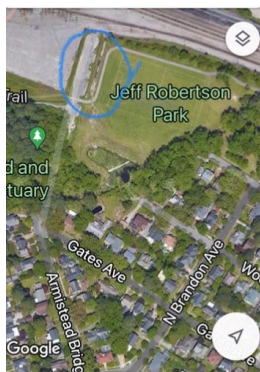


P4P: OLMSTED200 TRIBUTE GARDEN AT BLUEBIRD PARK

Last Updated: September 04, 2022



Zone VII, The Garden Club of Norfolk

Project Coordinator 1: Elizabeth Paiste

President: Katherine English

Treasurer: Vanessa Sigmon

Start Date: March 01, 2022

Public Land: Olmsted200 Tribute Garden at Bluebird Park

PROJECT LOG:

September 04, 2022

The historic city of Norfolk is one of seven cities within the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area in southeast Virginia. We have the 2nd smallest land mass (66 square miles) yet the highest population (4,500 people per sq. mile) in Hampton Roads. Compared to our sister city, Virginia Beach, which is the most populated city in the state, we have more than twice her population per square mile and only 13% of comparable land mass; hence we are a very densely populated city. Green space in Norfolk is at a premium. In fact, only 3% of Norfolk's public land is considered parks and that includes cemeteries, medium strips and school properties. This is why the Garden Club of Norfolk has been in partnership with the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation, Norfolk's City Parks and Recreation Department as well as other community businesses/members to reclaim and enhance blighted stretches of land in Norfolk. It is our desire to follow in the footsteps of Frederick Law Olmsted to create a place of beauty and public refuge for the health and well-being of our community. We also plan to include educational signage to explain to the public the value of planting native trees and plants for carbon capture, resilience and for the survival of pollinators and wildlife. We want to inspire the community to go native in their yards!

Working with the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation and the City of Norfolk, our club chose the blighted area of Jeff Robertson Park (also known as Bluebird Park) for our project. We began with Phase 1 in November, 2021, where we planted 15 native trees: Longleaf Pines, White Oaks, American Fringe, Tupelo Trees, Persimmon and Paw Paws as well as cleared off English ivy and privet that was choking six existing trees (Dogwood, Oak and Tupelo). We had volunteers from the military, local colleges, master gardeners, club members and neighbors who participated in Phase 1. Approximately 40 individuals. The community involvement was incredible and very inspiring. We are now focused on Phase 2, which is where we will be using the grant money we received from the Partners 4 Plants grant.

Working with the landscape architect, Painted Fern, and our Research Associate from Virginia Tech Extension, Dr. Laurie Fox, we have chosen 17 more trees and 124 native shrubs for our fall planting, which is occurring on Friday, 10/28/22. Prior to the planting, Heritage Landscaping, Inc. will kill off the existing weeds and grass in the area, which is longer than 2/3rds the size of a football field. They will till and fold in compost to make planting easier as the area had been a construction site in its earlier days so the land is quite compacted. Funds from Partners 4 Plants will be used for site preparation as well as for the purchase of some of the 2200 perennials that we will be planting in November, 2022 and March, 2023.

PROJECT GALLERY:



