# Dorner Drive project

Update as of 9/29/2020 – call with Morgan, Frank, Eliana, Brent, Ryan, Layne, Erin

1) Layne will contact suppliers and provide cost info to Morgan by Friday

2) Frank has info about one price and is getting the other price, too. Using a woven fabric between the courses to seal them up and get a good structural approach to put it back together – use dirt and rock to backfill the exterior that’s been dug out and use a landscape type rock around the entire perimeter of the pond to protect from mowers - $185k – budget $200k and it will take about 40 days of labor time to complete.

Not mowing it every week anymore – take out the landscape rock around it from the costs.

Coordination with Environmental Compliance? We will get them all involved.

Timing – funding would come in January - get it done in the spring. The construction work would be able to start in March/April – plus 8 weeks - for pond wall rehab. Planting could be done in the fall… seeds need consistent watering – get started on plantings as soon as the construction work is completed. (construction of bridge for RORG will also happen in the spring)

Student impact: students already use the site for informal picnics – and this will make it safer and more sustainable for them to enjoy the area – there is a direct link between nature and peoples wellbeing and mental health and this allows for a close location for members of the community to interact with nature and recuperate from our stressful lives – from extension – also this is part of the student interaction that we have with the RORG would be extended to the DDRP – working directly with classes – the plugs can be a service learning opportunity – really good success with that, even in covid – several dozen volunteers – and they are intergenerational volunteers – as long as the guardians of the galaxy is blasting over the speakers – next to LAR, allen hall, mckinley health center – provides benefits for students having this literally in their backyard – people going to the mckinley health center and the well-traveled ped pathway from urbana to campus and –

It would be a south campus water-way destination – by changing out the vegetation we are creating the coordinator that supports pollinators and thereby increasing the amount of birds and butterflies that students can enjoy - also good for the greenhouses across the street, which need pollinators to enter them – help bring in more pollinators – direct benefit to ACES and IB students, and ongoing USDA research and their grad students… and they have the plant collections in there with tours for grade schools as well

Wanted to include the indigenous students in the design – Jenny Davis – we intend to work with the indigenous tribes – through the provost, and in alignment with the resilient landscape strategy. Chancellor’s fellow of indigenous research and ethics. And assistant professor, and… Jenny L. Davis is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and an Associate Professor of Anthropology and American Indian Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign where she is the director of the American Indian Studies Program.

Conversion of low mow areas to high quality vegetation – elucidation – stop being so verbose need more parsimony

Two of three landscapes being integrated into extension programming throughout the state. – very impactful!

Extension will assist campus to convert 10 acres of low-mow zone to high-quality native plantings, beginning with the Dorner Drive Retention Pond. For stormwater ponds, naturalizing is a preferred approach that treats water quality as well as water quantity. Converting Dorner Drive Retention Pond’s vegetation creates another campus model that sets the standard for both urban and rural ponds.

For step 2 – detailed plan, schematic, etc. – also need to address the maintenance plans (and the installation costs) – and the plan for how to work through the finalization of the plan – with no new grounds workers, budget cuts, and no grounds gardeners.

Lean heavily on master naturalists – and get them to take on more work – so they look at larger areas, such as this space – 2.5 acre native prairie – certified pesticide applicators 🡪 new class for Master Naturalists planned for the spring (but don’t tell people yet) – and cooperate with classes and student groups.

Researchers will talk with us next time about their intentions for working with this area to track mosquitos. Some possibility for entomology students to work with them…

Status update – orchard downs low mow zone conversion –> loss of champion – working on it now with new students this year – strong communication with the students and Grounds. “From the Ground Up”

Vet Med rain garden – Grounds added some plants and Jessica Brinkworth from the carbon gardens – she grew the wrong species for her garden at Davenport – and Brent told her to put half of them at the Vet Med raingarden and some others at the Vet Med prairie in the front

The Vet Med prairie is a weedy mess – could we connect it with master naturalists? Wayne spent some time in there. Asked Brandon Boyd what he is interested in having happen there… they haven’t had a chance to reply – it is salvageable

Updated 9/15/2020 – call with Eliana, Ryan, Frank, Brent, Isaac, and Morgan

* From last call: 1) Layne will get the map to Brent this week. 2) Brent sent the marked up retaining wall map to Frank. Then Frank met on 9/2 with Robbie Bauer, Matt Dalton, and Rube King, and they are close to having the estimate done. They will have two prices 1) sketch that Brent put together, and 2) for the whole job – two options and the numbers will tell us. The SSC will tell us what they can fund.
* SSC – due 10/5 – I will put it together with help from others
* Planning and Buying Plants
	+ Layne will be working with Erin on that – with buy-in from Ryan and Brent. Layne and Erin will do conceptual stuff, with plant/seed mixes and some specific plugs and send it to Brent and Ryan for their approval.
	+ Buying the plants… Ryan could help out with ordering the plants – For the RORG, Layne spec’d the plants, then worked with Extension to order them – sourcing it from the vendors – then can F&S do the POs and take it from there? – Ryan says, sure – if Eliana’s team sources the materials, Ryan can get them ordered.
* Typical sources: Pizzo nursery (Jack Pizzo), Midwest ground covers, Extension’s native shrub and trees sale is from Possibility Place.
	+ If there is something we already buy in bulk – from Grounds – can confirm the vendors for sourcing the plants
	+ Can also check with vendor to see if they have it in stock – RORG efforts entailed getting new vendors
	+ Also seed mix and the plugs are separate.
	+ <https://www.pizzonursery.com/seed-mixes>
	+ <https://203304d9-e490-4fcf-b80b-068ea8799fb6.filesusr.com/ugd/1f441c_0711ed6035b04b50972b2e652014c866.pdf>
	+ <https://203304d9-e490-4fcf-b80b-068ea8799fb6.filesusr.com/ugd/1f441c_bdd36a604ab445f8adf601c1bcdc61cd.pdf>
	+ <https://203304d9-e490-4fcf-b80b-068ea8799fb6.filesusr.com/ugd/1f441c_9663a383a869488683b38834a6a0f2a8.pdf>
	+ I would go with Dry-mesic over the slope mix. Pretty much the same mix though.
* SSC applications
	+ no others from Brent
	+ Eliana likely will submit more applications – she said she would try to get the remainder to repay Grounds – but we do not recommend that she seek that aspect
* Student interaction?
	+ Benches? ADA compliant?
		- Yes, - should be ADA accessible
		- Just do an overlook – donors, such as Pizzo, State Farm, etc…

Updated by M. White on 9/1/2020

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Retaining wall maintenance:

* It’s only 3-3.5 feet deep, so shouldn’t need much funding – no geo-grid or anything
* Just take it apart, do some hand work, and put it back together
* Hopefully less than $100k
* Beth got the drawings to Brent – they are under buildings

Look at the trees:

* Ryan Welch looking at the trees? – chipping away at some of those saplings – talked about doing some work on the service berry out there – maybe lift those up slightly – and some aren’t in the best of shape – doing pretty well otherwise.
* Brent looked at them – just the mulberries – get rid of those

Add plant expenses:

* Keep total cost under $150k for request to SSC.
* Converting the low mow zones into high quality native plants – mezzic something: mezic and dry prairie plants – not a wet mezzic –
* Also say that this space will be a good attribute for the students for their well being etc.
* It is a native sanctuary nearby the residence halls.

Scope Discussion:

* Going to Pennsylvania? – would add Campus Rec – with Illini Woods to add bluebells in the non-park bench areas – away from picnic tables
* The ICECF grant expires August 2021 – want to get an extension to the fall of 2021
* Including Campus Rec could be included now and show it in phases, where we include who is included and what to – cover in Phase 1.
* Terry Elmore – the cuts coming to Campus Rec –
* ICECF is just a few thousand dollars – bring them into the conversation to see how they feel – remove mowing?
* Illini Grove – share the costs with F&S – we do the trees there and they mow the east side to Lincoln – all of the grove, back of tennis courts, and we maintain the Dorner tree frontage – from courts to Dorner – don’t really know where their property ends on the north side of the courts – not a lot of mowing, except under the trees
* What about between the two courts – 4-5 trees – any grass around the courts either they pay F&S to mow, or they mow them.
* South side is steep with a lot of rock – from Pennsylvania to the north end of the courts that is their responsibility, and we mow the Dorner side and the south for them
* Grounds handles the costs of maintaining the trees in Illini Grove.
* Eliana and Brent let Terry Elmore know – he is fine with it.

Design:

* Drawing of the area
* Include phase one, two, possible three
* Focus entirely on Dorner Pond
	+ Phases are
	+ Retaining wall
	+ spraying and seeding
	+ Plugs
	+ Benches, etc.

Decided: Only Dorner Pond at this time, don’t go all the way to the sidewalk

Next steps, as of 9/1/2020

1. Layne will outline area on a map, and Brent will confirm it.
2. Brent will mark up a map of the retaining wall, and Frank will get a cost estimate.

On another note: Eliana is seeking an extension and research proposal that would support Layne – would we be willing to be listed as collaborating partners and do we have any existing connections

* Students at Orchard Downs working with F&S – From the Ground Up
* Indigenous student group – faculty? Jenny Davis
* Jeff Matthews? Wetland delineation in NRES
* Bill Sullivan? Busy
* Eliana will send us more info about the grant: <https://extension.illinois.edu/connection/2020-extension-collaboration-grants-request-proposals>
* Include INHS – ask Jamie Ellis
* Next steps: Eliana will ask us in email and we will seek researchers. Thanks!