

Response To Homeowner Question On Masterplan Cost

We had a question from a resident in Monday Nov. 13, 2023 Board Meeting as to the necessity/wisdom of spending a large amount of money on the landscaping renewal project we call the Masterplan. We are posting this for all homeowners.

I would like to start by pointing out that the Masterplan does not create any new landscape areas – it is simply a renewal of existing areas in the main entrance and LJ Boulevard. In fact, we are eliminating some planted areas and replacing them with sod where we believe that will work in the overall context.

Our entrance and boulevard area landscaping was installed more than 20 years ago. Bed plantings typically have a useful life of 8-10 years and after 20+ years, ours look very bad. We have a lot of missing and dead or dying plants and plants in generally poor condition. Some replacement plants which were installed over the years were chosen without any plan or regard to the existing landscape design. About 12 large trees have died and were not replaced and 7 of those stumps remain. At least 13 crepe myrtles died and were not replaced. Over 175 trees have not been pruned in many years and are badly overgrown and in need of pruning. We will correct those things now.

There have been no annual budgets ever established to my knowledge for landscaping replacement. So, this project really amounts to many years of catch-up spending on landscaping replacement which will be done over the next 4 years.

This plan was reviewed extensively by the Board over recent months. A homeowners information meeting was held in August and roughly 50 homeowners attended in person or on Zoom. Based on the homeowners' input, the Common Grounds Committee revised their draft plan which had been to eliminate the LJ monument at the entrance. The monument has been repainted and will remain. The homeowners' response to all other aspects of the plan was very positive.

We conducted two 2-hour walking tours of the boulevard for homeowners last summer. The tours were sparsely attended but those who did join were uniformly supportive of the plans discussed. If there are some of you who would like such a tour in early December, please let me know and I will schedule another such tour for one more group of up to 12 people.

As we implement the Masterplan over the next 4 years, we will continue to look for smart choices we can make – particularly in the boulevard- to minimize the cost and still have an outstanding plan and design. But there is not a choice in my view to avoid a major re-do like this. The current state of our landscaping simply does not compare to what was installed originally nor other upscale communities in Pasco County. It is a primary duty of the Board under Florida state law for the HOA to maintain the commons grounds of Lake Jovita and protect and enhance the property values of our residents.

Dave Walker