

The year in review

Our first full year with the shared-use path saw a great increase in park use. We had little vandalism and many compliments on the condition of the area. The City mows more often now, so it is much easier to walk through the open areas. The wooded paths are holding up well, requiring only a few hours of maintenance. Almost everyone disposes of dog waste and trash in the containers that the City empties weekly. Our membership and volunteer numbers continue to be terrific. Several people who found us via the tunnel connection have become members. As I write this in early November, the 'worker bee' volunteers have logged 624 hours improving/maintaining the park in 2017. It has been a great wildlife year. This spring we finally had nesting bluebirds at the east end of the meadow. Bats inhabited at least one of our bat houses. The red-shouldered hawks continue to hunt in the park, so we have had no reports of vole activity. A highlight for many of us was the turkey family that successfully raised three chicks. We don't know if they are jakes or jenny's (yes, I looked that up!) but all have been out & about with mom most days in late summer/early fall. In addition to the deer that have been here for years, two fox have also crossed open spaces many days. Because of the bright night lights, we may lose the lightning bugs and some of the frogs that have entertained us for years, but the larger animals seem to be handling the new environmental conditions.

Projects

- Winter 2017 was so mild that the worker bees had over 100 hours before March 1. As you know, the winter months are ideal for pulling the invasive plants. We worked primarily in the woods between the path and Rock Creek and on the hill at the west end of Waterford Park. Lesley Cristol was on a mission to remove all the pesky wineberries from the old sewer line area.
- In March teens from KidsTheseDays and students from HEAT, the Hood Environmental Action Team, laid a mulched path through the middle of the meadow, easily 300 feet.
- In April HEAT students returned to plant 37 trees and shrubs purchased with grant funds from MUCFC (MD Urban and Community Forest Committee).
- As summer approached, we weeded, papered and mulched the trees in mowed areas. Astrazeneca green team helped with this and returned in November.
- In August the cast of *A Secret Garden* came and planted perennials.
- The DNR drilled new wildflower seed in the center of the meadow. However, we got an unbelievable ragweed crop in that area. It may be that when we disturbed the soil to drill, we gave the ragweed a boost. The DNR advised us to mow before the seed set. Worker bees also hand-cut the ragweed in the non-mowed areas.
- From June to October we watered new trees/shrubs.. To do this, we fill about 70 kitty litter jugs at the fire hall. With 3 or 4 of us, we can fill and water in under an hour. This year we watered the 3 trees near the turtle/bench area, two new donated trees, the plants around the Key bench area and other shrubs as needed.
- This fall we purchased and planted 12 gray dogwood, nannyberry and arrowwood viburnum to fill in an area along the edge of the Carroll Creek buffer.
- Kathy Soria coordinated birdhouse cleaning and maintenance, a multi-season task. Two new Girl Scout volunteers are building six new houses to replace some that have deteriorated over the years.
- In September, the first curve in the creek downstream from Baughmans Lane was shored up by the City with two truck loads of rock. This curve is close to the new sewer line and was eroding badly. FWP cleared the bank, transplanting winterberry hollies we had previously planted there, and we are in the process of planting silky dogwood and other plants appropriate for streambank buffering.
- In early December, Bartlett Tree Experts (in coordination with the City) is



The larger fox - what a beauty!

providing a pro bono day of pruning. The crew will prune trees overhanging the path as well as prune/elevate trees in other areas. We are most appreciative of this wonderful donation of time, skill and equipment.

- In April we installed a camera on a tree facing our most expensive single purchase: the wayside sign near the new bridge over Carroll Creek. Fortunately that sign has not been vandalized. We are tracking the number of park users who are in the park between 10pm and 5am. We will present the data to the City. Our board would like the City to revisit park lighting design, brightness and hours.
- The long-awaited replacement of the downstream bridge was completed by the City this summer. Work on the gravel area coming to the park from Meadowdale Lane should be completed by year-end.

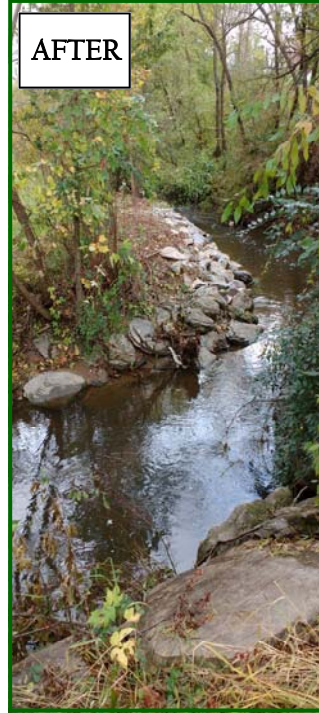


New downstream bridge.

- Funding is in place for the stream project. The goal is to slow the water in the section of the Rock Creek between the bridges. The banks will be stabilized as well. This work will hopefully begin in June, 2018.
- The City is required to complete two reforestation projects because of construction in the park. Planting near the tunnel and new bridge over Carroll Creek will occur in the spring. Planting in the old sewer line (leaving a 10' path open) will take place after the stream project, probably fall 2018.
- One large ash along the path will be removed. A large section fell, and the remainder of the tree was deemed



Creek curve "before" photo



Creek curve after the City

unstable, rotting because of the multi-trunk structure that allowed organic matter to accumulate in the narrow crotches. The City will have this tree pieced (as opposed to letting it fall into existing wooded areas) and the logs will be used as part of the stream project. We appreciate the City's willingness to spend more on removal to preserve existing canopy.

- That large ash showed no signs of borer. Bartlett Tree Experts injected approximately 30 of the best ashes in the park this spring, the second of five treatments. Visual evaluation shows these trees are not infected with the borer. This winter we will contract for removal of the non-treated ashes so the borer has less of a food supply in this area.

- An intern working with Jen Willoughby is applying for grant funds to plant trees that bear fruit that humans can eat: pawpaws, serviceberries, elderberries, persimmons and hazelnuts. If funded, the trees will be planted in accessible areas in the spring of 2018.
- FWP is purchasing four signs "If you see something, say something" giving the City non-emergency police number. If people call, the police response is quick.

On we go to 2018!

We will never finish, but the fun and reward are in the process.



Rocks with text appeared all over Frederick this year.



FWP, Inc. Board of Directors

- Ginny Brace, *president*
 Rachel Zigler, *vice-president*
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 Maurice Labbe, *treasurer*
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Thank-you to: The many worker bees and volunteer groups who make the park a place that people rave about. “Bees” Susan, Brad, Kathy, Fran, Joe, Vinnie, Hunter (new to us this year and a great contributor), Sara, Peter, Margaret, Kevin (before he left for the Marines!), Lesley, Don, Peg and Pat.

Anne Kenny, Ellen Dean, Susan Stokes and Joe Ganley who send photos.

Alice Meiners, for serving as treasurer. We wish you well in your new location.

The children of Dorothy Lloyd and Andy & Julie Ivins for donating new trees, a pink dogwood and a tulip poplar.

Friends of Roberta Gardella who contributed to a gorgeous bench and planting area in her memory that will be installed in 2018 near the middle bridge.

Volunteer groups: Astrazeneca green team, HEAT, girl scouts, and KidsTheseDays.

Financial

We are in good shape. Members continue to donate with yearly renewals, some to the Community Foundation Fund, some to our ash fund, some to general operating. We received a distribution from the Community Foundation Fund of \$1,319. We also received a donation from the Cross Foundation and a grant from MUCFC. Our fund at Morgan-Stanley has grown by over \$1,700 this year. We know that we need professional help with several projects. The ash treatment costs about \$3500. (Believe me, people are so impressed that we have tackled this expensive but worthwhile task. Ash trees are dying all over the county, and they are not cheap to take down.) We must continue to hire tree contractors for winter work (specifically, taking down some of the dead box elders); we need help with the invasive groundcovers in the woods near the middle bridge; we must get the Meadowdale entry area under control. We have a good relationship with a tree contractor and are interviewing landscape companies for regular maintenance of Meadowdale and for groundcover control. In the beginning we used chicken wire for fencing, had few tools, and no trailer or shed for our use. Our goals were much less ambitious. We have grown, become a 501c3, expanded our goals and accomplished so much more than we imagined back in 2004.

Thanks to all who support FWP.

Ginny Brace - *FWP President*

Photo Album - Native Friends



We never got a good bluebird photo, but this tree swallow paused to show off.



Turkeys came to our camera view in August.



The kids have grown but haven't learned to read yet!!



Everybody loves the meadow.



Family photo from August.



Heron from Baker Park fish in Waterford

Photo Album



KidsTheseDays came several times this year.



Asrazeneca Green Team at work



A few of the worker bee "regulars" after a hard morning's work.



HEAT members resting after a busy morning.



Worker bees kept the turtle area weeded



Cleaning out birdhouses, early fall.



Nancy came to enjoy the dogwoods she's donated over the years.



The path through the meadow was well-used this year



We had pawpaws this year!



Dan Yates from **Bartlett Tree Experts** and Ginny from FWP at the Green Neighbor Event at Culler Lake

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.
FWP is a 501(c)(3) MD Corporation. Guiding Principle: Do No Harm.