



The Parks Reporter

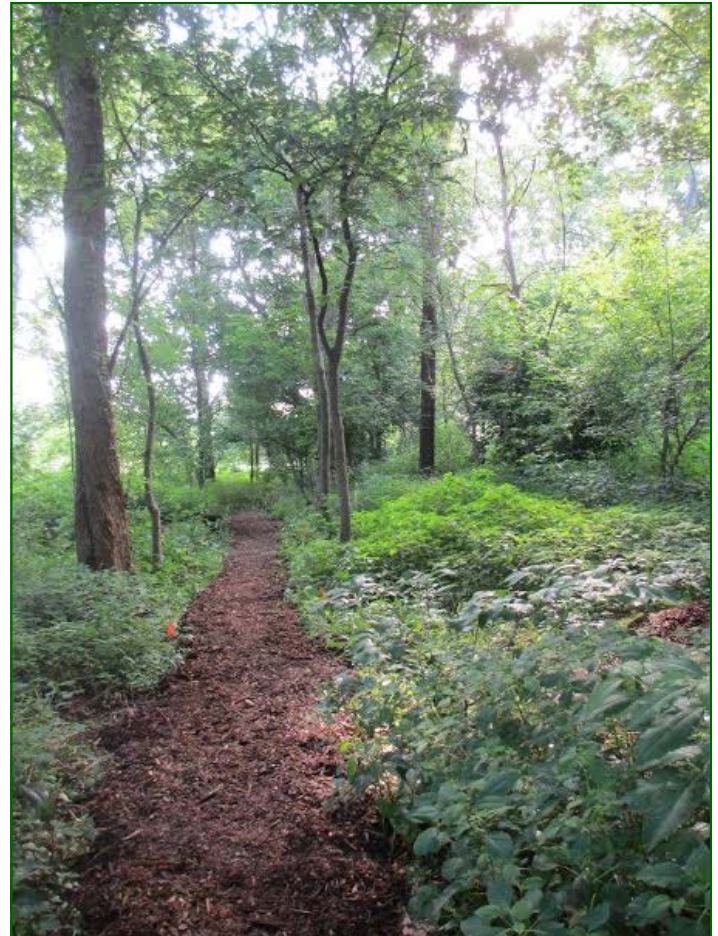
The Newsletter of the Friends of Waterford Park

Winter 2015/16

The year in review

2015 – a year with some major accomplishments. Our group is now a 501(c)(3) MD corporation. We have a five-member board committed to the mission of FWP. Over 100 new trees are now growing, part of the City grant for stream buffer plantings. The shared-use path is finally on track, with work to begin this coming spring. Our “worker bees” continue to volunteer; we are closing in on 500 hours of work in the park with 19 “bees” plus Hood students on 3 occasions, the Scouts who helped Kevin with his Eagle project and the UNESCO Center volunteers. Our fundraising for ash tree treatment netted enough funds to treat over 30 ashes, all the trees that have decent structure. We are maintaining a separate ash treatment account and are well on the way to having the funds for the 2017 treatment.

Early in the year, the tree contractors we hired as a result of last year’s fundraising completed their woods cleanup, removing several of the huge piles we had accumulated and pruning damaged or dying trees. Our volunteers checked tree shelters, removing the black shelters from trees that had outgrown them and replacing those with larger galvanized fence shelters. Andy Driscoll, FWP member and a professional arborist, donated several hours of pruning time. We worked with the City’s contractor to choose appropriate native trees and sites for the late spring planting; after the planting we made sure all trees were sheltered/fenced and watered through September in drier areas (Rock Creek and Waterford Park hillsides). We did basic weeding in the areas where we are trying to maintain perennials (behind the co-op buildings, at Meadowdale Lane, in the hibiscus area and under the kiosk). We mulched all of the larger trees and the newly-planted ones. In early summer Kevin Jaramillo organized and completed his Eagle project – paths in the woods. This was one of the projects members had said they wanted at our 2014 membership meeting. Many of our work sessions throughout the year focus on removing invasive honeysuckle; this never-ending task is showing great results. You can stand in the woods behind the kiosk and see almost no honeysuckle all the way to the Rt. 15 end of the woods! A goal for 2016 will be to complete our steady advance from east to west to the end of the wooded area. Our work was disrupted this fall when the park flooded; we had to spend several sessions freeing up trees and shrubs from debris. The refurbishment of the center of the meadow is an ongoing task; we hope to have the seed drilled in shortly.



Hundreds of feet of path for a cool summer walk

After 10 years, you would think I and others who have been part of the workforce for years would be tired or discouraged. Tired perhaps, but definitely not discouraged. The difference our group has made in the area from Rt. 15 to Baughmans Lane is amazing. Members each year donate the money needed to buy tools, meadow seed, fences, large trees, etc. and to fund the special projects we undertake.

Onward to 2016.

Ginny Brace
FWP president

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Purpose: *Friends of Waterford Park, a volunteer-staffed community service organization, is dedicated to the development of Waterford Park and Rock Creek Park as passive neighborhood parks by adding to and making improvements to the park landscaping and fostering neighborhood involvement in the development of the passive neighborhood parks.*

Guiding Principle: Do No Harm.

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FWP, Inc. Board of Directors

Ginny Brace, president
Rachel Zigler, vice-president
Kathy Soria, secretary
Alice Meiners, treasurer
Karen Berkheimer Morton
Kathy Fay, liason to Friends of Baker Park

It's a team effort, and it's a big team!

Many people and entities are involved in improving the parks. Jen Willoughby, City Sustainability Manager, is working to fund streambank stabilization for approximately 1500 feet of Rock Creek, from the middle bridge heading toward Baughmans Lane. The City has \$150,000 in its current budget for initial design of this huge undertaking. Jen also supervised a group of Hood students and staff for a session of invasives removal in October.

Tom Rippeon, City arborist, identified all of the ashes in the park as part of his City-wide survey. He also gave a big boost to Kevin's project when he brought a truckload of mulch to the path entrance, saving Kevin's crew many hours of mulch-hauling time. Dan Yates and the crew from Bartlett Tree Experts were professional and thorough in their evaluation and treatment of the ashes. Dan came back recently to evaluate the treated trees and saw no borer damage evident. He did examine one ash that we did not treat because it was in poor shape and found many borer exit holes. The borer has also been spotted in many nearby areas. We treated just in time!

The state of MD ash fund contributed \$500 toward this year's treatment. MD Urban and Community Forest Committee granted \$521 for treatment of one huge ash and signage. MUCFC also awarded FWP its Green Level certification, for "sustained programs that are organized, fully functional... funded and have full-time equivalent technical assistance."

Peter Brehm, president of Friends of Baker Park and an FWP member and worker bee, also keeps an eye out for groups that may want to work in the park. Thanks to Peter, the UNESCO group found us and brought more than 20 young adults for a very successful morning of mulching.

Dwight Moser continues to mow the buffer area for a nominal amount. He also came on very short notice and mowed the center of the meadow at no cost.

Mike Kay, DNR Forester, came after the flood and chainsawed several of the large logs that had rolled onto trees and shrubs.

Donnie Rohrback, DNR Wildlife specialist, continues to do the spraying and planting in the meadow at no cost.

Pete Rupp of Frederick Noxious Weed Control continues to advise and assist us with invasives control.

Kathy Fay's father, a master carpenter, recently moved to Frederick and is building six new bluebird houses and two screech owl nest boxes for us.

Betsy Pakenas of the Berkheimer Group at Morgan Stanley (a nationally recognized financial advisor and an FWP member) is handling our invested funds with no administrative fee. We are investing relatively conservatively, with the goal of modest ongoing returns.

Steve Lloyd shot a wonderful video of the park with drone and gopro cameras. It is on our website. The site is maintained by member Dave Maloney.

Pat Christoff, the contractor hired by the City for its grant plantings, worked with us to find some unusual native species for the park: franklinia, cucumber magnolia, butternut and Carolina silverbell. We now have almost 50 species of native trees. Diversity is a key component of a healthy ecosystem.

Derek Osgood, former Frederick resident now living in Florida, has formatted our newsletters for years.

Finally, we thank the people who walk in the park and tell us how much they appreciate the work we do.



East end woods after cleanup. What a difference!

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The City planting included many large trees

Looking ahead to 2016

The shared-use path completion will make the biggest impact in the park. We will co-ordinate with the City to develop a Berkheimer area with benches, native grasses and trees along that path. Funds donated in Linda Berkheimer's memory will be used for this project.

We will purchase several dozen understory shrubs/trees for the wooded areas where we have cleared the invasives. Look for species such as gray dogwood, pawpaw, American hornbeam, Eastern hophornbeam and red maple. We will apply for grant funds for this.

We will continue to water the grant-funded trees planted in drier areas for another year.

We use kitty litter jugs; it takes about 80 gallons of water to do the hillside trees.

The worker bees will do more of what we always do: maintain shelters, cut back or pull invasives, mulch and plant. By the time we make one full pass at the park, perhaps by the end of 2016, we will need to start over.

It is good that we enjoy what we do!



The flood waters came across the woods all the way to the benches



The force of the water is amazing



Winter view from the hill



Birdhouses get used year round



Trees planted in 2006 are getting big

Join the Team!

We have a wonderful group of regular volunteers, but there is always more to do, and they need a break sometimes. A little help from everyone would go such a long way! I personally don't like to work alone, and the jobs go so much faster and more pleasantly with several people helping. I've met neighbors that I would not have otherwise known. Catching up with a neighbor and meeting new friends as we all work together is great fun. The work is good moderate exercise and can be tailored for whatever you're prepared to handle. Even the kids can get involved for some of the jobs, and what a great way to teach them about their community!

No green thumb? We can teach you what you need to know!

Afraid of being corralled into regular participation? We promise not to rope you in! We're just happy to have volunteers!

As you can see from the previous article, we have all kinds of talented folks helping out, and new talent is always appreciated. What is holding you back? Seeing the beauty of the park with the eyes of a worker-bee is so much more rewarding, and think of what could be done if everyone in our membership volunteered just once a year!

Alice Meiners
FWP treasurer and worker bee



Hood environmental club students planted and mulched trees in 2015



Kevin near the end of the path project