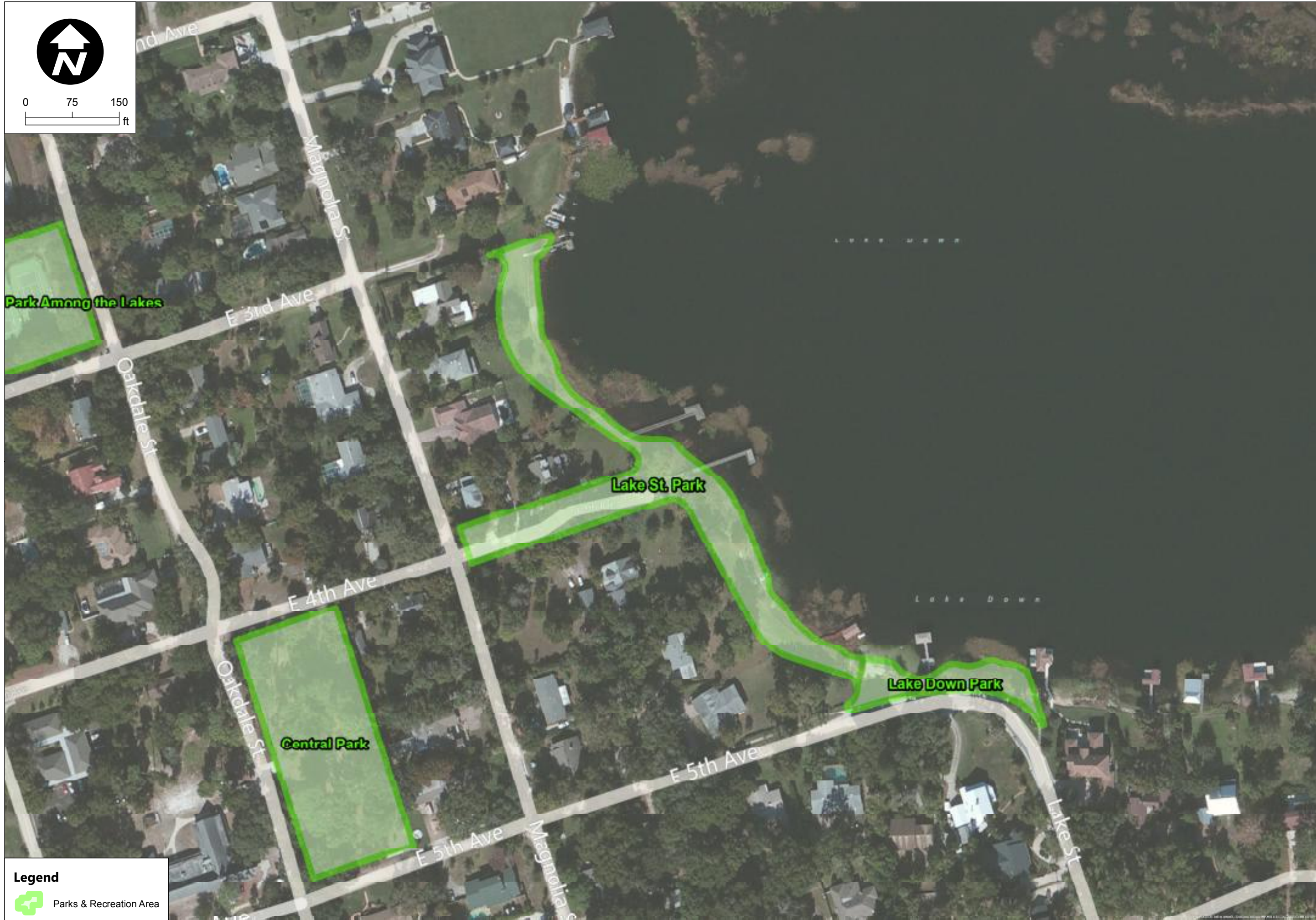




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Legend

 Parks & Recreation Area



Lake St. Park
Strategic Civic Land Use Planning
Town of Windermere, FL



Exhibit: 9

APPENDIX B- Public Participation Documents

Stakeholder Interviews

Document 1: Town Manager Interview (10/04/2012)

- Robert set aside a number of documents pertaining to BB so that our class would have access to information regarding the history of the site. Accompanying this information was also a history of Windermere's efforts to utilize the site since its acquisition, approximately a year and half ago.
- Legal documents detailing the acquisition of BB by Windermere, from the 3 HOAs which previously owned the site
- Documents in reference to the building which once stood on the site. This could best be described as a large clubhouse, with restroom facilities.
- Documents detailing the actions of a minority of residents which attempted to save the clubhouse from being demolished, after acquisition.
- Documents detailing a call for RFP for tennis instructors to teach commercial lessons on the site's tennis courts. These also explained commercial zoning conflicts if such action was pursued.

Document 2: Parks and Recreation Interview (10/04/2012)

- Donna is the chair of parks and recreation and Nora is a member of the board.
- Donna and Nora gave us a tour of the Town's recreational facilities/parks.
- Windermere has several small parks; some can best be described as boat ramps.
- No parking at small parks and walking trail sites.
- Pocket park, near downtown, is a current community hot button. One resident would like a veteran's memorial. Parks & Rec does not prefer this option. Centrally located.
- 2 parks with recreation equipment for young children (jungle jim, etc). Parks have parking, both fairly large compared to other Town assets.
- Walking trails. One runs behind property lines and border the lake. Affected residents upset by public use of trail.
- Active tennis community, with new league formed recently.
- Parks and rec has strong desire to have a parks "master plan" and expresses a desire to increase connectivity of recreation assets.
- One of the main concerns from the two was the lack of proper maintenance for the existing parks and facilities; provided example of a new walking path that the city received a grant to put in. After just a couple years the path is not in a good condition because it was not properly sealed/maintained.
- Would like to have a map of all of the parks detailing connectivity, i.e. how to walk or bike between parks.
- Signage should remain consistent between all of the parks, including butler bay.
- Nora mentioned that the split rail fence is a type of signature for the parks, signifying the park is not private land.
- There are some parks that have areas for people to swim.
- There was some discussion for a floating dock along with the fishing pier in Lake Street Park but that idea was shot down.



(In addition to these interview notes, copied below are the answers to several questions posed to Donna Steele by the Team regarding parks and recreation assets and issues.)

1) Q: What types of public participation exercises has the Town of Windermere participated in? Was it beneficial?

A: Parks and Recreation created a Master Plan in 1996 that included a resident survey. I can get you a copy of that. It includes a 2020 Vision Plan. 7-1-2007 Windermere received 2 FRDAP Grants and held several public meetings. Lake Street Grant Walking Trail \$112,500. Very controversial since the homeowners did not own the lakefront. P&R created a walking path with a green material that has not been maintained. Central Park Grant \$112,500. Pavilion, kids and teens playground equipment, 1/4 mile circular asphalt walking path. And we moved the "Operation Pride" old equipment to Palmer Park with the help of an Eagle Scout project.

2) Q: What other park planning efforts is the Town of Windermere currently working on?

A: Butler Bay Recreation Center and Pocket Park. Pocket Park is controversial. Small, green, sits between First Baptist Church of Windermere and TOW business district.

3) Q: How do most citizens gain information on Town-wide events?

A: In the past, most residents gained their info through the hard copy Town newsletter, banners hung at Town entrances, and word of mouth. Now possibly through TOW website, Facebook, twitter.

4) Q: Could you please provide us with a short history of Butler Bay Park and its incorporation to the Town of Windermere?

A: January, 2011 TOW acquired Butler Bay after 3 Homeowners Associations neglected the property for many years. TOW Council had numerous meetings between October and January. Decision was to accept neglected property for \$25,000 for a 9.4 acre lakefront park.

5) Q: What would you like to see in the open space plan? (way finding, site furnishing, amenities, connectivity, etc.)

A: Parks and Recreation supports an open space plan. P&R would like to create a map of connectivity to our parks. The Windermere 5K Run Among the Lakes is a great event that already follows the TOW lakefront. See www.TriFlorida.com and go to Windermere 5K Run Among the Lakes Course Map.

6) Q: Is there a more extensive inventory available of current parks and recreational areas then what is available on the web site?

A: The TOW currently has approx. 2,500 residents. We have Central Park and Palmer Park with park equipment for kids and teens in both parks. Two outdoor basketball courts and 6 tennis courts. P&R would like to see at Butler Bay Lake Crescent a cleanup and access for swimming, dock restoration, kayak and canoes, low impact sports like volleyball, kickball, soccer, etc on the island.



Document 6: Donna Steele Walking Interview; Windermere Parks and Recreation; Matt McIntosh (10/11/2012)

- Toured the Butler Bay site with Donna.
- Tennis Courts recently resurfaced by parks and recreation.
- Built in bleachers desired on hillside bordering courts desired.
- Removal of brush desired on outer border of mainland, facing lake (behind courts). Site was extremely wet without rainfall for two days.
- Old pavilion has some termite damage, replacement of several beams required.
- No restrooms. This is crucial to park and rec and community desires to enhance local tennis leagues, and possibly host local, regional, or statewide tennis events at BB.
- Bridge connecting island does not allow for activity such as kayaking through canal passage.
- Dock leading out from wetland area is fenced off and in disrepair.
- Out of this meeting came the idea for THE TEAM to join Parks and Recreation at their table for the Town's Fall Festival. The purpose of this effort is to promote awareness for the Team's upcoming Fall Forum, a public participation event used to gather information on the public vision for the park.

Document 3: Donna Steele Interview, Windermere Parks and Recreation; Pre-Fall Forum Review: Matt McIntosh (11/09/2012)

- Parks and Recreation's proposed pavilion would be located on the same site as the old clubhouse.
- Parks and Recreation envisions the pavilion being used for revenue generation by hosting group parties.
- Parks and Recreation desires two, unisex and ADA compliant restroom facilities. They also propose locating the restrooms near the tennis courts on the Park Avenue facing portion of the site.
- Discussed "space activation" concepts, some previously brought up during class time. Examples include: art festivals or displaying local artwork in the park which changes at a determined timeframe, wine tastings, and music/bands/live-performances.
- Discussed lighting the park trees with lights, such as those used in the Winter Park Village, to bring public attention to the space.
- Discussed Parks and Recreations thoughts on ways to distinguish resident from nonresident attendees of the Fall Forum. Relayed that THE TEAM did not feel this was warranted; Parks and Rec agreed.



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Theresa Schretzmann-Myers
Tree Board Chair
Email Correspondence with Nikhila Rose

1. What type of activities is the Town of Windermere's Tree Board involved in?

Activities that support our Urban Forestry Program: Tree planting projects with local residents, scouting groups, Home Owners Associations (HOA's) and schools; Writing Urban Forestry Grants; Coordinating and conducting volunteer work days and arboriculture on our Town's public parks and spaces; Coordinating campus tree planting projects and teach-ins with locals schools as "Partners in Education"; Attending continuing education seminars on Arboriculture and Urban Forestry at ISA Trees Florida Conference each year; Speaking as a "Small Urban Forestry" program representative and attending the Florida Urban Forestry Council meeting at UCF; Reviewing and rewriting the Windermere Tree ordinance as needed; Reporting and documenting via photography and electronic communications, violations of illegal tree take-downs and clear-cuts of protected tree canopy in Windermere to Town Management; Planning and hosting the annual Windermere Treebute Arbor Day Festival every third Saturday in January (Florida's Arbor Day) which raises money Windermere needs to purchase, replenish, diversify and replant Florida Native tree canopy in Windermere; Planning the annual Arbor Day tree planting ceremony with Windermere Garden Club and educating local school children; Planning and co-hosting the Tree Safety Training programs for emergency first responders, firemen, arborists so they know how to respond to and manage emergencies dealing with trees and power lines. (See attached Program information).

2. What policies are in place for tree placement, removal, and species allowed?

Windermere has a Tree Ordinance that covers these issues along with Florida native tree species replacement. For tree placement, Tree Board consults with ISA Certified arborists on where to plant our Arbor Day trees on Town property and right-of-ways. For tree removals, we suggest the Town and residents consult with licensed, insured, trained and certified ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) arborists. We are currently reviewing and rewriting our ordinance to bring it up to date with the expertise of Dr. Buck Abbey, from LSU who is a tree ordinance expert. For tree removals the Town RFP's emergency tree removal work out for bid to licensed arborists/arboriculture companies.

3. What types of public participation exercises has the Town of Windermere participated in (especially with respect to parks and recreation)? Was it beneficial?

Windermere Tree Board works closely with Parks and Recreation and volunteer ISA arborists on annual walk-thru inspections in our public parks and recreation areas to identify trees that need arboriculture work, restoration or remediation pruning or hazardous tree removal.

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Town Manager Robert Smith has previously called a “charette” of town committees and interested citizens to plan a particular green space or cultural landscape, such as the 1890’s Schoolhouse National Register Historic Site where we planned the conceptual site plan for preserving historic trees and restoration of historic trees and landscape plants. It was very beneficial and very helpful because it helped Windermere come up with a way to brainstorm as a group and come up with a vision and a conceptual site plan for that site. Now, the Historical Board, Tree Board and Windermere Garden Club are raising the money to put the conceptual site plan into action.

4. What other park planning efforts is the Town of Windermere currently working on?

Windermere Tree Board coordinated over 100 hours of volunteer arboriculture and structural pruning on all Florida native trees and palms at Butler Bay Recreation Park. The arborists mulched the trimmings from the trees and dumped mulch at the park so we could recycle and spread mulch into beds and around the roots of trees to prevent damage and impact on tree roots. Windermere Tree Board coordinated over 208 hours of removal of exotic invasive Brazilian pepper, Chinese tallow, and Chinaberry trees, caesar weed, dog fennel, cat’s claw. Our local refuse provider donated 2-ton roll-off dumpsters which were filled to capacity on these four clean-up days. Ongoing volunteer days will continue for removal of exotic invasive trees and plants.

Parks and Recreation resurfaced the Butler Bay Park tennis courts, replaced the tennis fencing, replaced the walking bridge over the canal to the island fronting Crescent Lake, restriped the parking lot and razed the HOA community building while retaining the cement foundation, plumbing, well and electrical box.

Ongoing park planning and work to be completed: The dilapidated dock out to Crescent Lake needs to be replaced with a new dock that has a canoe and kayak launch floating dock. The picnic table slabs on the island need to be edged and weeded and picnic tables replaced on those slabs. A diversity of Florida Native trees needs to be strategically planted on the island to provide shade for picnic tables yet not obstruct the beautiful view of Lake Crescent. Invasive Brazilian Pepper trees along the canals and island needed to be removed.

5. What would you like to see in the open space plan? (wayfinding, site furnishing, amenities, connectivity, etc.)

I would like to see tree identification signage with smart phone QR codes that tell about the particular native tree species and plants that support wildlife conservation. I would like to see interpretive signage with smart phone QR codes that show how our community forests continue to play an increasingly powerful role in the health and sustainability of our cities, towns and rural landscapes. There is a, “UF/IFAS Study that Quantifies Value of Ecosystem Services from Managed Forests.” It might appear that the only people who profit from Florida’s forests are landowners, but a new University of Florida study says the trees provide valuable services to land users and people in surrounding communities. As forests grow, they filter



water, store carbon and perform other helpful functions that are known collectively as ecosystem services. These services are often overlooked by the public but UF researchers found a way to estimate their dollar value, which can exceed \$5,000 per acre over 20 years. The study focused on four key ecosystem services; water quality, carbon storage, timber production and wildlife conservation. It also focused on forestland acreage enrolled in the Florida Forest Stewardship Program. The voluntary state program helps landowners manage their forests for multiple uses, to increase its economic value and maintain its environmental quality. Those uses may include timber production, hunting, ecotourism or activity on the carbon credit market. Founded in 1990, the Florida Forest Stewardship Program is a partnership among UF's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, the Florida Forest Service, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. The program is open to anyone who owns at least 20 acres of forested land and does not manufacture forest products or provide public utility service." Click [here](#) for more information about the Florida Forest Stewardship Program. To view archived InterfaceSouth Posts visit:

<http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/interfacesouth-posts>

I would like to see a LEED certified green building replace the razed community building on the existing slab with plumbing, lighting, cooking and amenities that are solar powered.

On Lake Crescent I would like to see a standard dock with a connected floating dock that could rise and fall with the level of Lake Crescent for ease of launching kayaks and canoes. (For example, the floating dock at O'leno State Park in North Central Florida.)

6. Is there a more extensive inventory available of current parks and recreational areas than what is available on the web site?

The last Windermere Urban Forest Management Plan was completed in 2006 by Earth Advisors, Inc. for the Town of Windermere as part of an Urban Forestry Grant written by Windermere Tree Board. It is attached for your information. It contains the age, species and health assessments of trees by percentage in public spaces and right-of-ways and the economic appraisal of what the public and private trees are worth to the town. Along with this plan was a GIS tree survey which is contained on the Town of Windermere Tree Board laptop. You are more than welcome to borrow Tree Board's laptop and download any of this information with permission of Town Manager Robert Smith.

7. What is the City's plan for the existing railroad bed? Has there been public dialog to get the community feedback?

The town has planted crepe myrtles and other low growing Florida natives under power lines along existing railroad bed that parallels Maguire Road. Ken Ward, (Ph: 407-876-6111) one of the trustees/property holders of the existing railroad bed should be contacted for his ideas and input, along with all private property owners who have purchased the railroad bed fronting their properties. When I asked Mr. Ward what he would like to see along the existing railroad

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bed he suggested filling in the spaces among the trees with to create a Florida Native wildflower corridor. To date, private property owners have been planting trees on their existing railroad bed space. I would suggest a town "charette" be called to discuss and plan this railroad bed green spaces with all the existing owners and interested town residents.

8. Is there any material with regards to GIS information and data pertaining to the grant for "Tree Preservation" that you feel relevant?

Yes, the Windermere Urban Forest Management Plan completed in 2006 by Earth Advisors, Inc. for the Town of Windermere as part of an Urban Forestry Grant written by Windermere Tree Board. Along with this plan was a GIS tree survey which is contained on the Town of Windermere Tree Board laptop. I would be more than happy to give you access to this GIS information with permission from Town Manager Robert Smith. We desperately need to update our Urban Forest Management Plant and GIS tree survey.

A planning tool that I would like to bring to your attention is the i-Tree tools available for assessing and managing community forests and doing tree surveys. What is i-Tree? "i-Tree is a state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software suite from the USDA Forest Service that provides urban forestry analysis and benefits assessment tools. The i-Tree Tools help communities of all sizes to strengthen their urban forest management and advocacy efforts by quantifying the structure of community trees and the environmental services that trees provide.

Since the initial release of the i-Tree Tools in August 2006, numerous communities, non-profit organizations, consultants, volunteers and students have used i-Tree to report on individual trees, parcels, neighborhoods, cities, and even entire states. By understanding the local, tangible ecosystem services that trees provide, i-Tree users can link urban forest management activities with environmental quality and community livability. Whether your interest is a single tree or an entire forest, i-Tree provides baseline data that you can use to demonstrate value and set priorities for more effective decision-making.

i-Tree Tools are in the public domain and are freely accessible. We invite you to explore this site to learn more about how i-Tree can make a difference in your community."
<http://www.itreetools.org/>

I have completed some training on the i-Tree Suite. I would be happy to meet with you all at a scheduled time to discuss anything I've mentioned here in more detail.

Richard Gonzalez
Town Councilman; Tree Board Liasion
October 20, 2012, conducted by Michelle Beamon

1. What types of public participation exercises has the Town of Windermere participated in? Was it beneficial?

The Parks & Recreation Committee and the Tree Board took the lead in some urban planning ideas. Parks where the first projects and the planting of the trees. The Town has planted more

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than a thousand trees. This has been a low funded project mostly done through donations. These boards are using grant writers to find additional funding.

The Horizons West development had requirements for when certain infrastructure would be built. Traffic was supposed to be diverted away from Windermere but it wasn't. Now the Town gets approximately 20,000 cars per day of through traffic. This caused major traffic jams and there was a community planning session held. That started more formal planning for the town. The Town hired Canin & Associates to complete the downtown plan.

2. What other park planning efforts is the Town of Windermere currently working on?

They do fundraising events for the trees and parks.

3. How do most citizens gain information on Town-wide events?

Through the Town newsletter and the email database, the Town Manager has control of the email database.

4. Could you please provide us with a short history of Butler Bay Park and its incorporation to the Town of Windermere?

Butler Bay Park was owned and run by the HOA of the adjacent subdivisions. They were going to sell it since it was deteriorating. Mr. Gonzalez had suggested that the Town buy the Park. But the HOA ended up donating the Park along with a monetary donation.

5. Could you please go into further detail about OUC's "The Pines"?

The Pines is a privately owned park. It is a for-rent park and the gates are not open for public use.

6. What would you like to see in the open space plan? (wayfinding, site furnishing, amenities, connectivity, etc.)

The plan should highlight the connectivity between the parks. The connectivity could be by trails or wildlife corridors and habitat. Mini habitats should be created in all of the parks, this will generate improvements everywhere.

Keep some natural areas with the parks.

Create turtle nesting areas where there is water; there is not enough sand right now. They try to cross streets and die. These nesting areas and boxes would be maintained yearly.

Define the limits of the parks. The existing fences may not be in the right place. Some properties have access to parks through non-formal easements. Make these formal with expiration dates.



Rather than formal perimeters the perimeter could be wildlife corridor, eliminate plants that need trimming, watering. Let them take natural shape. No rails or barriers.
Build small wildlife retention ponds, not just for water. Wildlife was being driven into the town
Encourage diversity of species of trees
Put in bird houses and bat houses, eagle and osprey nesting area. The eagle and osprey have lost their formal pine homes due to land clearing.
Eliminate pesticide sprays and roundup in all parks.
Each park should have a covered area, like a pavilion. Low maintenance seating areas.
Golf cart trails, 10ft wide. Some kids/parents take golf carts to school, but the trails are not wide enough
Beautify the school

7. What policies are in place for tree placement, removal, and species allowed?

The tree removal permit has been updated. Now instead of just requiring the owner to replant a tree on their property, they are allowed to pay a fee and the Town will plan a tree where it is needed. This is beneficially because the owners may not know how to take care of the trees.

The town promotes all Florida native plants as well as planting a variety of species. This is done to prevent against losing the whole stock to a disease. They would like more hickory trees; they are a good food source for turkeys and fox squirrels.

8. General Discussion Items

Mr. Gonzalez encouraged us to meet with Steven Withers, a Town resident. Mr. Withers is a world renowned architect. We should work with him on the design of Butler Bay. He may be willing to come to class to talk to us.

The Baptist church expanded in the 1980s. They closed off a street; there was a lot of opposition to this. They mitigated for this by taking over landscaping for two blocks. That was a major project for the town and they have done a great job with it.

The Town has started using high school students for city work. They have done tasks such as clearing areas in parks.

Sergio Duarte
Senior Environmental Specialist, Orange County Environmental Protection Division
Conducted by Jacques Colon

