

Laurel Community Farmstand

Senior Project HCS 462 Terje Johansen

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Senior Project

Yuma, AZ Farmstand

Introduction

This project was proposed to us by Tanimura and Antle along with Urban Community Partners.

Tanimura and Antle is an international farming company based out of Salinas. They farm across the U.S. as well as areas in South America. They grow a number of crops including lettuce, broccoli, and onions.

The Urban Community planners are based out of Monterey and are a real estate development and consulting company. They address the changing needs of the 21st century with sustainability and healthy beautiful communities in mind.

The president of Tanimura and Antle, Rick Antle, introduced a farmstand project to us in Yuma, Arizona in the Laurel Community. The Laurel community is a large scale community project on a piece of land that was used for farming but hasn't had good yields. The main objectives of Laurel Community are community, wellness sustainability and authenticity which come directly from the Urban Community partners goals. The Laurel Community projected plan will be a mixed-use traditional neighborhood development with 1,169 homes, a 25 acre local farm, and 110,000 square feet of commercial development including a mixed-use main street concept. There will be a recreation area, parks, trails and a community garden. In the development the idea was to bring farming into the community. This included a farmstead area that was left for agriculture use along with a farmstand. The project was for us to come up with a temporary farmstand that would be set up to sell fruits and vegetables but mainly to draw people to the area to bring awareness that there were plans to build a development at that location. Our group, Dana Curtice, Robert Vasilieff and Terje Johansen met with the developers three times. New ideas and information were presented in the first two meetings. The third meeting was to present our final design.

Materials and Methods

Initial contact of the group was made through a telephone conference between Rick Antle,

Jeffrey Gordon Smith (our project advisor) and a number of students. The second contact was in person with Rick Antle when he was visiting Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. He gave us the Laurel Community plan book which included the proposed development stages of the Laurel project. It had pictures of street and housing layouts along with housing styles. There was also a plant list of potential plants to be used in the landscapes which was helpful to us. Rick gave us some background of what he had in mind with a moveable farmstand of 500 square feet, no bigger. The surrounding area was to include tables and some landscaping.

Before the first meeting with Rick and Urban Community partners Dana, Robert, and I put together a slide show presentation using Microsoft PowerPoint (See Appendix A). Putting together the presentation included looking up information about Yuma, AZ to get an idea of the surrounding area. We researched demographics, climate, native plants, other plants commonly used in the area such as citrus grown for citrus production, other farmstands as examples of possible farmstand design ideas and information about the Laurel Community.

The first meeting with Rick Antle, Mathew E. Simis, Ian C. Gillis, and Keith L. McCoy was on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. Dana, Robert and I presented a slide show of background information of Yuma, Arizona and plant material considered for use around the farmstand and possible types of structures for the farmstand itself. At the end of the slide show was a slide with questions we had about the Laurel Community farmstand project (See Appendix A; Pg. 19). Rick, the planners and my group partners and I looked at the Laurel Community layout and talked about potential sites for the farmstand. One of the

issues was trying to define more specifically what the project was about and the desired location of the farmstand. There was talk about it being along the road with carts that would be able to be moved down the road as the housing development progressed. There was talk about putting it closer to the freeway. In the end it was decided that the farmstand location would be next to the soccer fields which is also next to what would be a shopping center and the permanent farmstand. The soccer fields were also going to double as a retention pond for rain water and lower than the surrounding area. The idea of first building sports fields and having a farmstand would be a draw to the Laurel Community. Other ideas we were given to include in the design were a pavilion for people to have events and provide shade, a family farm and a community garden which ties into the general idea of the Laurel Community. There was mention of having a citrus grove of heirloom varieties since it fits the Yuma area. Using citrus trees in the landscape was also suggested. The farmstand was not only to be for people of the Laurel Community but also for visitors.

We set the next meeting to be on Thursday, May 6, 2010 at 11 a.m. to present a rough draft of our designs. Before the next meeting each of us came up with our own design (See draft 1). Materials used for creating drawings were PC's with CAD programs, Dynascape, AutoCad, and a printer. In the design, I included a pavilion next to the soccer fields. On the other side of the soccer fields was an heirloom citrus grove. Plantings of Texas Mountain Laurel which are one of the main plants of the Laurel Community were used around the soccer field. Other plants are also used in the design around the soccer field and farmstand. In the first meeting, ideas of sustainability were brought up and means of power for the farmstand. In the first design, I brought up the idea of straw bale construction since it has good insulating properties. I also suggested using a Honeywell wind turbine for producing power for the farmstand (See Appendix B for Honeywell wt6500 information). Rick liked the idea of using big farm billboards like in Salinas as an advertisement for the farmstand. Other ideas included an Agave demonstration garden since it is used to make Tequila and it is fitting for the area.

At the second meeting with the developers, presenting the first design, the idea of the farmstand area being an oasis was discussed. There was talk of temporary placement of palm trees in an area. A section would be used by a palm tree grower. When I think of an oasis I think of a watering hole in the middle of a desert with some palm trees and grasses around it. Having a water feature was suggested. Since it is a farmstand and Yuma, AZ I thought it would be fitting to use a round water trough as a water feature in the final draft. Each of our designs was different and the placement of the farmstand was in different locations on each of our drawings. Rick and the planners concluded that making the location of the farmstand in the middle of the parking island next to the soccer fields would be best.

On the final draft, I included a palm grove with the idea that it would function as storage of palm trees for a palm tree grower (See draft 2; also Appendix D; Pg. 28). The farmstand was relocated to the parking island along with the landscaping around it. Trails were included leading to the demonstration gardens and the community garden. Farm carts that are moveable were included. The thought was that these carts could be moved to other locations like farmers markets. I also made a Dynacape color printout which gives color to the plants, walkways, and hardscape (See color printout Appendix D; Pg. 29).

The last meeting with Rick Antle, Mathew E. Simis, Ian C. Gillis, and Keith L. McCoy was Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 11 a.m. We presented our final presentations. They thanked us for our efforts and they explained that they would take our designs and ideas and would like to incorporate them in their design process. A SketchUp model was mentioned as a good tool to get a feel for the space and layout. I put together a SketchUp model to send them after our meeting as part of the project. They asked us to send them a copy of our designs. Rick offered a check for \$15,000 to the Horticulture Department at Cal Poly which recognized our project group for our efforts on the Laurel Farmstand project.

<u>Analysis</u>

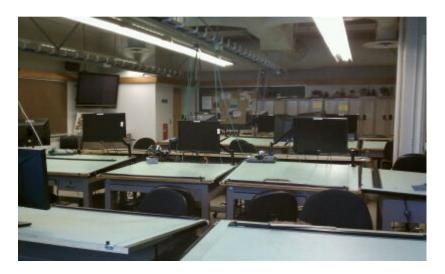
In overview of this project, one of the issues was trying to define more specifically what the project was about and the location of the farmstand. There was talk about it being along the road and being carts that would be moved down the road as the housing development progressed. There was talk about putting it closer to the freeway. In the end it was decided that the farmstand location would be next to the soccer fields which is also next to what will be a shopping center and the permanent farmstand. The idea of first building sports fields and having a farmstand would be a draw to the Laurel Community before other phases of the housing development were completed.

Situations that arose that were not discussed in the beginning of the project were the soccer field doubling as a retention pond, along with the need for drainage canals and potential flash flood issue. The other part of this project, which in a lot of cases is outside the scope of landscape design, was the building of farmstand sales and also the challenge of how to get power since there is no onsite power at this time.

One of the Urban Community Partners, Keith McCoy, asked if any of us had used Google SketchUp to make 3-D models. I had a little exposure to it and as a follow up I made a SketchUp model. It gives an idea of what the layout of a project would be like in 3-D space rather than 2-D space which gives a view looking down on the plan and all the objects are flat (See appendix C for SketchUp pictures). Making the sketchUp model gave me more exposure to 3-D modeling and the usefulness as a design tool.

This opportunity was good exposure to working with land developers of a relatively large housing development. It gave good exposure to what a landscape design project on a large scale would

be like along with issues that may arise. Another great part of the project was that our involvement raised money for Cal Poly. The \$15,000 that was donated was used to get computers for the drafting lab to be used by future students for landscape design among other uses.



Picture of Computers in drafting lab