

MEETING NOTES

PROJECT: Ware-Lyndon House – Historic Garden

TO: Keith Sanders, SPLOTS Manager

FROM: Michael Kidd

DATE: June 4, 2014

A kick-off meeting was held on Wednesday, May 28, 2014, at ACC City Hall in Athens. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the stakeholders and the design team, to discuss the project background, to review the schedule, and to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the site.

Attendees:

1. Ron Evans, Ware-Lyndon House Chair
2. Amy Kissane, ACC Heritage Foundation Executive Director
3. Barbara Andrews, ACC Arts and Nature Administrator
4. Roger Cauthen, ACC Landscape Management Division Administrator
5. Mike Wharton, ACC Leisure Services Operations Administrator
6. Keith Sanders, ACC SPLOST Project Administrator
7. Michael Kidd, Root Design Studio
8. Madie Fischetti, Athens Design Studio
9. Mack Cain, RLA

Administrative Notes:

1. Project Budget = \$150,000.00
2. Project Schedule
 - a. Conceptual Design (May 28 – June 11)
 - b. Schematic Design (June 11 – September 2)
 - i. June 21 – submit initial schematics for Mayor/Commission work session agenda
 - ii. Aug 12 – M/C work session
 - iii. Week of Aug 12 - Public Meeting (presentation and open house)
 - iv. Sept 2 – M/C approval
 - c. Construction Documents (September – October)
 - d. Bidding [public bid] (November)

- e. Construction (December – March)
3. Stakeholder Committee meeting schedule
- a. June 11
 - b. June 25
 - c. July 16
 - d. July 23

Project Notes:

1. Per the SPLOST Application the key elements of the garden are to include:
 - a. Green/sustainable design
 - b. Education
 - c. Tourism
 - d. Events
 - e. Public Art
2. Design team to investigate the pros and cons of the existing concept (by Rob Fisher), as well as the idea of recreating the Stevens Thomas garden on our site.
3. Show an exact replica of the Stevens Thomas Garden overlaid onto the aerial of the site, drawn to scale. If a recreation of the Stevens Thomas garden isn't feasible, explain why.
4. Develop alternative concept(s) that take their inspiration from the Stevens Thomas garden.
5. The cistern was intended to be an important part of the garden for sustainability. This element needs to be interpreted within the garden somehow. Committee is open to an above ground cistern. Design team will present options. The house historically had a cistern in the back.
6. The plant material should be drought tolerant. Landscape plans should follow water-wise and xeriscape principles as much as possible.
7. Suggestion to look at the boxwoods at the T.R. Cobb House. They are struggling, as are many others around town. May need a substitute for the boxwood. The Heritage Garden at the State Botanical Gardens utilized Dwarf Yaupon Holly.
8. The intent for this garden is not to have a permanent irrigation system feed from domestic water. Temporary irrigation will be necessary during the establishment period. Beyond that, it is intended that the cistern provide supplemental water to the normal rain fall.
9. There is an approximate \$5000 annual maintenance budget for the garden.

10. It might be possible to collect condensate from the HVAC units for the house. This will be investigated outside the scope of this project. The design team will try to accommodate condensate harvesting for the future.
11. The garden space will likely be utilized for events that are held at the House. This space will probably be used as a pre-function space for cocktails, photographs, and ancillary activities to the main event. There is no intent to set up tents and have the garden space be the primary gathering area for events. The design should allow for gatherings of small groups, but should not be dictated by this function. The back lawn is currently where large events take place.
12. Two benches might be available for use in the garden. The stakeholder committee will provide the design team with photographs and/or product information for the benches. Benches are cast iron, reflective of the period.
13. The central water feature in the Rob Fisher design was intended to cause visitors to walk around the feature and take note of the garden, as opposed to just walking to and from the House.
14. The stakeholder committee will provide the design team with any research that has already been done (i.e. historical information for the house, historically appropriate plant materials, etc.)
15. There has been discussion about incorporating a white, wooden picket fence around the perimeter of the garden. Historically this would have been used to keep livestock out of the garden. Today it would be used to control foot traffic of visitors.
16. The existing brick walkway is a modified herringbone pattern, which is not historically accurate. A brick walkway from the street to the house shows up in the 1939 aerial photo. Depending on the grading required for the garden, the walkway may need to be re-built. Reconstruction of this walkway was not part of the original construction budget
17. The garden will need to be accessible per the most current ADA Standards for Accessible Design. The existing handicapped parking spaces are to the northwest of the House. Access will come from this location.
18. Depending on the design, grading activities could very well impact the large oak tree to the right of the house. If this tree were to be removed, it would open up the view to the large community center building immediately adjacent to the site. This would have a significant impact on the aesthetics of the garden and the House. The stakeholder committee is open to the idea of removing this tree.
19. Lighting for the garden is intended to be low bollard/pathway lighting for evening events. Any new lights will have to meet the ACC Dark Sky Ordinance. Lighting for the House and the street might be done as a follow up phase to this project. The intent of the lighting is for pedestrian safety, not security.
20. The modern art sculpture in the front lawn should be relocated. The stakeholder committee will find an appropriate place to relocate it.

21. Keith will provide additional survey information to include the area to the west of the House, from the existing survey limits all the way to the edge of the entrance drive to the Arts Center.
22. It will be important to show the design process at the public meeting to explain how design decisions are being made.
23. It was recommended that the design team visit other gardens in Athens such as the Taylor Grady House, the TR Cobb House and the Heritage Gardens.
24. The design should be historically appropriate, but should also serve the public and become an attraction for the House.
25. There are a number of wall murals in the House that feature various flowers. It might be possible to incorporate those flowers into the garden design.
26. An alternative design concept was presented in the meeting which showed two narrow parterres flanking each side of the walkway, with the main garden moved off to the side. Alternative ideas will be developed further during this process.
27. The parterre garden will need to be on a relatively flat slope, which will require changing the existing grade. This might impact the large tree to the right of the house.
28. There is no historical evidence that there was ever a parterre garden in front of this House.
29. The existing boxwoods along the brick walkway are English and were planted at least fifty years ago. But they are in poor and declining health.
30. The paisley pattern of the Stevens Thomas garden should be an important element in the new design.
31. Pathway materials need to meet ADA requirements, but should not be paved. Pea gravel is not recommended. Material should also not track into the house. Possibilities include "Slatescape", crushed brick, M10 (granite fines), a fine crushed aggregate with a stabilizer product, soil cement, etc. Take a look at the Greenway parking lot at College Ave and MLK.
32. Underground utilities include a water line and an electrical line.
33. There has been no arborist inspection or evaluation of the existing trees.
34. Placement of the cistern has been discussed but not finalized. Possible location is on the east side of the house. It could be placed at any of the downspouts.
35. Mike Wharton will provide the early aerials of the site.

END OF NOTES