

Sunday Real Estate



SARASOTA HERALD-TRIBUNE



Mature trees add beauty and value to University Park homesites. Existing trees are saved and other large trees are transplanted.

Moving Trees With Care

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A 15-foot live oak that has just taken a ride in a tree spade needs a big drink of water.

“About 120 gallons,” said Charles Varah, who represents the Pasold family, co-developers at University Park. “We get water to the trees as soon as they’re popped in the ground.”

In the last four years, University Park has saved about 1,800 trees by transplanting them. Many are transplanted within the 1,200-acre development on the Manatee County side of University Parkway. University Park was able to transplant more than 200 trees from nearby projects. Wayne Ruben and Benderson Development Company, developers of the new Home Depot on University Parkway, allowed the

University Park team to move trees from there and from another Benderson project.

“The timing was perfect. The trees would have been bulldozed. To us, this was a ‘good neighbor’ act that shows what can be achieved with such cooperation,” Varah said.

Live oaks, pines, laurel oaks, magnolia, hollies and maples up to 25 feet tall, with 6 to 10 inch diameter trunks were moved to enhance the University Park streetscape, golf course areas and screen the perimeter of the property. University Park claims a success rate of more than 90 percent.

“That’s impressive,” said Frank Melton of the Manatee County Extension Service. “The smaller trees do better: 4-inch diameter or less.”

Varah knew he had to surpass the generally accepted 25 to 40 percent



Trees to be transplanted are marked with a red ribbon for easy identification.

success rate. To ensure success, specialists Tim Verwiebe and Steve Hazeltine, owners of Charlotte-based Trees, Trees, begin the process three months before transplanting. They prune and give one or two root injections to help strengthen the tree.

Trees, Trees uses tree spades in either



The magnificent mature oaks throughout University Park add to the beauty and privacy of this established community.

the 65 or 90 inch size. The larger tree spade takes a 7.5 by 6 foot plug of soil out of the ground and lifts the tree and root ball. After the mature tree has been moved, the root ball is completely flooded using recycled water from the University Park lakes. A drip irrigation system designed for each individual tree regulates the amount of water a transplanted tree receives. The ground maintenance team can regulate the recycled water flow from 1 to 20 gallons per hour.

“The larger transplanted trees are more beautiful and they give a mature look to our neighborhood,” said Pat Neal, managing partner at University Park. “We’ve long been involved in conserving the environment. We use our recycled water to ensure these trees will survive. Our success rate has been so favorable, we plan to continue the program for many years.”

Neal says the new Warwick Gardens area was planned around the more than 100 existing trees that were 80-plus years old. They were too large to be moved so

they received a dose of pre-construction protective care, including root injection, pruning and watering process. The injections and nurturing will continue for another 12 months to insure their survival. Smaller, younger trees located in areas to be developed were transplanted to enhance the landscape.

The 62 treed sites in Warwick Gardens are as large as 80 by 260 feet and offer preserve, lake and golf course views. Home/site packages range from the high \$400,000s to more than \$1 million (for a large home on two sites).

Barbara and Rolf Pasold, Neal’s partners, always have encouraged saving trees, starting with the “woody” entrance and the fines charged to builders who fail to save a tree that has been flagged.

When builders save additional trees, “we pay them \$200 per tree. They pay us \$200 if they knock down a tree that should have been saved. It makes them think about the trees,” said Varah, a transplanted Londoner. “I’m impressed at how much trees have grown that we

transplanted four years ago. That much growth would take 25 years in England..”

Varah estimates the cost of transplanting a tree, trimming and irrigating it at about \$300 per tree, compared to \$500 for a nursery-bought tree.

“It’s economically viable, if we can keep a good success rate,” he said.

For more information about University park or its tree transplanting program, phone 941-351-7777 or 1-800-394-6325.



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