

380 TREES PLANTED IN JANUARY 2014



The article in the February 2014 Seven Oaks News was about the removal of 354 oak trees between the sidewalks and streets in the first of five phases of the Oak Tree Removal Plan. This article is about 380 trees planted between the sidewalks and streets as specified in the first phase of the Oak Tree Removal Plan.

Before telling about planting the new trees, a little background might be helpful. To determine where the trees would be planted, the CDD Board took the following actions:

- *Worked with Pasco County to insure we met their land development code requirements*
- *Hired an arborist and professional landscaping company to insure that each tree planted would not have the problems of the oak trees and these trees were landscaped to maximize the overall appearance of each neighborhood*
- *Held several workshops so the Seven Oaks residents could provide inputs on each aspect of the project*

The new Pasco County Land Development Code adopted in 2011 required us to plant at least as many trees as we removed. It also required us to plant at least 8 different species of trees since we were removing more than 35 trees.

Based on feedback from residents at the workshops, the CDD Board decided that the new trees would be put between the sidewalks and streets. So, we started working with Ron Litts, arborist we hired, and Alyson Utter, landscape architect with Anderson Lesniak Limited, Inc., to determine the exact location of each new tree. Ron recommended 11 species of trees which the CDD Board accepted.

To insure the trees would have room to grow, Ron and Alyson recommended that the trees be placed 30 ft from other trees, 30 ft from light poles, 15 ft from driveways, and 15 ft from ground level utilities such as fire hydrants and stormwater inlets. To maximize the appearance, Alyson recommended that a limited number (i.e. 2-7) of different species

be placed in groups in each neighborhood. After the CDD Board agreed, a plan was submitted to Pasco County which they approved.

The CDD Board knew from reports that it had received that there were five problems with the oak trees between the sidewalks and streets. Before any oak tree was removed and new trees planted, here's how we addressed the five problems:

- 1) WRONG TREE FOR LOCATION:** Based in Ron's recommendations, the CDD Board selected 11 species of trees that would have enough room between the sidewalks and streets.
- 2) POOR QUALITY TREES:** The CDD Board specified in the contract with the nurseries that the new trees had to be Florida #1 or better.
- 3) GROWN INCORRECTLY:** Only the nurseries who were growing the trees correctly were considered.
- 4) PLANTED WRONG:** In the contract with the company planting the trees, it states exactly how Ron specified the trees should be plant-

ed. It specifies how deep, the size of the hole, herbicides, pine straw, staked, etc. We tried not to overlook any detail that would insure the tree had the best opportunity to grow to its full potential.

5) NOT PROPERLY MAINTAINED: The CDD Board passed a resolution to assume maintenance of the trees between the sidewalks and streets. To get the maintenance started, gator bags were installed with each tree for the first year and will be periodically filled with water to insure each tree gets adequate water.

The CDD Board did not want to just trust that we would get Florida #1 trees that had been grown correctly and planted correctly just because the contracts specified it. Scott Brizendine (District Manager), Tyree Brown (Rizzetta Operations Manager), and Ron Litts (arborist) closely monitored the delivery and planting of the new trees. They worked with the Arbor-Tech principles, who ensured that each tree met or exceeded contract specifications and was planted correctly.

Oak Trees Removed New Trees Planted

Amberside
Brookforest
Coventry
Springwood
The Laurels



Arbor-Tech employee marks where a tree will go in The Laurels



Darren Jenne (Right), adds water after insuring that there is enough loose dirt around the tree roots

SECOND PHASE

The second phase includes removing 385 oak trees and planting 395 new trees in Edenfield, Forest Edge, Pinecrest, and Villas at Edenfield. In addition, it includes removing 35 oak trees and planting 20 new trees in common areas such as the clubhouse. We are working now to insure there is enough funds in the budget and that the nurseries will have the type of trees we will need in January 2015.



Darren Jenne (Left), principle for Arbor-Tech, makes sure that one of the White Crepe Myrtle trees being planted in Amberside is planted correctly.



Ron Litts (Right), arborist, shows Mike Rose, principle for Arbor-Tech, how he would like for each of the trees to be staked so it will not move.



Pictured above, an Arbor-Tech employee drills a hole using a Bobcat digger. Below, workers loosen dirt and enlarge the hole to correct size.



After the pine straw has been added, one of the Arbor-Tech employees attaches a gator bag on a Ligustrum in Amberside to ensure that it will have adequate water for the first year.