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Snapper Creek Townhouse Homeowners Association, Inc.

Landscape Advisory Committee (LAC) Guidelines

2015

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1.0 Introduction

Today, many planned communities are essentially self-governing as Condominium Associations or Homeowners Associations. State law provides minimum standards for each but the rules of a particular association may be stronger than the state statutes, if so written.

Homeowners Associations exist for good reason. They allow for the proper maintenance of common areas and permit the enforcement of community appearance standards and rules of behavior for the common good. In communities where people live close to each other, sometimes a greater measure of respect for one's neighbor must be encouraged, in order to have peace and the quiet enjoyment of one's property. It is also desirable for planned communities consisting of town homes or other multiple dwelling units to have uniform exterior appearance standards, not only for greater harmony and beauty, but also for the more practical reason that property values are stabilized or enhanced. Our home is one of the biggest investments we make and it is desirable to have increased in value over time. Control and consistency of exterior appearance aid greatly in achieving this goal, according to real estate experts.

When we purchase in a community with an association, we have the opportunity to elect a governing board that represents us as homeowners. We also agree to abide by the rules set by that board and written down in the governing documents of the association. At Snapper Creek, there have always been committees created and authorized to assist the Board of Directors in governing the community. The Landscape Advisory Committee (LAC) is one of these; another is the ACC or Architectural Control Committee.

The LAC guidelines spell out the options available to homeowners who want to enhance the appearance of their own property or who wish to volunteer to upgrade and maintain certain common areas. Residents and owners are not free to alter any plants or trees planted in common areas without making application.

The LAC meets once each month, normally on the third Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. sharp at the Clubhouse. All homeowners are invited to attend meetings so feel free to come and ask your questions or just observe the process and learn something new. The committee also welcomes new members who feel they have something to offer.

2.0 Functions of the Landscape Advisory Committee

The primary purpose of the LAC is to advise the board of directors and management of the Association regarding general maintenance of the exterior environment of the common areas of our community, including landscaping-- grass, shrubs and trees-- but also "hardscape" elements such as paving, curbing, walks and paths, walls and fences, signage and other similar elements of the infrastructure. The LAC also is involved in the planning of new projects to beautify and improve the common areas of the community.

Another responsibility of the LAC is to review applications for improvements to certain parking islands allowed under the Rules and Regulation of our association. Residents who wish to upgrade such an area must formally agree to install and maintain improvements at their own expense. They do this to improve the appearance of their immediate neighborhood and as a contribution to the overall community. The process is handled through an application submitted to the LAC via the HOA office. After the application is approved, the office will provide the text of a standard agreement to be signed and kept in the unit file.

2.1 Membership—the LAC welcomes interaction with residents, who are invited to attend monthly meetings and if interested, to actively participate in the work of the committee by becoming a member. Members who enjoy gardening can offer advice to residents, assist them in planning their private projects, volunteer for community projects or just learn more about plants and trees and landscape techniques suited to South Florida. One of the goals of the LAC is to share information that will encourage and assist unit owners and residents to beautify their own property with attractive, low maintenance materials that will contribute to the overall curb appeal and enhance property values.

3.0 LAC Guidelines for Islands and Other Common Area Upgrades by Owners

3.1 Islands and Other Common Area Upgrades by Owners—Landscaping materials

The elimination of grass on smaller islands is strongly encouraged. Some form of edging or curbing is needed to retain and define the recommended decorative rock or wood mulch material selected. [See ACC 3.4 Landscape Curbing]. Mulch will enhance plant growth, retain water and resist weeds. Weed barrier fabric is also recommended to cut down on maintenance and is laid down prior to mulch application. Instead of bushes or shrubs requiring frequent watering, LAC recommends the use of Xeriscape friendly plant material, including bromelias, Agave, Flax Lily and similar plants. *See appendix to these guidelines, or consult the LAC for additional options.*

3.2 Islands and Other Common Area Upgrades by Owners—Trees The only trees approved by the association for islands areas approved to be upgraded by owners are certain palm trees. The list of approved Palms is found in the Appendix.

3.3 Islands Upgrades by Owners-Extruded Concrete Landscape Curbing Extruded Concrete Landscape Curbing An individual homeowner or a group of neighbors in a section or area may elect to provide, at their own expense, a border around the edge of an island area that they have agreed to maintain. Contact the office in advance, submitting your request in writing and allowing the association time to coordinate and cooperate on the project. The association will confirm and approve the location and configuration of the proposed curbs for the record. To provide continuity of appearance for future projects, the extruded concrete edging must be of a similar size, profile and color as examples already existing within the community. Information is available at the office. Minor deviations in the pattern or slight dimensional differences are acceptable to allow for different equipment. Residents who apply for the initial installation and their successors are responsible for routine maintenance.

4.0 General Guidelines for Private Residential Property

Other than the special rules for limited upgrading of island parking areas by residents [see- 3.0], the Association does not regulate the landscaping that owners choose to plant on their private property. However, common sense and climate constraints should apply. Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida publish lists of invasive and noxious plants that should be avoided or removed if found. There are also laws that specify which trees require a permit for removal. Please avoid over trimming of trees [“hat racking”] which is illegal. Note: No tree belonging to the association may be trimmed by a resident. Residents do **not** own trees on common areas, including parking islands.

4.1 Front yard LAC encourages attractive, practical landscaping. For example, avoid using vines that will rapidly take over walls and interfere with painting and other maintenance. Know how large a tree will become before planting it too close to walls and roof overhangs. Avoid any plants with invasive roots that may cause damage to property, including cracking of walls and clogging of sewer lines.

Avoid planting grass in small areas. Instead, use weed barrier and decorative rock or wood mulch. Select low maintenance shrubs that are drought and pest resistant. Choose plants that will fit well within the designated areas when mature. LAC members can help with plant selections. *Tip—consider using one or more of the palm trees approved by the HOA for islands within your yard. They are well suited to our limited spaces.*

4.2 Structural Landscape Elements on Private Property All trellises, arbors, pergolas, permanent walls and planters planned in connection with landscape improvements to private property continue to be subject to ACC application and review, prior to construction. This also applies to pavers that extend to front sidewalks and are visible from the street and to lattice panels applied to building walls to support plants. These are “hardscape” elements and may be subject to building and zoning regulations in addition to HOA regulations. Please refer to ACC Guidelines and submit the appropriate application to the office for any of these improvements.

Note: Under the documents which govern responsibilities of unit owners [members of the Association] you are expected to keep all landscaping and planting areas on your private property in good condition, especially whatever is visible from the common areas and streets. Failure to keep up your property may result in violation notices and penalties as noted in the documents.

5.0 Appendix

5.1 LAC List of Approved Plants and Trees

Compiled by the Landscape Advisory Committee August, 2012

The current list reflects a basic palette of plants and trees selected by the LAC to be implemented over time, with several objectives and benefits. The listed plants are readily available, affordable, require low maintenance, and most are drought tolerant. They have been selected for their visual impact and in an effort to establish themes that will eventually run throughout the common areas, creating a sense of unity and continuity. This list is intended to be flexible and organic, with limited additions and deletions possible, over time.

While this list is intended for our common areas, homeowners may wish to use these plants on their properties, as well. It will be noted that this list is not as extensive as it might be and that certain species are omitted. The reason for this is that the committee feels that some plants are overused or not suitable for other reasons and that it makes better use of limited funds to focus on a limited palette of plants for improvements done on behalf of the HOA.

It also should be noted that not all plants on the list are equally suited to every environmental condition; some plants are more suited to full sun than others or maybe less drought tolerant or their pattern of growth may make them better suited for screening or hedge use them as free standing specimens.

Trees and plants are listed by their common names

<p><u>Trees</u> [deciduous]</p> <p>Live Oak Mahogany Tamarind Paradise Tree Copper Pod Royal Poinciana Green Buttonwood Silver Buttonwood Dahoon Holly Verawood Stoppers [various] Cassias [various]</p>	<p><u>Palms</u></p> <p>Sabal Palm Fountain Palm Everglades / Thatch palms Solitaire Palm MacArthur Palm Alexander Palm Bismarck Palm Lady Palm</p>
<p><u>Large shrubs / small accent trees</u></p> <p>Cattleya Guava Crepe Myrtle Lakewood Jasmine Jerusalem Thorn Desert Senna Fire bush [Hamelia Patens] Red-tipped Cocoplum Podocarpus</p>	<p><u>Small shrubs and accent plants</u></p> <p>Cardboard Palm [Zamia Maritima] Green Island Ficus Mexican Petunia [Ruellia] Dwarf Bougainvillea Creeping Juniper [various] Bromeliads [various giant, sun tolerant] Agaves and similar</p>
<p><u>Flowering bedding plants and ground covers</u></p> <p>Lantana Flax lily Purple Queen Crown of Thorns</p>	<p><u>Miscellaneous</u></p> <p>Bamboo [various, depending on site and purpose] Ornamental grasses [various] + Papyrus [non-aggressive]</p>

5.2 HOA Approved Palm Trees Snapper Creek Townhouses HOA

Palm tree recommendations for common areas *submitted by the Landscape Advisory Committee,*

A) For special planting areas or a feature landscape accent such as along main roads or medians or on larger common areas selected for a landscape upgrade. These palms are on the large / tall side and make a dramatic statement. Palms look better in groups of 3 to 5 rather than alone or planted in rows.

Montgomery Palm [veitchia montgomeryana]

A majestic palm featuring smooth gray trunk and a beautifully shaped canopy of elegant fronds. Can reach 70 ft. No special needs or problems, full sun is OK



Fountain Palm, **Ribbon Palm [livingstonia decipiens]**

Slow growing, nice alternative to coconut and Sabal palms in the landscape. Reaches 15-20 ft. Easy to grow, few pests, tolerant of poor soils, full sun OK. Fountain Palm has thorns on the fronds.

Cabbage Palm [Sabal palmetto]

*Attractive , trouble free native symbol of Florida
Up to 40+ ft., full sun, no problems*



B) The palm choices that follow are better scaled for parking islands or other common areas with limited space. Using different varieties at selected locations adds diversity and interest to the landscape.

Buccaneer Palm / Sargent's Palm [pseudophoenix sargenti]



Hardy native tree; tolerant of our alkaline soils, drought resistant, slow growing, reaches 10-15 ft., Full sun OK



Alexander Palm aka Solitaire Palm [archontophoenix alexandrae]

*Slim and shapely, with an elegant thin trunk; attractive fronds, red berries. No special problems
Full sun, can reach 45 feet, in time.*

MacArthur Palm [ptychosperma macarthurii]

Similar to Alexander, but not as tall; reaches 15-20+ ft.

Grows in shade, tolerates sun, no special problems. Generally grows in cluster form, trunks are slimmer than Alexander's.



Florida Thatch Palm [thrinax radiata]

This hardy native palm likes sun and our soil; can reach 15 ft.