Director Brazil suggested not treating trees and revisit that next year.

Rene Silvin inquired if the Committee would like to have a member of ARCOM and LPC listen to the Committee meetings. Chair Lindsay agreed. Member Zeidman expressed her concern about adding this requirement to commission members who are already stressed with their own meetings. Chair Lindsay suggested having a commission member listen to specific items so when it goes before their board they have some prior knowledge of the issue. She stated this should not be mandatory.

VI. NORTH FIRE STATION RESTORATION

Jason Debrincat, P.E., Senior Project Engineer

Director Brazil mentioned that the North Fire Station was overdue for renovations as there is water intrusions due to the roof starting to fail. He explained that since the work is so extensive the firefighters would have to be relocated. Monthly air quality tests are being conducted and it is still safe to be in the building. This will be at least an eighteen month project so reasonable accommodations will be needed for the firefighters during that time.

Jason Debrincat, Senior Project Engineer, reported that for the past couple years there has been a capital program in the budget for renovation of the station. Recently there has been water intrusion in some areas and also concerns about air quality. A consultant was hired to carry out an air quality assessment, which yielded negative results. The Town Manager directed us to accelerate the program to restore the station. At this time we are working with Purchasing to find the most efficient, effective way which resulted in going with the CMAR. To give you an update, tomorrow, October 7, is the architectural and engineering services selection committee review and on October 14 is the CMAR selection. After the selection process, the recommendation will go before the Town Council in November or December. The scope of work is interior space renovation which includes new roof, windows and structural modifications as required.

As the level of service has to be maintained for the fire department, Chen Moore was hired to do site evaluations of some temporary sites, including Palmo Way Central and West, Tangier Avenue, and Wells Road. After evaluations, the Wells Road configuration was the most economical. Chen Moore will now provide a proposal for temporary site development.

Director Brazil explained the reasons for not choosing other sites as neighbor sensitivity to any work in Palmo Way, trees that might be disturbed that are dedicated to individuals who have passed away on other locations and cost. He stated that at the Wells Road site, traffic can be maintained, utilities are already in place, neighbors are already used to having a fire station, and it costs less than any of the other alternatives.

Member Zeidman expressed her agreement with the temporary site. Chair Lindsay also agreed with using the Wells site and inquired about the temporary trailers to house the firefighters and the screening that will be used for these. Director Brazil informed her that there will be a six ft. green screen with concrete barriers for protection and there will be temporary trailers already outfitted as bunk rooms and all the firefighters' needs. There will be a small administrative trailer for the Chief and administrative staff. There will also be room for a storage area. He further stated that the award for this service will be on the Town Council agenda for November and the neighbors will be notified.

Rene Silvin, LPC Chair questioned during public comment, if there will be any changes to the exterior of the building and was informed that there may be alterations to the windows. He then asked if an Architect from LPC could volunteer to work with the committee so the process can be simplified and streamlined before it gets to LPC. Director Brazil responded that, unless the Committee members disagreed, he would agree with Mr. Silvin's suggestion as this has been done before but he would select the LPC architect. Both committee members agreed with this suggestion.

VII. RESILIENCY IMPLEMENTATION

Jason Debrincat, P.E., Senior Project Engineer

Jason Debrincat gave an overview of the final recommendation by the Woods Hole Group. He stated he was working with Rob Weber, Coastal Program Manager, on the

resiliency implementation for capital projects. They visited various sites with the Woods Hole staff. He stated there were five stations that are scheduled for construction in FY22 as:

D12 Pump Station (Everglades) – Recommendation for deployable barriers and modifications to elevations on the equipment.

E5 Lift Station / D8 Pump Station (Country Club Road) – Recommendation on raising equipment base for elevation.

A5 Pump Station – Recommendation on equipment heights for resiliency.

D-17 Storm Water Station – Recommendation on control cabinets, generator heights and electrical equipment.

Mr. Debrincat explained that they wanted to meet the goal of resiliency while being practical and unobtrusive. He also mentioned that a grant application was submitted to the FDEP for a cost sharing of \$608,000 and a decision should be made in December.

Chair Lindsay confirmed with Director Brazil on the recommendation that will be on the Town Council agenda for October as the modification to the Pay-As-You-Go capital improvement program to include resiliency for the stations.

VIII. TOWN MARINA

Jason Debrincat, P.E., Senior Project Engineer

Mr. Debrincat stated that this project was nearing completion and shared the following upcoming milestones:

October 19, 2021:	Substantial completion (Punch list items)
November 1, 2021:	Final completion (Project closeout and change order reconciliation)
December, 2021:	Ribbon Cutting

He showed some timeline photos of the Brazilian and Peruvian Docks and various site improvements. Director Brazil reported that the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for the Brazilian Dock building was received and the Dockmaster will be moving in shortly. The fire and sewer utilities will be tested today and the network is being installed. Mr. Debrincat showed all the various landscaping and paving that is being installed and explained the traffic stops at the various intersections.

Director Brazil stated that there were still change orders to negotiate, the contingency was expended but the project will not go over budget and will be ready to open in November.

Carolyn Stone, Assistant Town Manager, stated that November 1st is the start of the seasonal lease, of which 17 have been issued and the annual leases start on December 1st.

Rene Silvin commented that the boat owners all love the hardscape and questioned the need for a three-way stop at Australian Avenue. Director Brazil explained that this was a traffic calming measure. He assured Mr. Silvin that he did not receive any complaints from the residents. Ms. Stone stated that Deputy Town Manager, Jay Boodheshwar, had met with Mr. Gordon McCoen and he was very pleased. She further stated that December 9, 2021 at 4PM will be the opening ceremony and ribbon cutting.

IX. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Director Brazil introduced a new Project Engineer, Jane House. Ms. House stated her credentials as Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Civil Engineering with a concentration in Environmental Engineering and a Professional Engineer registered in the State of Florida. Her work history includes planning, assessment, design engineering services during construction, and project management for various heavy civil construction projects. She stated she worked on a State mandated consent decree program for Miami-Dade County which was a \$1.9B program to upgrade the County's sanitary sewer infrastructure and wastewater treatment plants. She expressed her pleasure on being a member of the Public Works engineering team. The committee members welcomed her to the Town team.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Works Committee Meeting of Wednesday, October 6, 2021, was adjourned at 11:50 a.m. by Motion made by Member Zeidman and seconded by Chair Lindsay.

APPROVED:

Bobbie Lindsay, Chair

ATTEST:

Queenester Nieves, CMC, Town Clerk

Date

ADDENDUM

Public Works Committee Report October 6, 2021

The Public Works committee, Bobbie Lindsay & Maggie Zeidman, met on October 6 via zoom.

Green Initiative

An update was given by Paul Colby and Paul Brazil on progress of the Green Initiative. The Green Initiative policies were adopted in 2018 to take an active role in improving environmental safety for our residents, visitors and pets on our town parks and public spaces, as well as supporting a more sustainable and natural environment, friendly to pollinators, birds and wildlife. Among the Green Initiative's goals is to eliminate, where possible, and reduce where elimination is not practicable, the use of synthetic chemicals on Town property, while promoting the use of more native plants, trees and shrubs and fewer exotics that require applications of synthetic chemicals to thrive. Glyphosate (Round Up) was eliminated from use on all Town property in 2018, one of the first municipalities to do so in Florida. The town's landscaping maintenance contracts were amended to eliminate the use of synthetic chemicals, which reduces the runoff of these chemicals into our storm drains and waterways, as well as exposure to our residents, visitors, pets, and wildlife.

One of the Green Initiative's goals was to remove the exotic, pesticide dependent, *F. benjamina* from town property. Much of the approximately half mile of this species has now been removed and replaced with either native material, or material that is Florida Friendly and requires no applications of synthetic chemicals to thrive. Ordinances have since been adopted town wide listing two ficus species as invasive and prohibiting new installations of them on both public and private property.

Mr. Colby updated the committee on a 3 year trial in the Town's Palmo Park nursery to eliminate chemical applications on the Town's Royal Palms. He was pleased to report that the trial has yielded good results with no infestations, and Mr. Brazil added that town wide, no Royal Palms will be treated with chemicals for the next year as a result, along with continued monitoring. This fiscal year the Town will replace the mature 175 lineal feet of *F. benjamina* hedge screening the large pump station at North Lake Way and Slope Trail (backing up to the PB County Club property.) This replacement is challenging due to the height of the structures being screened (the current ficus hedge is approximately 15') and the relatively narrow footprint for planting (approx 5' wide). Both committee members recommended reviewing native alternatives with Susan Lerner, native horticulturist at Pans Garden. Mr. Colby said staff often consults with Pan's garden/Ms. Lerner, about the use of natives and would continue to do so on this project. He mentioned that Ms. Lerner and the Garden Club consulted with him on the replacement of the *F. benjamina* hedge at the police station with native Silver buttonwood and the addition of a butterfly garden. Member Zeidman was complimentary about the outcome of that project.

Staff reported that, at the recommendation of SMI Design, Mr. Jorge Sanchez, it is reviewing the use of growth regulators as part of the Green Initiative to reduce labor and emission costs of trimming (carbon footprint). As an example, Mr. Colby mentioned that they trim the trees in Memorial Park quarterly and slowing the growth might reduce the frequency of trimming. Both committee members had concerns about introducing more chemicals or hormones to our trees to slow growth, and while acknowledging they were not familiar with the practice, asked staff to conduct more research about the effects of these products on the trees and plants as well as

ADDENDUM

public safety. Staff agreed to conduct more research and bring back the results to the committee before proceeding.

Phipps Canopy

Staff discussed the condition of the landmarked *F. benjamina* tree canopy on the divided North County Road north of the fire station and adjacent to the Phipps estate. Mr. Brazil clarified that the trees are weakened by white fly infestations, in spite of applications of chemicals to manage white fly. Consequently, an opportunistic Hypoxylon Canker attacks the white fly stressed trees and kills approximately two trees a year, threatening the long term viability of the canopy. The dead trees are gradually being replaced by *F. altissima*, but inspections by staff and members of the Garden Club have found that these trees are also being attacked by white fly. A discussion followed about whether a more sustainable replacement tree could be identified. Mr. Brazil welcomed some planning assistance on this issue from the Garden Club and suggested that it would be ideal for an overall canopy plan to be adopted by the time the under grounding project reaches this area in 2023, so that some work such as installing tree wells might be accomplished at the same time as there is under grounding construction in the area. Staff and the committee agreed that this will be a very sizable project, likely to be funded and implemented in phases over a multi-year period. (The Garden Club has been contacted and is very interested in helping with a plan.)

North Fire Station Restoration

An extensive renovation of the landmarked North Fire Station has been accelerated to mitigate unsafe structural issues, mold and poor air quality caused by water intrusion into the building. Mr. Brazil reported that Wells Road has been identified as the recommended site relocation for fire/paramedic personnel and equipment. He outlined the air quality and water leakage issues, as well as how staff were planning to accelerate the renovation, with money set aside in the budget this year. Results of the CMAR selection and schedule will be provided in November or December directly to Town Council.

Woods Hole Report Resiliency Implementation

Jason Debrincat described the final recommendations for the D-12, E5, A-5 and D-17 pump, lift, and storm water stations. These were reviewed and approved at the Town Council meeting in October.

Town Marina schedule was updated and briefly discussed as it was planned to be brought to the full Town Council the following week.

Committee members were delighted that Director Brazil made a welcoming introduction of Jane House, a new town project engineer with a Masters degree in Civil Engineering.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbie Lindsay, Chair

October 30, 2021