



FAIRHOPE

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

AGENDA ~ MONTHLY MEETING

FEBRUARY 14, 2025 / 3-4 PM, FAIRHOPE PUBLIC LIBRARY ~ 2ND FLOOR BOARD ROOM

ATTENDEES

COF Officials: Christina LeJeune, Nicole Love

FEAB Board Members: Amy Paulson, Ben Frater, Gary Gover, Carl Couret, Steven Scyphers, Jennifer Foutch, Anna Miller

FEAB Members Absent: Nigel Temple, Jim Horner

Official Quorum Count: 7/9

FEAB Active Participants: Sarah Bogdanovich, Sarah Chandler

Honored Guests Michael Herzog, Manager The Grande Hotel and Spa
Grace Stringer, University of South Alabama PhD student

Minutes Author: Sarah Chandler

Commencement: Amy called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

SUMMARY OF SALIENT DECISIONS, DISCUSSION, AND ACTIONS

- Greenspace Working Group presented an early concept plan for the COF Greenspace Map and Storyboard. In partnership with Univ. South AL, and in response to overwhelming feedback during the COF Landuse Planning process to increase greenspace availability, this group is working to develop a GIS-based digital map system cataloging existing and potentially available green spaces across Fairhope. The dashboard identifies publicly-owned lands across the City, existing uses and amenities, and opportunities for management or expansion.
- Sustainable Waste Management (SWaMP) Committee taught 6 composting classes at the Fairhope High School and they are piloting composting project.
- FEAB has expertise available to assist COF with SmartGrowth policies, ordinances, and incentives to improve infrastructure and provide fair and equitable opportunities for all prospective post-moratorium development.

DETAILED MINUTES

1. **Housekeeping**
 - a. Approved Jan Meeting Minutes
2. **Guest Presentation:** Greenspace Working Group - 2025 Greenspace roadmap (Ben, Steven, USA)
 - The group presented an early concept plan for the COF Greenspace Storyboard
 - <https://arcg.is/1jKXeX3>
 - *Mission:* During the production of the Land Use Plan, residents were clear they wanted to see more green spaces in Fairhope. The Mayor asked FEAB to assist with this project.
 - *Deliverable:* In partnership with the FEAB Greenspace Working Group, Steven's USA students developed a geospatial mapping tool (GIS digital map system) cataloging existing and potentially available green spaces across Fairhope.
 - The students produced a Storymap, which is a digital map where you can layer site data such as description, amenities/use, size, location; photos; stories/comments



FAIRHOPE

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

- *In scope:* Phase 1 was the assessment of developed existing green space in Fairhope and potential green spaces (available real estate for sale) that could be reasonably acquired. Included pocket park ideas if COF, SingleTax, SALT, or Nature Conservancy wanted to buy something.
- *Out of scope:* Not every single “green space” is included (e.g., gulleys, private property, golf private courses with restricted access). This is more of a proof of concept at this point. Doesn’t include)
- *In Development:* In order to align on “what is a greenspace?” this effort began in 2024 with a through investigation of green space definitions across City rules, regulations, ordinances, and other official documentation (i.e. should this tool identify properties under HOA control, treed courtyards like at USA building, areas outside of the City [e.g., The Grande, SALT properties], restricted/limited access parks and recreation [baseball fields, soccer fields, golf course].
 - The tool sorting parameters can be changed depending on the user query.
 - The tool may need to expand the detail of available categories to fully understand how “greenspace” is balanced in Fairhope and accommodate the varying definitions/perspectives of it (i.e., sports amenities, passive recreation, nature-based outdoor experience, conservation areas, compatible mixed uses).
 - Blueways could also be included to identify public waterway opportunities (kayak/ canoe trails).
 - Flood loss/floodplain data layer could also be added to prioritize acquisition/ preservation of natural areas to mitigate flooding.
 - Imagery can be used to tell stories of restoring green spaces over time.
- *Next Steps:*
 - Do field work to validate green spaces bc the online data was not complete to characterize them.
 - Add some better characteristics of green space parcels (i.e. benches, passive recreation, active recreation, amenities, lighting).
 - Add ‘city-owned’ label.
 - Add ‘what is accessible’ and what is ‘restricted access.’
 - Add tree density.
 - Explore if we can add ‘how many people does each park serve within a walking distance’ - but must define “serve” (i.e., restricted access does not “serve” all).
 - Socialize with the Planning Department first, then other City departments.
 - Make it an official FEAB project and put our logo on it.
 - Deadline - April.

3. Priority Issues & Subcommittee Reports

- a. Greenspace & Native Habitat
 - i. SALT Fish River Nature Preserve Tour - group proposed Feb 28 - Friday morning
 - ii. Colony Park Tree Walk (Nicole)
 - 1. Discussed an idea of a ‘tree trail’ at park using Baldwin Real Estate Developers grant \$7500K + some portion of City \$. Use a scanned code to learn about tree. Maybe add benches.
 - 2. COF has requested FEAB assist Justin with species selection.
 - 3. Baldwin Real Estate Developers grant is available every year.
 - 4. Next Steps: Get a Daphne rep to come to one of our meetings to further discuss, species expertise available (Auburn Extension, Ben-USFWS)
- b. Sustainable Waste Management (SWaMP)- Sarah B/Sarah C/Jennifer/Gary
 - i. Sarah shared new marketing stickers with the group
 - ii. Sarah taught 6 classes at the Fairhope High School and they are piloting composting project



FAIRHOPE

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

- c. Energy Policy - Anna
 - i. There is a development moratorium for Fairhope.
 - ii. We should do some things *now* to improve the infrastructure (i.e. subdivision regs) before it is open again
 - iii. City wants to look into Smart Growth before it opens again.
 - iv. Nicole is thinking about who we can be connected to discuss this again.
- 4. New Items / City Environmental Issues**
 - a. New Issues / Ideas
 - i. Take the Recreation and state of the city survey!
 - b. Mayor's Office and City Departments
 - i. Requested FEAB representative on Stakeholder Committee for 'Safe Streets for All'
 - ii. Watershed signs are here and to be installed as recommended by FEAB in 2024.
- 5. Wrap Up**
 - a. Involvement & Education Opportunities
 - i. Green Drinks - next is Feb 26 and speaker is an international fellow who will discuss her research on Native/Nature-based solutions in Denmark
 - b. Future Agenda Items
 - i. Mar: Daphne EAB and native tree specialists
 - ii. April: Greener By the Yard, Guest(s): Johanna X, SALT; Troy X, Extreme Turf
 - iii. May: annual meeting with CoF Mayor and Departments
 - iv. Future: Rhydonna Mosely, FEEF - Pelican's Nest



FAIRHOPE

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING REFERENCES

FEAB Vision: *to serve as a trusted, scientific resource providing a local environmental perspective to policy decisions to ensure environmental matters are given full consideration in the City's decision-making processes. We strive to positively affect the quality of life for all residents, their connection to our local ecosystems, and the resilience and sustainment of Fairhope as a small, yet world-class, city.*

FEAB Role: *the FEAB is dedicated to increasing awareness of environmental issues, offering recommendations to City administrators, and providing state-of-the-science consultation in the implementation of sustainable solutions.*

MEETING READ-AHEADS

Land Use Plan - Environmental Issues

See [NOTES](#) and [SUPPORT LETTER TO CITY](#)

The following list identifies specific sections of the LUP that are relevant to the FEAB's mission, speak to member professional expertise, or have been identified as Board priorities. We offer our utility to the City as you identify opportunities and track progress across the LUP and particularly for the following Tasks:

Ongoing

- ❖ Task C-2: Preserve natural areas and wetlands for recreational use
- ❖ Task C-3: Enforce green space requirements within new developments
- ❖ Task C-6: Encourage pest control and landscaping companies to implement best practices when applying pesticide and fertilizer
- ❖ Task C-7: Promote living shorelines
- ❖ Task C-8: Preserve and maintain gullies for recreational areas
- ❖ Task C-11: Implement Low Impact Development through the use of green infrastructure
- ❖ Task C-12: Construct Low Impact Development pilot projects in public right-of way and green space
- ❖ Task G-1: Design more parks for passive recreation

Year 1:

- ❖ Task C-9: Develop and/or update City codes to protect the environment
- ❖ Task C-10: Identify development incentives for environmentally friendly project components

Year 2-3

- ❖ Task C-4: Develop and implement green space maintenance plans for areas that are not covered by existing maintenance agreements
- ❖ Task E-20: Develop a citywide Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Masterplan

Year 3-5

- ❖ Task G-2: Develop new parks in the eastern and southern portions of Fairhope