

Southwest Corridor Park Alliance Annual Report 2022

We are pleased to share this **Southwest Corridor Park Alliance Annual Report 2022**. This year was a strong year for our network. Each year, our volunteer network contributes over 2,000 hours of hands-on stewardship in the park, plus an equal number of hours of behind-the-scenes work: coordinating community garden activities, organizing our mini-grant initiative, participating in community meetings, and collaborating with city, state and community organizations about events and projects along the length of this vibrant linear park. Throughout the year, the park is enjoyed by thousands of neighbors and park visitors, who enjoy the bike paths, gardens, playgrounds, sports facilities, trees, natural areas and community events.



Winter Day in the Carleton Court Dog Park



At the end of 2022, PMAC members shared an Annual Meeting presentation simply titled “Four Seasons in the Park,” reflecting on the beauty of the park and the positive shared experiences of our volunteer network and the wider community of park neighbors and park users in the Southwest Corridor Park this year. Fifty years after the historic decision to stop highway construction, and three decades since the park opened, the Southwest Corridor Park continues to serve as a valuable resource for the city to bring people together from neighborhoods from Forest Hills to Back Bay.

NEW NAME, LONG HISTORY

As of January 2023, PMAC starts the new year with a new name. We have chosen the name **Southwest Corridor Park Alliance** to provide clear identity as the forum for community voice in the Southwest Corridor Park and to highlight the way our network brings people together across neighborhoods and across many different park-related interests, activities, and roles.

PMAC's history reaches back to the planning stage for the Southwest Corridor Park, when the park design team convened nine Station Area Task Force groups, as well as Arts-in-Transit groups, neighborhood groups, and an overall Parkland Management Advisory Committee (PMAC) to provide resident involvement in the process. When the park opened, PMAC continued as a formal advisory board, as the forum for community voice in the care of the Southwest Corridor Park.

PMAC has met continuously since the 1980s, providing a forum for community voice and a network for community engagement in the park. Now, in 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is launching a Park Master Planning process, seeking to update the many features of this important urban park. In anticipation of our role in the master planning process, our members agreed that we wanted an easily-recognizable name, reflecting the name of the park, and reflecting who we are as a strong network, bringing park neighbors, volunteers, park users and neighborhood organizations together, across neighborhoods, and across many different interests, roles and activities.



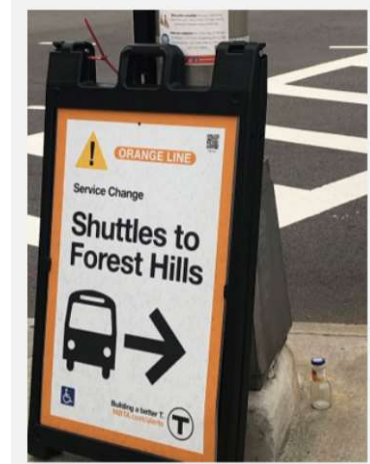
The Southwest Corridor Park Alliance's volunteer network is visible in park stewardship work each year, and through a variety of park events held during the year. The Southwest Corridor Park Alliance network is also active behind-the-scenes, attending community meetings and serving on committees and boards across five neighborhoods; meeting with active transportation groups; meeting with public safety officials from city, state and university jurisdictions; coordinating the work of twelve community gardens; and supporting and participating in park events for neighbors of all ages.

2022 WAS A YEAR OF:

Focus on active transportation: This year's month-long MBTA Orange Line closure was one of many factors that helped to focus attention on the importance of the Southwest Corridor in the city's active transportation networks. Meetings with city and state officials focused on next steps to maintain and improve this important active transportation pathway. Through community feedback gathered via meetings, surveys and our online dashboard, our leadership team can provide detailed information and maps showing where path users have asked for improvements.

Focus on climate and greenspace: During a summer of drought and heat waves we saw park volunteers hand-watering plantings affected by drought. We also saw a deep appreciation by neighbors for the park, as the trees, pathways, spray pools and gardens provided a favorite destination on hot days.

Focus on families and communities: Through both formal events and informal meet-ups, the park provides myriad opportunities for people to gather and enjoy being outdoors together. Each member of our network can name favorite activities during the year: the Dancing in the Park series in the field behind English High School. The Easter Egg Hunt at Mission Deck. The celebration of the new murals along the park at McBride Street. Children's Paint-Outs in the park during the United South End Settlements summer program. Unity Day at Mildred Hailey Apartments, coordinated with music from JP Porch Fest. And much more, but also, just as important, the informal gatherings of families on the playgrounds, of people with dogs, of skateboarders, basketball players, tennis players, community gardeners and many others.



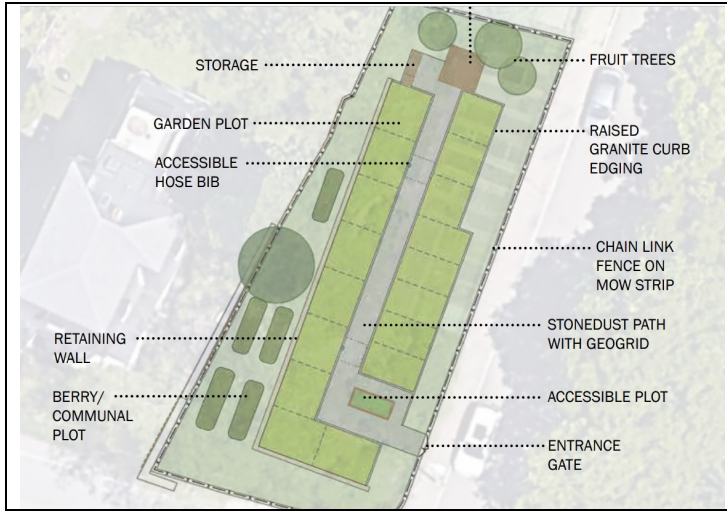
LOOKING FORWARD TO 2023 FOR:

DCR MASTER PLANNING PROCESS: We are happy that the Southwest Corridor Park was selected to be one of the first parks to be the focus of DCR's new Master Planning process. As members of the Southwest Corridor Alliance, we look forward to supporting DCR and connecting with a wide network of park neighbors, park users and organizations to support the master planning process.


During 2022, PMAC members met with DCR staff in monthly meetings and in small group meetings and park walk-throughs and bike-through's, to discuss the planning process and to help to identify park planning needs. The PMAC leadership team gathered and shared documents with DCR staff, documenting past community conversations, desired improvements, community input into nearby building and transportation projects, and other aspects of community voice about the park.

In the year ahead, we plan to support the master planning work by helping to connect DCR staff and consultants with a wide variety of neighborhood individuals and groups, so that community voice continues to play a strong role in shaping the park

NEAR-TERM and LONG-TERM PARK IMPROVEMENTS: Along with the master planning work, we are also focused on ongoing projects in the park, including meeting with neighbors and with DCR staff about planned work with community gardens, playgrounds, and bicycle and walking paths.

 <p>Diagram labels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STORAGE GARDEN PLOT ACCESSIBLE HOSE BIB RETAINING WALL BERRY/ COMMUNAL PLOT FRUIT TREES RAISED GRANITE CURB EDGING CHAIN LINK FENCE ON MOW STRIP STONEDUST PATH WITH GEOGRID ACCESSIBLE PLOT ENTRANCE GATE 	<p>Through a DCR Public=Private Partnership our Community Gardens Committee completed work on the planning phase of a community garden improvement project, working with DCR staff and a consultant to develop landscape plans for renovating the twelve community gardens. In the next phase, we anticipate piloting these new designs in three of the twelve gardens.</p>
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CELEBRATING HISTORY: The Park Master Planning process, and some of the more immediate playground improvement projects, will provide the opportunity for designing fresh signage and for looking at how the art and infrastructure along the corridor celebrates the communities along the park and shares the history of the land and its many stories.

	<p>Along the Southwest Corridor Park, at Northampton Green, the new historic marker, highlighting the newlywed home of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King Jr., on Northampton Street. In the background: new mural panels created by Boston Cares volunteers during the MLK Day of Service.</p>
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HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022:

All along the park, in gardens in the South End, at Mission Deck, in Jackson Square and in Jamaica Plain, volunteers provided over 2,000 hours of hands-on park stewardship.

In the South End/Back Bay section of the park, the Carleton Court Dog Park was re-surfaced (by DCR) and re-painted and re-mulched (by volunteers), in a project that illustrated the long-time collaboration between the Friends of Carleton Court Dog Park and DCR.

Also in the South End, the Southwest Corridor Park Conservancy worked with Northeastern University students to update marketing materials and web presence, creating the new website corridorpark.org.

In the Fenway, the new historic marker was placed along Northampton Street marking the location of the newlywed home of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King.

In Mission Hill, the Alice Taylor Tenants Association provided numerous events in the Mission Deck section of the park, including an Easter Egg Hunt, Movie Nights, the Walking Club, and Alice Taylor Apts. Unity Day.

In Jackson Square, we continued working with children and family programs, providing arts and crafts activities for Mildred Hailey Apts. Unity Day, for weekly cookouts, and for the fall Jackson Square Youth Fair, and maintaining the children's garden next to the Lorber Family Playground.

In Jamaica Plain, a Mural Celebration brought people together to celebrate the installation of two murals on the Extra Space Storage Building at McBride Street, a project that grew out of new development in that area.

Also in Jamaica Plain, gardeners in the Oakdale Community Garden completed the first full year of gardening as the newest community garden in the Southwest Corridor.



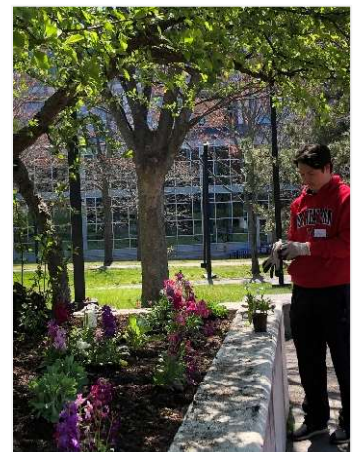
After years of planning by the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association (SNA) and funding by SSG Development and Construction, the exterior walls of an Extra Space Storage facility at 141 McBride Street in Jamaica Plain was transformed into works of public art that celebrate the surrounding community. Two areas of the building totaling 2,500 sq. ft. have been enhanced with new, vibrant murals by Boston-based artists Julia Csekö (in collaboration with Eddie Maisonet) and Sharif Muhammad.

WAYS TO CONNECT WITH THE SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PARK ALLIANCE

[1.] Connect online. Sign up for the email list and follow the Southwest Corridor Park on social media. Visit swcpc.org for links to social media and email.

[2.] Share your thoughts and suggestions. Seek opportunities to share your thoughts and suggestions via Southwest Corridor Park Alliance meetings, subcommittee meetings, via any special surveys, and via the park dashboard on our website. Visit swcpc.org/alliance for a meeting schedule and visit swcpc.org/dashboard to share suggestions via our park dashboard. As we enter a year of park master planning, your suggestions are more important than ever.

[3.] Participant in a volunteer day in the park. Starting in April with Northeastern University's Day of Service and DCR's Park Serve Day (and previewed in January with the MLK Day of Service), each year there are



many volunteer events open to neighborhood volunteers, college students, corporate groups and others.

[4.] Encourage your organization to apply for a Southwest Corridor Mini-Grant. Our mini-grant initiative, supported by Northeastern University and by the Southwest Corridor Park Conservancy, provides small grants for youth and family programming, focusing on the arts, photography, history, nature study, sports and exercise, or other themes, with an overall goal of nurturing a next generation of park leadership.

[5.] Learn and share the park story. Visit the swcpc.org website and look under PARK HISTORY to see resources that can help you learn about and share the story of the Southwest Corridor Park.

