

My name is Bruce Ketcham. For those who do not know me, I am a year-round Excelsior resident. I have prepared a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the Grounds Committee's accomplishments during the past year for those in present in our community room, but particularly for those who are attending by Zoom and have not been on the property for a while. To set the stage, I want to remind the owners that in July 2022 the prior board contracted with Tropical Gardens Landscape (TG) to maintain our lawn, plants, and irrigation system.

Gulf Side Property.

1. During repair and painting of the gulf side building, the landscape of the gulf side property had been damaged by the routing of access to beach to the north side of the building. In addition, the irrigation system on the gulf side property was essentially non-functional. TG initially trimmed the existing plantings and rebuilt the irrigation systems – installing new controls, replacing valves, wiring the valves back to the controls, repairing leaking irrigation lines, and replacing irrigation heads.
2. After those repairs, the committee worked with TG to redesign the landscape and hardscape to improve the appearance and function of the gulf side property. The prior board approved those changes in September 2022 and the work was accomplished in December. Improvements were made with the addition of seating areas by the grills.
3. Improvements were made to the appearance of the landscape on the northside of the building by installation of new shade tolerant sod and installation of drip irrigation to maintain the planter boxes by the entrances to the building.

Bay Side Property

1. Similar actions were taken on the bay side property – initially existing plant material was trimmed and the rebuild of the irrigation system began.
2. The repair and painting of the bay side buildings damaged some of the landscape. The committee worked with TG to identify plants that needed to be replaced. The damaged plants were replacement in January.
3. The building repair contractor replaced the sidewalk that had been cracked and broken by the lifts during the construction.

Excelsior Grounds is more than plants, grass, and trees. It includes everything that affects the appearance of the property. And that takes a team – the committee, Dan, and our maintenance staff.

1. In January, I worked with Masterpiece construction to design the reconstruction of the bridge over the lagoons on the east end of the bay side property. The board approved the reconstruction in the March meeting and the bridge was rebuilt in May.
2. Jim London worked with our maintenance to clean and maintain the architectural fountains on the bayside and gulf side properties.
3. I located new globes to replace the missing and broken globes at the entrances and exits to the underbuilding parking areas for the bayside building. I located a cost-effective sign company to make and apply the lettering. Mark installed the globes in September.
4. The replacement of the mushroom lights with pagoda lights along the roadways and sidewalks and that was approved by the board in January was finally accomplished by Orv and Mark in September.

5. The new sign company manufactured new pool rule signs to replacement the discolored signs and update the signs with the current statutory language. Orv repainted the wood that the signs were mounted to and installed the new manufactured signs in September.
6. A replacement directional signed was manufactured by the new sign company to replace the faded and unreadable sign at the entrance to the bayside property. The new sign company manufactured the sign. Orv and Mark straightened and painted the existing sign posts and installed the sign.
7. Over the past year Jim London worked with our umbrella and chair supplier to repainted and restrap worn pool and beach chairs. He and Carol selected new tropical design cushions to complement the furniture on the bayside pier.
8. John Kurakis suggested that tilapia be purchased to control the algae that was growing in the bayside lagoons. In the spring, he traveled to a fish farm and picked them up. Now instead of algae we have ducks floating on the water.

Challenges during 2023.

1. Extreme drought conditions and a burned-out pump on the bayside well resulted in additional damage to the plants and lawn.
2. Bayside plant replacement from drought damage as well as contractor damage the was not previously replanted was recommended during July board meeting was postponed due to lack of money.
3. Planned fall tree trimming was postponed to new year do to lack of money.
4. Sod replacement recommend during July board meeting was postponed due to lack of money.
5. Continued irrigation improvements and modifications were postponed by the board due to lack of money.
6. Fence damage around the gulf side building caused by Hurricane Ian remains to be repaired.

In closing, I would like to continue to work to improve the appearance of the property and hope the new board will consider my appointment as chairman of the grounds committee.