

Tamarron Association of Condominium Owners

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE LANDSCAPE PLAN

Owners

Mark Pelizza (Gamble Oak)
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Lynnette Thibodeaux (Pinecone)
Rich Wiltz (High Point)
Pat Penton (Lodge)

Management

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Staff Support

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Executive Board

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MISSION

To develop and periodically update a comprehensive plan for approval by the TACO Executive Board to upgrade and maintain the community's grounds and landscaping to a level that is pleasing to Tamarron owners and guests. The plan will equally consider the ongoing sustainability of landscaping while addressing the challenges of the mountain environment, water and irrigation requirements and limited landscaping staff.

INTRODUCTION

During the first regular meeting after the Annual Homeowners Meeting in September 2021, the President approved the creation of a Landscape Committee. Subsequently, the Executive Board determined that the Landscape Committee had been previously established but had become inactive and determined that the current team was a reconstitution of the dormant Landscape Committee. The Committee met on 9/15 and determined the Committee should prepare a plan to improve the Tamarron landscaping. The Executive Board approved limited funding during the November 2021 meeting for consultation with a professional landscape architect to recommend design options to improve the Tamarron landscaping. This consult was performed in December 2021. The Committee met on February 15, 2022 and March 1, 2022 to further refine the Plan. With input from home owners, and careful consideration by the Committee, this plan is the product of this collaborative effort.

The plan is divided into Priorities, Current Conditions, Actions and Schedule. By executing the elements that are described in this Plan, the Committee believes that the Mission will be fulfilled.

PRIORITIES

1. *Appearance.* Not to diminish any of the priorities listed below, the appearance of the Tamarron landscape is what gets the attention of, and the most commentary from, homeowners. Upgrading the landscaping per the Mission will increase the communities "curb appeal" and result in both aesthetic and economic value to the homeowners.
2. *Employee Safety.* There is no compromising safety. In addition to PPE, any work condition that may result in a potentially unsafe accident should be mitigated.
3. *Safety to Structures.* The fire hazard potential at Tamarron and its environs is common knowledge. Maps within the Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW) analysis that

was performed for La Plata County in 2020¹ show the Tamarron area as a HIGH hazard area both in the Landscape and Local categories. Therefore, landscape decisions in the approved plan should include fire hazard mitigation.

4. *Costs.* The landscape plan must be fiscally responsible. Homeowners do not want landscape improvements at any expense, or even at an incremental fee increase. Therefore, the plan should be tailored to meet the Mission and Priorities with existing resources by increasing employee productivity, replacing high maintenance elements with low maintenance elements, and phasing the improvements overtime to meet budgetary realities.

5. *Productivity.* Staffing constraints are now, and will be in the future, a fact. The only solution to “more results” with finite staffing is higher productivity and potential outsourcing. Productivity per staff member can be increased through planning, investment in modern equipment and power tools, plus the proper selection and use of pre-emergent and post emergent herbicides to reduce the manpower requirement.

6. *Water conservation.* Water is a precious commodity in the west, and, likely will be more so in the future. Irrigation (sprinklers) should be designed for efficiency and maintained for proper function. Plantings should be chosen so that water requirements are minimized.

7. *Suitable plantings.* All replacement plantings should be chosen for aesthetic appeal, while being low maintenance, requiring modest water needs (or even drought tolerant), and adaptive or native to our mountain environment here at Tamarron.

8. *Staff Training.* As with any occupation continuous training will lead to an understanding of Best Practices, which can be applied to the ongoing improvement of the landscape.

ACTIONS

1. Ornamental beds: completed in 2021 at Highpoint, and upcoming at Pinecone and Gamble Oak. Old landscape fabrics, plants, roots and soil shall be excavated in the landscape ornamental beds with a backhoe, and removed from the premises.

2. Replacement plantings: ornamental landscape bed plantings shall be designed by staff for minimum maintenance, water requirements, and ideal for, or native to, the TACO mountain environment. All beds shall be generously mulched with suitable materials to preserve moisture and discourage weed growth. These recommendations are consistent with Priorities 1,6 & 7.

Rebuilding and replanting the beds will be a significant investment. These beds are a semi-permanent installation; therefore, this work must be done correctly the first time. The Highpoint 2022 landscape remediation is planned for the growing season. The selection and layout of plants have been planned carefully by the staff, and the design provided to the Committee for comment. The design may be subject to minor changes within existing budget constraints throughout the planting season depending on conditions that are encountered on the ground or other minor changes that the Committee agrees upon. This procedure will be evaluated by the Board, before deciding on the path forward for the Gamble Oak and Pinecone remediation process.

It is noteworthy that a number of small, random beds exist at the three communities. In the past, some owners designed and planted their own small ornamental flower beds. Over time these owners left Tamarron; the beds remained. These minor beds shall be removed and replaced with turf grass, or, another low or no maintenance ornamental grass. The goal is to

¹ Final Recommendations to Reduce Wildfire Risk to Communities: La Plata County, Colorado.
PREPARED BY: Wildland Professional Solutions, Inc. Wildfire Planning International, LLC. USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station. September 2020

have no more than three or four ornamental beds at each community. The result would be a reduction in the up-front cost of plant replacement, and thereafter, the cost of maintenance due to the smaller number of beds.

3. Trees trimming: in addition to the appearance value of tree trimming, removing the lower limbs is necessary for the safety of the lawn care staff, who ride the mowers under limbs (eye hazard). It will also improve turf growth by allowing sunlight under the trees. However, at Tamarron fire safety is even more important. Best Practice for fire hazard mitigation has been developed by Colorado State Forest Service². The Board had budgeted Defense Zone 1 tree remediation as described therein. A Defense Zone 1 would result in most flammable vegetation (tree limbs) trimmed to a distance of 15 feet from each structure, with the exception of low-growing shrubs or fire-resistant plants. All property-wide limbs should be removed 10 feet off of the ground, along with limbs that overhang and touch roofs. Pine needles should be raked away 10 feet from all structures. After Defense Zone remediation TACO staff shall contact the Durango Fire Protection District Fire Marshall and request an inspection of the work to certify that Defense Zone 1 standards have been achieved.

Establishment of a Defense Zone 1 at the outlying properties is consistent with the criteria in Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 8 and allow lighting for better turf grass growth under trees.

4. Shrubbery: all shrubbery shall be maintained neatly at unit stairway entrances, along with other areas where free standing shrubbery is present. Regular shearing will fill out shrubs, reducing the stalky appearance; for example, some homeowners have elected to maintain the shrubs in front of their units making the shrubs look healthy and well cared for.

TACO staff shall review necessary tool and equipment upgrades to increase efficiency in maintaining shrubbery and turf areas.

5. Sprinkler systems repair and upgrade: the efficiency of the existing sprinkler systems shall be improved with more regular inspection and specific training for the staff. Because malfunctions can occur from time to time (and leaks are wasteful per Priority 6), TACO management should reach out to homeowners to report any malfunction so that it can be repaired ASAP. Properly functioning sprinklers are important to maintain turf grass and conserve water, according to Priority 6.

There are certain areas that irrigation has not been installed, such as the eastern edge at Gamble Oak, the entrance to Gamble Oak and the west edge of High Point. This has resulted in desert-like conditions that create a dust nuisance for the homeowners and staff.

Some residents have elected to water non-irrigated areas with a hose and sprinkler. This type of attempted maintenance is not an efficient use of water because there is no timer function. A sprinkler that is left on for a prolong period of time may result in overwatering, runoff and waste. Installation of a properly engineered zone of automatic sprinklers would result in water savings, pursuant to Priority 6. The Committee recommends that additional sprinkler system zones be added on the west side of High Point, the east side of Gamble Oak, and the SW side of Pinecone.

6. Grass seeding and ground cover: grass seeding bare spots is an annual maintenance item. Staff should have the equipment to do a proper job, for instance spike aerators and simple seed spreaders.

² Colorado State Forest Service. Protecting Your Home from Wildfire: Creating Wildfire Defensible Zones. October 2012. www.csfs.colostate.edu

In certain areas grass will not grow like shady areas under trees and high erosion areas. The staff should consider a mulch type ground cover under trees and stone armor in high erosion areas. (One source of mulch under trees that should be considered is the use of wood chips from tree trimming activity).

7. Training: important to keep up with current developments in any field; necessary per Priority 8. TACO landscape can take advantage on-line CSU professional landscape technician training³.

SCHEDULE

Landscaping is work performed in natural systems that is subject to the uncertainties of: nature; certain contracted activities that may not be available as planned; design features may change midcourse; increases in productivity discovered by the Committee; or many other external factors that control timing. As such the timing of the elements described in the Schedule may take more or less time than was initially predicted, making the Schedule a working document. A realistic estimate of work-flow throughout the year 2022 has been prepared by the Committee. Necessarily, the Committee will evaluate the schedule at each meeting and make adjustments as necessary

BOARD REVIEW

The Landscape Committee shall report progress to the Board on a time-line that is requested by the Board.

³ <https://www.online.colostate.edu/badges/nalp/>