

JACARANDA COUNTRY CLUB VILLAS CONDOMINIUM
ASSOCIATION, INC.

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LANDSCAPE DIRECTION

August 18, 2003

Background

The Jacaranda Country Club Villas were developed in the 1980-1986 timeframe. Much of the landscape was planted by the original developer, so it is about 20 years old. Rather than replace each dead bush with a new bush, a Landscape committee was formed several months ago, to research issues, identify good horticultural practices, suggest designs, and help answer questions that many of you had for improving our landscaping. Attached is a condensed report that was put together for reference by individuals as well as the Board. The committee findings are consistent with the water restrictions, good horticultural practices, and use of native Florida plants.

Purpose

This document is intended as a reference for those contemplating changes to the Villas landscaping. It incorporates the "Uniform Planting Policy" that was issued April 23, 1996, along with findings of the 2003 Landscape Committee (Bob Burrows, Doris Gallipeau, Dick Hohan, Betty Lemasters, Judy Liston, Betty Voehl).

Procedure

The Landscape committee worked with the University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service Sarasota County to survey the site, analyze soil samples, and make recommendations. We used many pamphlets available from them, plus several books specific to Florida landscape plants. We used one book on Florida lawns, since the coop extension discouraged lawns and did not have much information on Florida lawns.

We met with Valley Crest, our current landscape maintenance provider, to understand their current practices and get a standard design for plantings around buildings, which can be used as a starting point for specific landscape changes if desired.

University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service--Recommendations

Shrubbery

Our shrubs are too close to buildings and often planted under the eaves. Many shrubs are poor choices for that location, requiring severe pruning to keep them small enough to fit the space. Severe pruning over a long period of time causes the plant to have leafless twigs in the interior of the bush.

Proper plant selection can eliminate much of the pruning requirements.

1-Plant shrubs with spacing that will be "correct" when the plant is five or more years old, rather than spacing them (as the original developer did) so the landscape looks "fully planted" from day one.

2-Shrubs should be planted at least "½ the diameter of the mature plant, plus 1 foot" from buildings, to facilitate maintenance to buildings and avoid mildewed walls. In no case, should shrubs be planted under the eaves of a building.

3-Non-palm trees should be planted at least 15 feet away from structures so the roots don't cause damage in the future; palm trees may be planted closer since their root ball is more like grass.

4-Trees should be surrounded by a mulch bed that is two feet in diameter for every 1 inch diameter of the tree trunk. The mulch bed should be expanded as the tree grows. The mulch bed prevents mowers from damaging the tree and reduces evaporation from the soil.

5-Shrub beds should be mulched liberally (2"-3" deep) to conserve moisture. Never use cypress mulch as it is slow to absorb moisture and its use encourages the deforestation of Florida's few remaining wetlands.

Lawn

From an environmental perspective, lawn areas should be minimized, since they consume water, fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicides, which runoff and pollute our lakes and streams.

Shrub beds or ground cover (such as perennial peanut) should be considered as alternatives, restricting turf to areas where you have heavily used ground and need to keep the dirt from eroding, or want the grass for activities such as walking, picnicking, sitting in lawnchairs etc.

Areas that are less than four feet across, such as between driveways, are candidates for ground cover, since they are difficult to irrigate without wasting water on the pavement. Areas that are on a slope (such as behind 809-861 toward the pond) are also candidates for ground cover, since they require hand mowing (i.e. weedeater) for a 3'-4' strip along the water.

Ground cover is laid as sod, so it is as labor intensive to convert from turf to ground cover as it is to lay new grass. Perennial peanut is the recommended ground cover. It looks like a 4-5" tall clover with yellow flowers. It does not need to be irrigated or mowed. However, it turns brown in winter if we have freezing temperatures, so is not as visually attractive as green grass.

Irrigation

Soil samples showed that our grass has a shallow root system. This and the current presence of Dollarweed are an indication the grass is being over watered. It should be watered only when it starts to wilt and irrigation schedule adjusted seasonally.

1-Group plants with similar watering requirements.

2-Use “native Florida” plants as they require less irrigation. The Co-op Extension Service does not expect the “once a week” watering restriction to be lifted, and in fact, they know of communities where no irrigation is allowed, so recommended we plan for that.

3-Sprinkler pop-ups should be used only in turf areas.

4-Drip or micro-irrigation should be used in landscape beds as it puts the water only where the plant is, eliminating water on buildings and windows.

From Florida Lawn Handbook, ISBN 0-8130-1643-6.

Since lawn expenses can vary widely, the first step is deciding the quality level one is willing to support: a showplace lawn, average lawn, or a means to control erosion. Within each level of expenditure, there are grasses that work best with that level of maintenance.

There are four types of grass suitable to Florida: Bermuda, Zoysia, St Augustine, and Bahia. The first two are high maintenance (monthly fertilization, twice per week mowing and frequent irrigation). St. Augustine is moderate maintenance (4 times/year fertilization, 3 times/year insecticide, weekly mowing), and Bahia is low maintenance.

Bermuda is not suitable for most home lawns because of the need for restricted use pesticides to control nematodes and insects. It requires the most maintenance for an acceptable appearance of any Florida turfgrass. It turns brown in winter, unless it is overseeded with rye grass.

St Augustine is a dark green turf with coarse leaf texture. It requires irrigation to produce a good quality turf. It is susceptible to chinchbug so the “Floritam” cultivar is recommended, as it is resistant. St Augustine must be sprigged or plugged to get adequate turf coverage within 3-12 months (or sodded for instant coverage). St Augustine won’t grow satisfactorily from seed in a home lawn environment, so seed is not commercially available.

Bahia grass will grow satisfactorily from seed and once established, is one of the most drought tolerant lawngrasses. It has fewer pest problems than any other Florida lawngrass. It is less visually attractive than St Augustine: Bahia has a crab-apple-green color, prolific seed heads, and a much lower turf density. This plus the tough leaves and stems which require weekly mowing with a rotary mower make this lawn less popular than St Augustine.

Alternatives to Improve Our Lawn Quality

We have a mixture of Bermuda and St. Augustine. Valley Crest is on a “moderate” maintenance schedule for our lawn (5 times/year fertilization, 3 times/year insecticide, 2 times/year herbicide, bi-weekly mowing in winter; weekly mowing in summer). If we want to improve the quality of our lawn beyond what weedkiller and fertilizer do to

increase turf density, then we could get rid of the Bermuda, since it requires high maintenance to look good, and turns brown in winter.

Sodding with St Augustine would provide the best visual solution, since we already have a lot of St Augustine and as noted above, it looks nicer than Bahia (which can be grown from seed.)

Next Steps

The direction presented here favors "native Florida, less reliant on irrigation and severe pruning". None of the recommendations provide immediate cost savings, either in labor or materials, but should require less upkeep as more of the landscape is planted in the "horticulturally recommended, native Florida" ways discussed here.

Because of limited funds in the budget, and the widespread existence of 20 year old bushes and irrigation, the ideas presented here may be tried on a limited basis. If they work out favorably, the concepts can be expanded to include more areas depending on the budget and spending priorities of that year's Board and depending on individual plans submitted by owners for landscaping a particular area at their own expense.

Any changes to landscape need to consider the effect on existing irrigation lines. If large areas are re-landscaped at the same time, it may be feasible to move to drip or micro type irrigation rather than pop-ups for the shrubbery. This probably needs to be done for an irrigation zone, or for the entire complex, rather than each individual unit, due to pump pressure, dirt in lines and similar issues that could affect the micro delivery of water.

The following attachments are provided to aid in planning changes for a specific site:

- Attachment 1—Horticultural recommendations from UF Cooperative Extension Service.
- Attachment 2—Uniform Planting policy of 4/23/99 if owners want to change landscape.
- Attachment 3—Sample design for a "standard building"
- Attachment 4—Sample design for a "standard courtyard".

The plants in the suggested designs are not the only plants that are suitable, nor are these the only designs that could be used. Rather this is a starting place for ideas.

Owners that want to refresh their plantings at their own expense, should provide a scale drawing and list of shrubs, mulch/stone color to the Board for approval. This insures that there is coordination across the development as we upgrade the landscape on individual timetables, as appropriate.

Approved by the Jacaranda Country Club Villas Board of Directors
 Jane Anderson
 Joe Gutowski
 Dick Hohan
 Judy Liston
 Jack Van Ness

Attachment 1	
Horticultural recommendation	How it could be used at our site
1-Shrubs should be planted 3' from bldgs; never plant under eaves of bldg	a-Replant sides of buildings between large open spaces (899/897, 831/833, 904/868) so shrubs are 3' from bldg.
	b-Plant 1 row of bushes BETWEEN buildings that have 12-15 feet between the bldgs (853/851, 845/843, 825/823, 817/815, 809/807, 891/889, 881/879, 863/861) These should be surrounded by mulch beds with stepping stones across the mulch, if desired. Plan which areas should be so planted vs left "open" so equipment can be driven between buildings, when necessary.
	c-Or plant a few bushes at the corner of the buildings and use ground cover or mulch between buildings
2-Trees should be surrounded by a mulch bed that is 2' diameter for each 1" diameter tree trunk	a-Install mulch bed or perennial peanut (ground cover) around palms planted between driveways which currently have grass right up to the tree. This will keep mowers from damaging the tree trunk. (such as units 899/901, 885/887, 881/883, 875/877, 871/873)
3-Use ground cover rather than grass if area is less than 4' wide so hard to irrigate without having water hit the pavement.	a-Consider planting perennial peanut (sod) between driveways if grass needs to be replaced (such as 872/829, 835/837, 819/821, 811/813, 803/805, 898/896, 894/892, 886/884, 882/880, 865/867 853/855, 849/847)
4-Use ground cover rather than grass on sloped areas that are hard to mow	a-Consider planting perennial peanut (sod) if grass needs to be replaced along the pond (801-861). (NOTE: Perennial peanut will turn brown with a freeze, although it grows back with warm weather.)

Uniform Planting Policy 4/23/1996

Attachment 2

Applies:

When you want to change the plantings or make additional plantings in your front entry courtyard or the perimeter of your building.

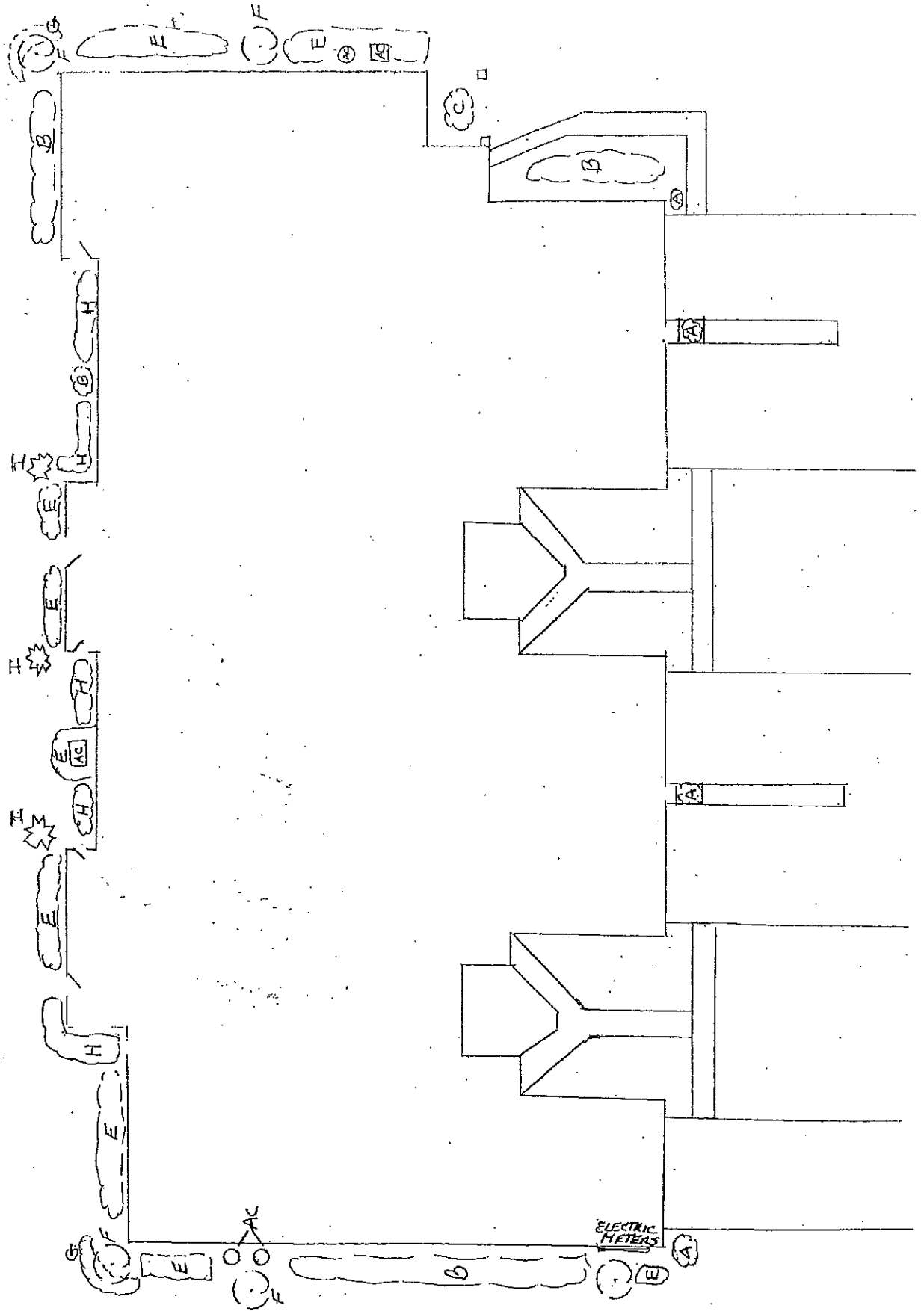
Procedure

1-Get "Landscape Change/Addition" request form. Fill out describing what you want to plant and where. This must include dimensions of the site and plantings. Type of mulch/stone etc. Submit to the Board for approval.

Considerations

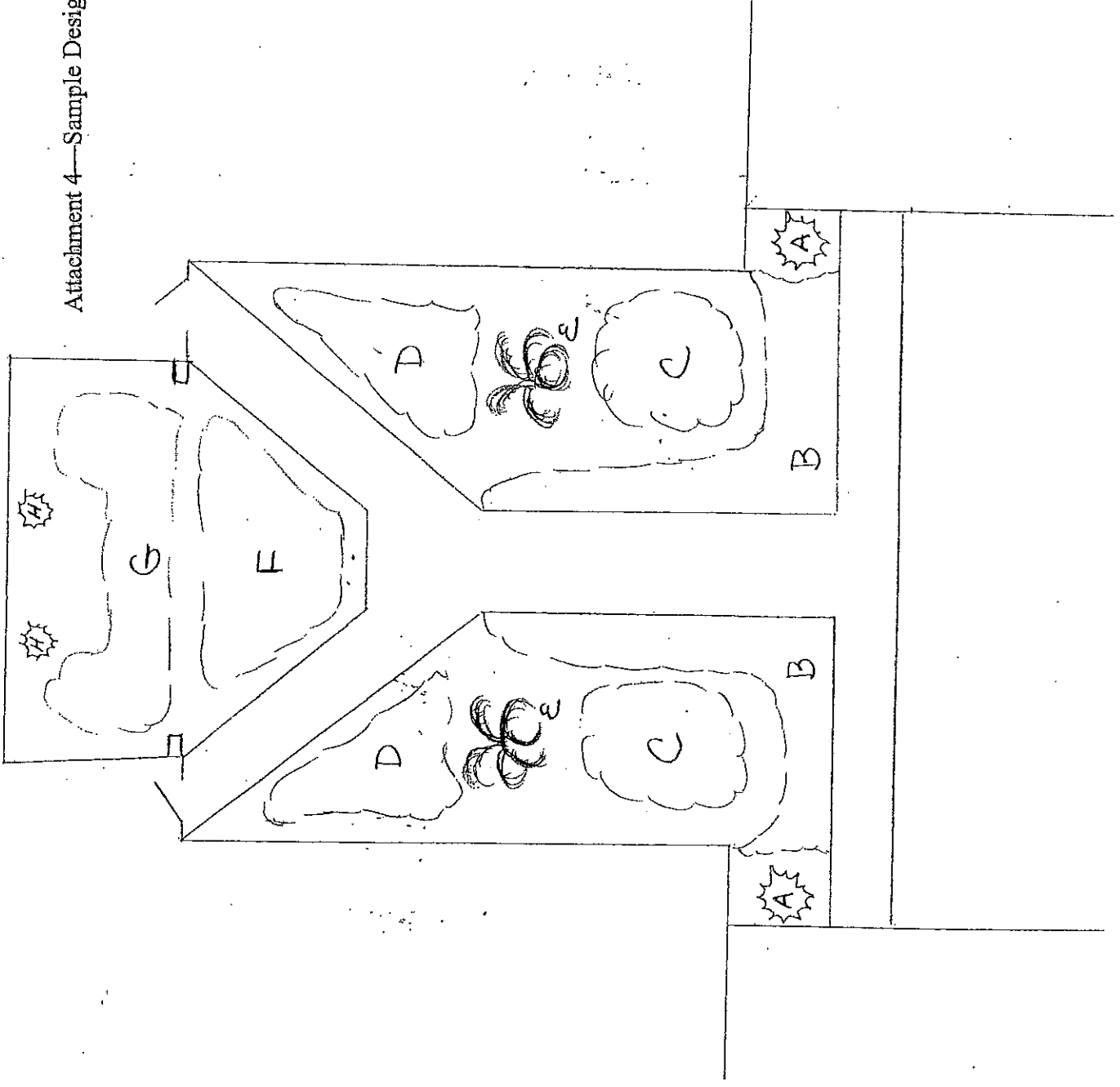
- 1-New plantings cannot increase the cost of maintenance
- 2-Unit owner is responsible for the replacement, if the shrub dies before it is fully established.
- 3-Unit owner must provide additional watering if the shrub needs more than the weekly irrigation provides, until the shrub is established.
- 4-if sprinkler heads must be moved or added, the cost will be billed to the unit owner.
- 5-Damage to sprinklers, underground wiring, TV cable, etc will be repaired at the unit owners expense.
- 6-Type and color of stones or mulch must be approved at the time the plantings are approved.
- 7-Plantings that are killed by cold weather will be replaced at the discretion of the Board.
- 8-Fruit trees are prohibited (existing trees are grandfathered in, but if the owner neglects fallen fruit, the tree could be removed.)
- 9-Unit owners are encouraged to add trees and change/add plantings, but this can only be authorized by written approval from the Board of Directors.

Attachment 3—Sample Design for Standard Building



	Standard Building		Attachment 3		Drought	Growth
Group	Plant	Mature size is up to	Description		Tolerant	Rate
A	Podocarpus	35' X 10' wide	Commonly used as 6' hedge; dark green needlelike leaves about 1-2" long;		med	moderate
A	Burford Holly	8-12' tall	Commonly used as 3-4' height		med	fast
B	Snowbush	8' tall X 3' wide	Pink tinged leaves; can be kept trimmed to 3-4' level		high	moderate
B	Hibiscus	9' tall X 7' wide	Blooms all year; can be kept trimmed to 4' level		medium	moderate
B	Dwarf Jatropha	8' tall X 7' wide	Red blooms all year; maintain atleast 4' tall; bare at base.		high	moderate
B	Thyrallis	9'tall	Usually kept 3-5' tall; compact; fine twiggy brittle growth; yellow flowers		medium	moderate
B	African Bush Daisy	2-4 feet tall	broadly rounded evergreen groundcover; yellow blooms from spring thru winter		medium	moderate
C	False Aralia	12' tall X 7' wide	Flowers occasionally; no direct sun; needs wind protection; narrow upright growth with 3-4 main stems; evergreen		high	moderate
C	Variegated Shell Ginger	7' tall	Clumping plant with pendulous white & yellow flowers in summer, fall, winter;		medium	fast
C	"	"	Green/yellow leaves			
C	Spathiphyllum	3'tall X 2' wide	Peace lilly; several varieties/sizes; white flowers; accent plant; no direct sun		medium	moderate
E	Ligustrum, Green	8 feet to 12 feet tall	Florida's most widely planted broad-leaved (pear shaped leaves) evergreen shrub;		high	moderate
E	"	"	white blooms in spring; blue-black berries most of the year		"	"
E	Ligustrum, Variegated	"	"		"	"
E	Viburnum Suspensum	6-8' tall	Evergreen shrub hedge with pink/white blooms in summer; easily maintained at any size		medium	moderate
E	"	"	"		"	"
E	Variegated Arbuticola	2' tall X 2' wide to 8' X 4'	Dark green and light yellow leaf about 1 1/2" long; slow growth so usually kept at small size		high	slow
E	"	"	"		"	"
E	Orange Jasmine	3-6' tall	Good hedge; dark green glossy leaves; white flowers with orange blossom scent in spring/summer		high	moderate
E	"	"	"		"	"
F	Areca Palm	20' tall X 8' wide	high trimming needs		high	moderate
F	Ligustrum Tree	15' tall X 10' wide	freeze tolerant; can maintain as hedge or a small tree (see group E)		high	moderate
F	Geiger Tree	30' tall X 15' wide	Rough dark green stiff leaves; orange to scarlet geranium like flowers in spring		medium	moderate
F	"	"	and summer; sensitive to cold so leaves do not look good in winter; needs full sun			
F	Little Gem Magnolia	20' tall	Evergreen shade tree; small magnolia variety; fragrant flowers in spring		medium	moderate
G	"	"	"		"	"
G	Parsoni Juniper	1 foot-2 feet tall	ground cover w look of evergreen		high	moderate
G	Dwarf Indian Hawthorne	1 foot-2 feet tall	small fragrant rose-like flowers 1/2 inch diameter in pink, white, rose color;		high	slow
G	"	"	for a few weeks in spring			
H	Dwarf Indian Hawthorne	see group G	"			
H	Ilex Schilling	1-2 feet tall	ideal as a low growing foundation plant; native to Florida; brittle branches		high	slow
H	African Iris	2 feet tall	clumps of narrow, stiff, iris-like leaves; white flower with yellow bands. Blooms		medium	moderate
H	"	"	year round. Divide plants every 3 years			
I	Dwarf Jatropha	see group B				
I	Snowbush	see group B				
I	Hibiscus	see group B				

Attachment 4—Sample Design for Standard Courtyard



	Standard Courtyard		Attachment 4		Drought	Growth
Group	Plant	Mature size is up to	Description		Tolerant	Rate
A	Podocarpus	35' X 10' wide	Commonly used as 6' hedge; dark green needlelike leaves about 1-2" long;		medium	moderate
A	Burford Holly	8-12 feet tall	Commonly used as 3-4' height		medium	fast
B	Parsoni Juniper	1 foot-2 feet tall	ground cover w look of evergreen		high	moderate
B	Dwarf Indian Hawthorne	2' tall	small fragrant rose-like flowers 1/2 inch diameter in pink, white, rose color;		medium	slow
B	Ilex Schilling	1-2' tall	Ideal as a low growing foundation plant; native to Florida; brittle branches		high	slow
C	Mamy Croton		Evergreen with coarse foliage, brightly variegated in color		high	slow
C	African Bush Daisy	2'-4' tall	Evergreen with green foliage, yellow flowers year-round. Butterfly nectar plant		medium	moderate
C	Dwarf Allamanda	18" tall	evergreen leaves in whorls; bright yellow, flaring trumpet flowers during much of the year; mounded ground cover		medium	slow
C	"					
D	Dwarf Ixora	2' tall	Evergreen leaves of medium texture and medium green color; tubular flowers of red, yellow or orange		medium	slow
D	Dwarf Allamanda		See group C			
D	African Iris	2' tall	clumps of narrow, stiff, iris-like leaves; white flower with yellow bands. Blooms year round. Divide plants every 3 years		medium	moderate
D	"					
E	Single Stem Pygmy Date	6' tall X 6' wide	Evergreen; 8" seed pod; small frond		medium	slow
E	Single Stem Adonidia Palm	20-25' tall	Elegant foliage; often grown in groups of 3; not cold tolerant		medium	fast
F	Dwarf Indian Hawthorne	See group B				
F	Ilex Shilling	See group B				
G	Variegated Arbuticola	2' tall X 2' wide to 8' X 4'	Dark green and light yellow leaf about 1 1/2" long; slow growth so usually kept at small size		high	slow
G	"					
G	Snowbush	8' tall X 3' wide	Pink tinged leaves; can be kept trimmed to 3-4' level		high	moderate
H	False Aralia	12' tall X 7' wide	Flowers occasionally; no direct sun; needs wind protection; narrow upright growth		high	moderate
H	"		with 3-4 main stems; evergreen, coarse texture of mottled brown color			
H	Variegated Shell Ginger	7' tall	Clumping plant with pendulous white & yellow flowers in summer, fall, winter;		medium	fast
H	"		Green/yellow leaves			
H	Spathiphyllum	3'tall X 2'wide	Peace lilly; several varieties/sizes; white flowers; accent plant; no direct sun		medium	moderate