

DATE: November 15, 2017

SUBJECT: University of Tennessee Lone Oaks Farm Master Plan

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Campus master plans are an essential element of higher education public policy. Master plans provide an opportunity for long-range planning that incorporates the institution’s needs and ambitions, while also providing the public and state government a sense for how the institution might evolve over time. Whether the acquisition of strategic property, the need for and efficient use of facilities, or an analysis of how the campus footprint meshes with the surrounding community, master plans provide a method of anticipating and preparing for the future needs of the campus and the students it serves. THEC requires institutions to produce a master plan every ten years that addresses near, mid-, and long-term needs of the campus with respect to building and land use, open space, vehicular circulation and parking, and land acquisition opportunities.

MASTER PLAN SUMMARY

Lone Oaks Farm, a 1,200-acre complex located in Middleton, serves as the home for many UT Extension programs in west Tennessee, including the regional 4-H Youth Development Camp. The site hosts visitors and conducts three primary functions: administration of youth education and developmental programs; agricultural production and research; and facilitation of entertainment and recreation for community members, vendors, and guests. The farm’s primary function, however, is school outreach and youth engagement. Currently, 1.2 million students live within 150 miles of Lone Oaks Farm, with 430,000 living within 75 miles.

Acquired by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture as a working farm in 2015, the property comes with facilities—including barns, stables, hiking trails, and ponds—conducive to outdoor youth development. This master plan will help identify needed facilities improvements to make the property fully operational.

The Master Plan for Lone Oaks Farm was developed collaboratively by Nelson, Byrd, & Woltz (landscape architecture); El Dorado, Inc. (architecture and design); W. M. Whitaker & Associates (landscape architecture); and the UT College of Architecture and Design. The plan calls for the addition of 200,000 GSF through three phases divided between the farm's areas of focus: agriculture production, youth education, and leadership development.

Phase one of the project will focus on STEM Education, with the construction of a STEM & Farm Center and a greenhouse, among other renovations and improvements. Phase two will emphasize Youth in the Outdoors, with the construction of four student cabins, four staff cabins, a dining hall, a recreation sports center, an amphitheater, and rifle and archery ranges. Phase three will highlight Leadership Development, including the construction of an administration building, infirmary, four student cabins, a swimming pool, and a low ropes course. In total, 192 student and 24 counselor beds will be constructed across sixteen ecological-themed cabins.

Other projects not included in these phases include remodeling and aligning all current facilities to code, constructing a conference center, adding five executive cabins, and restoring the farm to its natural ecological state.

RECOMMENDATION

The 2017 Lone Oaks Farm Master Plan provides a comprehensive yet flexible plan to guide the facility for the next decade. It has been thoroughly reviewed and THEC staff recommend it for approval.



Site Conditions



Site Boundary and Conditions

The Lone Oaks Farm property includes 1,200 acres of scenic pastures, large bodies of water, and protected woodlands; it is a complex site that will accommodate a wide variety of programming.

Fields and forest area exist in nearly equal proportions and the site is readily accessible by an extensive road and trail network.



Proposed Framework

Through a series of presentations and workshops the design team worked with members of the Planning Committee and Executive Review Team to develop and refine the preferred organization of the farm.

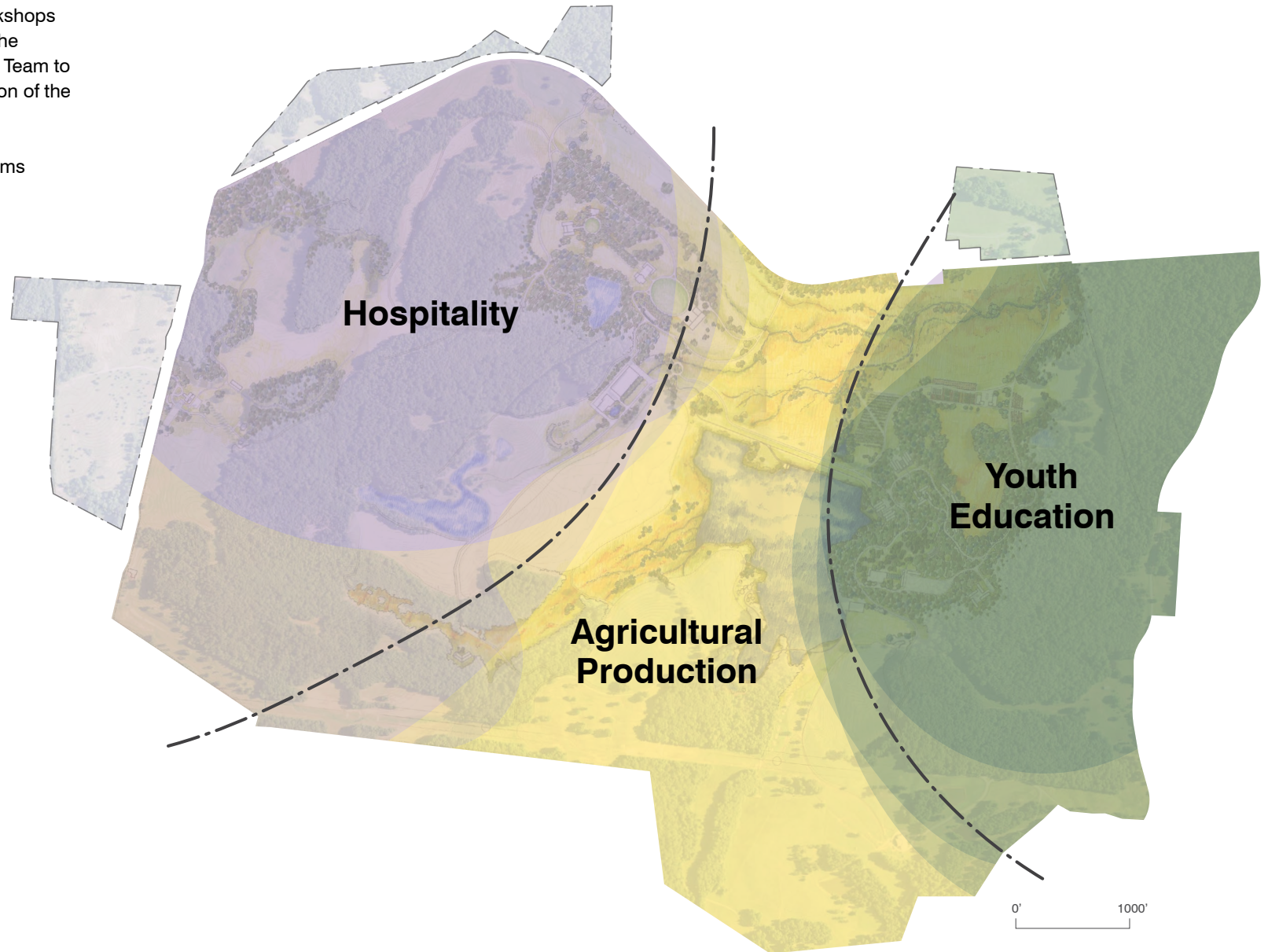
The preferred scheme consolidated programs related to youth education to the east and Hospitality programs to the west.

Youth Education Programs:

- 4-H Camp
- STEM Center
- STEM School
- Camping Area

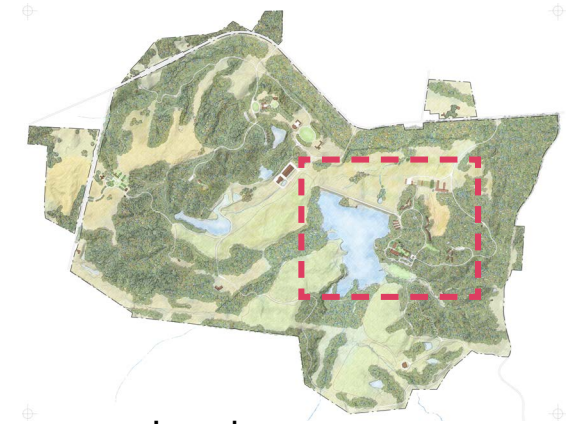
Hospitality Programs:

- Conferences
- Health and Wellness
- Lodging
- Events
- Sporting Clays
- Leadership Center



Focus Area: Youth Education & 4-H Overview

The 4-H Camp is situated within the Upland Forest on the eastern side of the property, in close proximity to the Big Lake. Upon entering the property, campers will be taken through a sequence of ecologies and functioning landscapes. Initially, meadows interwoven with a meandering stream and braided channels transition to the 4-H Agricultural Center, and into the forest, traversing the perimeter of a native warm season grass meadow and pasture. Ultimately, campers will arrive at a campus core, and disperse to one of four cabin clusters, each a tribute to a unique landscape: water and wetland; forest and silvopasture; meadow and pasture; ravine and forest. Recreation and education are immersed within the forest and its glades, lake and wetlands, and agriculture.



Legend

1. Dining Hall
2. Recreation Center
3. Parking and Drop-Off
4. Infirmary and Admin Buildings
5. Amphitheater
6. Meadow Cabins
7. Fire Ring
8. Lake Cabins
9. Forest Cabins
10. Ravine (Staff) Cabins
11. STEM & Farm Center
12. Greenhouse and Storage Barn
13. Vegetable Garden
14. Swim Dock
15. Sail Dock
16. Board Walk
17. Zip Line & Canopy Tour
18. Shooting Range

Study Area: Hospitality Complex

The Hospitality Complex leverages the existing architecture and spatial arrangements of the Ledbetter era buildings on the 20 acre plateau to serve the proposed needs of this hospitality and conference center program. The strong axial geometries of this plateau are reinforced by the placement of a new Inn at the western edge of the ridge with the space in front of the current Stable as the rotational pivot.

The Inn will serve 30-40 people and is imagined to be a high-end residential structure for executives looking for a unique farm and retreat experience in rural Tennessee. Access to the Inn will be from a new road that will start at a fork in the existing road just beyond the entrance at 10,000 Lake Hardeman Road. The left fork will take visitors to the Restaurant area adjacent to the existing oval drive and the right fork will take visitors to the Inn and retreat cabins.

The Inn will be served by a dropoff area and valet service. Beyond the Inn entrance a proposed parking lot will be built for staff and visitor parking.

The current Stable will be repurposed into a restaurant and event space. The existing qualities of the architecture, including a tack room and one or more stables, will be used to create a unique space that feels authentic to the farm experience.

The current riding ring adjacent to the front of the Stable will be repurposed as a large lawn/landscape space to allow for spillover mingling space and for cocktails and small group gatherings. The edges of this exterior space will be more heavily planted to create a more inward and controlled viewshed experience. The three points of departure from this rotational pivot point, counterclockwise from the right, provide access back to the Inn, down the hill to the pedestrian only zone of the 'small lake', and east to the Health and Wellness Center.

The current Shop retains the ability to host wedding events. Additionally, it becomes a Wellness Center servicing the Inn residents and other executives and visitors to the Farm. Access to this building is from 10,000 Lake Hardeman Road.

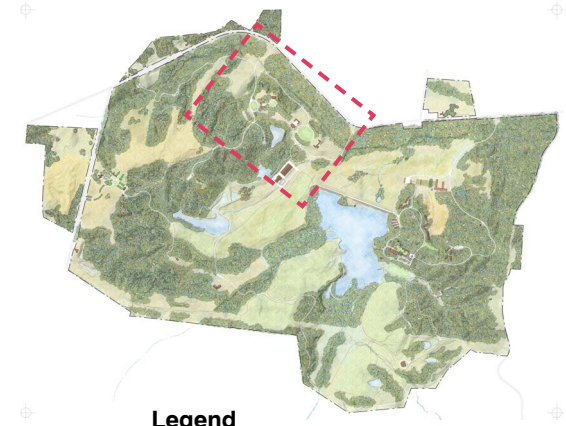
The 'Implement Shed' at the far eastern edge of the plateau will remain as a focal point and terminus to the central axis.



The Stables



Circle Drive



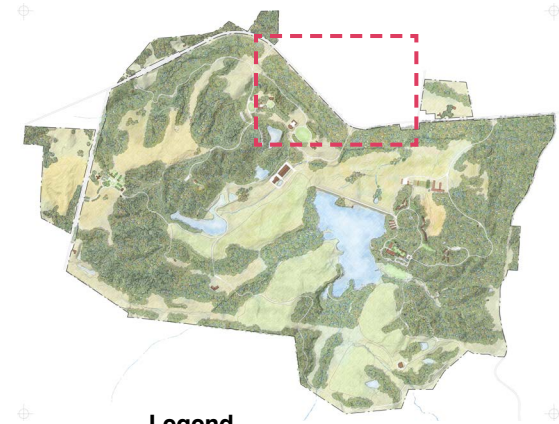
Legend

1. Inn & Meeting Rooms
2. Cabins
3. Resturant
4. Implement Shed and Tower
5. Health and Wellness Center
6. Parking

Study Area: Farm Center and Administration Hub

For the first phases of master plan implementation, the Sale Barn continues to function as it is. The commercial kitchen will continue to feed guests for various seminars, meetings and education events. Storage of the antique tool displays will continue as well as the use of various rooms for administrative purposes.

Eventually this area will take on the additional function of the centralized space for farm operations, maintenance, and administration. The commercial kitchen operation will be relocated to the Hospitality Complex at the new Restaurant facility.



Legend

1. Farm Center
2. Sale Barn
3. Rotational Grazing Pasture
4. Waterfall Cabin
5. Entertainment Pavilion

