

Notes from the Field

Over the summer and fall, many park friends groups have been involved with clean ups, educational activities and other events. BGSA offers support services to park friends groups such as small grants, fiscal agent services, information on starting a group and more. Please call us at 617-277-4777 or visit our website at www.brooklinegreenspace.org for more information.

New Groups

Friends of the Minot Rose Garden

This spring the Friends of the Minot Rose Garden was formed to help restore the rose garden located in the southeast corner of Winthrop Park. The garden has been through several cycles of decline and rebirth and during its better times the garden has been resplendent in fragrant, colorful blooms. The group has grown to a membership of 25. They've been working hard to clear the beds of weeds and keep up with the garden's maintenance. This fall, with the Town's help, all the unhealthy rose bushes will be removed and next spring new replacement roses will be planted. The group recently received a \$500 grant from Brookline GreenSpace Alliance through its Neighborhood Initiatives for Parks (NIP) small grant program to purchase rose bushes and tools to use next spring. They are also working with Erin Chute, Director of Parks and Open Space, who envisions the restoration being a feature of Brookline's 300th birthday celebration next year. If you are interested in joining please contact Linda Pehlke at minotroses@aol.com.

Friends of Cypress Field

Neighbors of Cypress Street Playground recently formed a group and joined the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance when they learned of tentative plans on the part of the Town to replace the current multi-use field with an artificial turf playing field. The group is concerned about the environmental and practical impact of artificial turf, and the wisdom of this kind of development on the historically significant playground. The Friends, most of whom have children at the high school, unanimously acknowledge that there is an acute need for one or more all-weather playing fields in Brookline to accommodate high school and youth sports. But they are convinced that Cypress Field is an inappropriate location for artificial turf, a position supported by BGSA. In letters and an August meeting with Erin Chute, the Friends discussed their concerns. As of mid-September Erin Chute reported that the likely location of artificial turf would not be at Cypress Field. The Friends of Cypress Field will continue to advocate on behalf of this historic neighborhood park. If you would like to join the group, please email Molly Paul at mollypaul@rcn.com.



(Above) Bill Donahue, Judy Mason, and Helen Liu, all members of Friends of Minot Rose Garden, planting new climbing roses.

(Below) Another member, Barbara Lianides-Chin digging a hole to plant a new climbing rose bush.

Photos by Linda Pehlke



Friends of the Billy Ward Playground

The Friends of the Billy Ward Playground was formed this spring to help make improvements to this small neighborhood park in Brookline Village. The group is currently soliciting feedback from neighbors and user groups on ways the park could be improved for everyone. In addition to park improvements such as new plantings and gates, the group would also like to address the use and overall disposition of the basketball court with the Park and Recreation Commission. Anyone interested in receiving a survey sheet or to offer comments is welcomed to email Ruthann Sneider at rsneider@hotmail.com

Ongoing Groups

Friends of Dane Park

Dane Park continues to improve thanks to the help of volunteers and the Division of Parks and Open Space. This spring, volunteers from area Starbucks Coffee stores helped to remove invasive species such as Japanese knotweed, which continues to plague the park. In September, Abby Coffin, with the Friends of Dane Park led a walk through the park for over 20 interested participants to explain the significant improvements that have taken place over the last several years. A design review committee will begin a formal review of the park starting in January. For more information, or to learn about potential volunteer opportunities, please contact Abby Coffin at coffinam@aol.com.

Friends of Emerson Garden

The Friends of Emerson Garden held its annual spring cleanup and is currently talking with the Parks department about helping to fundraise for potential improvements to the children's play area. For more information contact Jennifer Pieszak at jenniepie@rcn.com

Friends of Hall's Pond

The Friends of Hall's Pond continues to work diligently to help maintain the Hall's Pond Sanctuary near Coolidge Corner. In September, the Friends hosted a "Minna Hall Tea" to raise money to help support the Brookline Environmental Learning Project which was originally started by the Friends of Hall's Pond before being expanded to other sanctuaries by Brookline GreenSpace Alliance. The upcoming fall Hall's Pond work day is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 21 from 11am-2pm. For more information about the cleanup, contact Janice Provencher at janicep2@verizon.net.



A painter at Hall's Pond.
Photo by Bruce Wolff

Friends of Larz Anderson Park

The Friends of Larz Anderson Park has recently reorganized and is reaching out to others who care about the park and all it has to offer. If you use the playground or picnic area, walk your dog, fly kites, sled or skate in the winter, belong to the community garden or just love the nature and beauty that abounds, you are invited to join the Friends of Larz Anderson. Contact: Susan Forti, FrndsofLarzAnderson@comcast.net.



Lagoon at Larz Anderson Park.
Photo by Marian Lazar

Friends of Leverett Pond

In September, the Friends of Leverett Pond participated in a volunteer effort to help replant the oval at the Allerton Overlook in Olmsted Park and to plant opposite the Brook House near Route 9. Student volunteers from Wentworth were organized by the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and the Town of Brookline provided the tools and materials needed to do the work. For more information on the Friends of Leverett Pond, contact Hugh Mattison at hmattison@aol.com.



Volunteers from Wentworth Institute of Technology planting shrubs at Allerton Overlook.

Photo by Hugh Mattison

Friends of Lawrence Park

Longwood Playground has officially reopened after considerable restoration efforts. (Longwood Playground is the official name of Lawrence Park.) The 4.25 acre park was rehabbed for handicapped access from Longwood Avenue, new play structures, path reconstruction, improved basketball and tennis courts, playing field and plantings. The goal was to blend the park and playground features for this dense neighborhood crossroad and school gathering place. Land immediately affected by the new Lawrence School addition, under a separate bid with the school contract, is being reviewed and nearing completion.

The Friends of Lawrence Park contributed matching funds for a new post and chain fence at the circle garden and plan to reestablish the circle garden plantings when spring breaks in 2005.

Lincoln School PTO Landscape Committee

The Lincoln School PTO Landscape Committee spent the summer tending the new school-yard garden and following construction progress on playground improvements. In June, second-graders had planted squash, corn and beans, Wampanoag-style, and all three will be harvested this fall for the students' classroom and kitchen use. Other grade levels will use the mature plants (including the 9-foot corn stalks) for botany study, and individual students have enjoyed exploring inside the garden, which is adjacent to the school's playground entry. The playground improvements project addressed a long-standing need for outdoor seating and re-surfaced some heavily used areas to upgrade bike parking, maintenance vehicle access and play areas. The Landscape Committee contributed design and construction documents while the Town provided funding and managed the construction contract. For more information about this group contact Randolph Meiklejohn at RMeiklejohn@verizon.net



New outdoor seating and planting beds, under construction at the New Lincoln School.

Photo by Randolph Meiklejohn

Friends of Lost Pond

On September 13 the Park and Recreation Commission accepted final plans for the new park that will be created on the capped Front Landfill. The park will include a full size irrigated soccer field, space for a playground, exercise area, and picnic tables and about a mile of walking trails. The cap will be contoured to create a natural looking landscape and native plants will be used to create an inviting habitat for wildlife. Future plans include a boardwalk through the adjacent Department of Conservation and Recreation land to connect the park to the Lost Pond trail network. Construction work is expected to begin next spring.

Plans for the Back Landfill are awaiting state approval before review by the Brookline Conservation Commission. The capping of the back landfill will have a considerable impact on the Lost Pond Conservation Area. The trail that now traverses the meadow area will be moved and reinstalled to by-pass the DPW facility to be built on the capped area. A part of the conservation land abutting the meadow was also used for dumping. Waste in this section will be pulled back onto the main part of the back landfill and capped. The cleared area will be maintained as a meadow to replace the area that will be lost. The stream that runs out of Lost Pond will be “daylighted” and flow through this area. For more information on this group contact Marian Lazar at mlazar@theworld.com.



A walker enjoying a quiet moment of contemplation on the Lost Pond boardwalk. Photo by Marian Lazar

Friends of the Muddy River

Friends of the Muddy River hosted the Bala Brass Ensemble in a free outdoor concert for the community along the Riverway in September. They also hosted their 11th annual Mushroom Walk along the Muddy River with Dr. Milton Landowne. The group remains actively involved in the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Muddy River restoration project. The project is currently awaiting funding approval from the Army Corps of Engineers in Washington. Final approval is not anticipated until after the November election. For more information on Friends of the Muddy River contact Isabella Callanan at 617-734-2741 or muddyrvr@theworld.com.

Friends of the Old Burying Ground

This group is working diligently to raise funds to help restore the historic Old Burying Ground on Walnut Street. The group has recently been awarded a \$5,000 challenge grant by the Brookline Community Fund, and the restoration work has begun. Fannin-Lehner Preservation Consultants has been hired to do the work, which is anticipated to take three years and cost \$76,000. For more information or to join the Friends, call 617 566-5876.



Friends of Monmouth Park

The design review committee for Monmouth Park has recently completed its review process and is waiting for final approval from the Park and Recreation Commission. To contact the Friends of Monmouth Park, email Adele Goldstein at arndele@aol.com.

Monmouth Park.
Photo by Marian Lazar