

Sky Valley Landscaping Advisory Committee

March 7, 2024 Minutes

Present: Cheryl Beckert, chair; and committee members Debbie McAfee, Don Rice, Cathy Turner, and Debbie Dalhouse Curtis

Absent: Becky Whitehead

CALL TO ORDER

Cheryl Beckert called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cheryl Beckert introduced new committee members Don Rice, Cathy Turner, and Becky Whitehead (in absentia)

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Cheryl Beckert reviewed the committee's responsibilities:

- Beautify the city
- Work with City landscaper Mark Wanamaker
- Seek funding sources (City, Garden Club, and Property Owners Association)

REVIEW OF 2023 PROJECTS

A. New City Hall

One holly shrub on the right side of City Hall appears to need fertilizer. Other 2023 plantings in front of the building and at the sign are in good shape.

B. Memorial Bench at Post Office

A wooden bench on a cobblestone base was installed in 2023 in memory of past City Building Inspector Bob Powers, facing a bed of daylilies and the flag pole on the left side of the building. No additional work is needed. Carolina Jessamine and Abelia shrubs in the planters at the pavilion restrooms are in good shape; no additions are needed.

C. Street Corners

The Garden Club maintains perennial and annual plantings at street corners around the city: Rebel Circle at Bald Mountain, Sky High at Bald Mountain, Peak and Peek at Bald Mountain, Winding Ridge at Bald Mountain, Driver Lane at Bald Mountain, Sky Valley Way at Ridgepole, and LaBelle rock at Ridgepole. In 2023, volunteer Don Rice expanded the planting at the large LaBelle rock to add a rock border, fresh mulch, and oakleaf hydrangeas.

D. Front Entrance

The committee commended the 2023 choice of colorful annuals at the front entrance but noted that the perennial pollinator plants at the bottom of the Teardrop Garden did not return because the area was heavily mulched with pine needles.

E. Additional Street Corners

The Garden Club added a new planting on Eagle Circle at Driver Lane in 2023.

FUNDING OF PROJECTS

The City funds regular maintenance—mowing roadsides, and planting, fertilizing, weeding, and mulching flower beds—at City Hall, the Front Entrance, and the Post Office. In previous years, Garden Club members have donated plants and installed them at selected street corners. The

Garden Club has also donated funds for additional plantings. The Property Owners Association has donated funds to match the Garden Club donation for additional plantings. In 2023, the Garden Club also purchased Kwanzan Cherry trees that were planted along Sky Valley Way by the creek and on the hill behind the Post Office.

DISCUSSION OF 2024 PROJECTS

A. Pickle Ball Courts

- Request permission from the City to add ornamental grasses provided by Don Rice at the corners of the Pavilion and Pickle Ball Courts.

B. Street Corners/areas updated &/or added

- **Rescue at Evergreen rock**

Request City staff to locate utilities so volunteers can plant flowers and shrubs donated by the Garden Club and Don Rice, including Blue Spruce in front of the existing pine trees, and Snapdragons and Marigolds near the rock. Other plant recommendations include Shasta Daisy, Rudbeckia, Cone Flower, and Bee Balm to be purchased.

Don Rice also suggested that the City:

- Install a watering faucet so new plants can be maintained (Cheryl Beckert will discuss with Public Works Director Jerry Shope)
 - Remove debris from the rock (Cheryl Beckert will discuss with Public Works Director Jerry Shope)
 - Deposit leaves from cleared ditches as soil amendment (City Communications Director Sherron Van Camp stated that these leaves are currently being placed on Tahoe Lane near the waterfall to fill an eroded area)
- **Evergreen at Crusher Run**
The committee agreed to wait for City staff to determine if rock pillars or other hardscaping will be installed at this entrance.
 - **Sky Valley Way at Ridgepole**
The Garden Club installed additional garden soil and flowering plants (Begonias and Heuchera) at the corner and Kwanza Cherries on the hillside in 2023. Suggestions for additional plants on the corner include evergreen Autumn Fern, Christmas Fern to be purchased, and Pachysandra (donated by Cathy Turner).

C. Front Entrance

- Install annuals similar to the 2023 mix at the Front Entrance at Bald Mountain Road.
- Remove dying boxwoods on the left side of the Front Entrance at Bald Mountain Road.
- Remove pine needle mulch at the bottom of the Teardrop Garden and install perennial pollinator plants Bee Balm, Coneflowers, and Rudbeckia.

D. City Hall

- Add a new bed at the three flag poles with plants similar to those at the sign: Golden Mop Dwarf Cypress, Nine Bark, and flowering annuals.
- Fertilize the male Blue Prince Holly in the bed on the right side of the building.
- Install annuals similar to the 2023 mix at the sign and in front of the building.
- Request permission from the City to add Kwanzan Cherry trees provided by the Garden Club at the City Hall picnic area.

E. Post Office

- Install annuals similar to the 2023 mix in front of the Post Office boxes

F. Compactor

- Cheryl Beckert will ask City staff if volunteers could paint a mural on the Knob Drive trash compactor.

G. Pond at Time Shares Maintenance Building

- Don Rice asked if City Public Works could remove shrubs growing in the pond and replace them with marsh plants such as Cattails. Cheryl Beckert will ask Public Works Director Jerry Shope if this would be allowed by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division since the pond is part of a secondary trout stream.

H. Arbor Day

- City Communications Director Sherron Van Camp stated that the City has ordered 100 Red Maple saplings that will be offered to Sky Valley residents for planting at homes and public spaces to celebrate Arbor Day. Details will be announced later.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be 1 p.m. Thursday, April 4, at the City Pavilion.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m. with a motion by Debbie Dalhouse Curtis and second by Cathy Turner.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Dalhouse Curtis