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## ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

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- Annual Report Presentation - 2018 Highlights
- Presentation and Discussion by State Representative Byron Rushing
- Recognitions & Thanks
- PMAC Leadership Team Election

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

The Southwest Corridor Park has a long history of community involvement, from our roots in the anti-highway movement to today's vibrant park supported by our network of volunteers, neighbors and community organizations. This year's annual meeting highlights focus on our work in:

- [1.] Advocacy and Advisory Work
- [2.] Park Stewardship
- [3.] Youth and Family Activities
- [4.] Park History and Art

This report describes work done by PMAC, the Southwest Corridor Conservancy and the Friends of Carleton Court Dog Park, reflecting the hope that while we have more than one organization, we are a seamless network that works together to support the park. Learn more about our work and find connections to us on social media at <http://swcpc.org>

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### [1.] Advocacy & Advisory Work

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2018 Highlights -

1. Developed a Park Steward Volunteer Guide and coordinated with DCR Volunteer Coordinator;
2. Conducted a survey about potential improvements to the SWCP Rose Garden and Northampton Green; met with DCR Universal Access Coordinator; met with neighborhood residents and organizations; began planning and initial work;
3. Prepared a "SWCP / PMAC Priorities Presentation" and met with state representatives;
4. Organized archives from former PMAC president Frank Jordan;
5. Obtained park history documents from DCR archives and DCR SWCP office;
6. Supported DCR in JP dog park planning;
7. Supported Friends of Carleton Court Dog Park in leadership transition & expanded team.
8. Worked with Northeastern University on bike path striping/stenciling for the Carter Playground and Science building sections of path;
9. Worked with City of Boston about intersections with city streets and the path;
10. Provided representation on a CAC to work with MBTA & state rep. on Back Bay Station Ventilation project.

### Three Principles of Park Advocacy:

As we look at strategies for advocating for the Southwest Corridor Park, we are also shaping some general principles to shape our advocacy strategy. Why advocate for parks? Why the Southwest Corridor Park? And how should advocacy be channeled to action?

**COMMUNITY INVESTMENT: Public investment in the Southwest Corridor Park is matched and multiplied by investment by community members.** Park volunteers and partner organizations invest time, resources and



money in the park, in garden stewardship and landscaping, management of the community gardens and dog park, fundraising, supporting park-related youth and family programming, researching and documenting park history, and bringing people together to discuss and work on park-related issues and projects. We believe that this record of work and accomplishment adds strength to our advocacy on behalf of the park.

**LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO THE PARK: Investments & updates in the Southwest Corridor Park should be guided by an open and transparent process; with strategic priorities set based on long-term as well as short-term needs.** Too often, public dialogues are dominated by an action-and- reaction pattern, with attention dedicated to the loudest voices or the most disruptive current problem. We are seeking to take a more thoughtful approach. ***PMAC members are active in looking at a range of issues, from the addiction crisis to environmental issues to park maintenance issues, all relevant to park advocacy.*** As a group, we have provided leadership for community voice in the park continuously since at least 1982. We call on DCR to improve communication with members of the communities they serve to engage together in setting priorities and addressing long-term and short-term needs.

**WIDER VISION: As advocates for the Southwest Corridor Park, we have many interests and projects; all under a theme of “building a more sustainable city.”** Park advocacy brings together people with varied interests, such as bicycling, gardening, open space, nature and environment, youth programming, park history, community development and more. The power in bringing these interests together is that all directly and indirectly support a vision for how parks help in building a more sustainable city. We see our advocacy as not a single-interest, but part of a larger array of environmental and community issues.

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## [2.] Park Stewardship

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The Southwest Corridor Park is well-known for our network of volunteers who maintain gardens and landscaping in the park. Volunteers and neighbors take pride in the hard work and creativity of the park stewards. This work not only maintains the beauty of the park, but also creates strong community connections among neighbors.

Statistics for the year:

- Approximately 2,000 hours of park stewardship volunteer time
- 30+ Garden Stewards
- 20+ garden locations in the park in the South End/Back Bay, Jackson Square and Jamaica Plain.
- 12 volunteer groups, including monthly/bi-monthly dates with Boston Cares and special volunteer days with school, university and corporate groups.
- Work includes planting, transplanting, weeding, and watering

In addition to 2,000+ park stewardship volunteer hours that we track (via the SWCPC), we estimate that PMAC members contribute an additional equal amount of time on park volunteer work, including the coordination of community gardens (with coordinators for each of the 11 community gardens); networking with bike advocacy organizations, neighborhood groups, university groups and others; communication and troubleshooting around maintenance and public safety issues; communications, social media and website, developing informational materials, conducting surveys and gathering input from neighbors on park projects, attending park-related community meetings, managing the mini-grant initiative, and additional park-related projects. Additionally, Friends of Carleton Court Dog Park invest many hours in maintenance and coordination for the dog park.

### Volunteer Days

- Boston Cares – monthly dates in the South End/Back Bay; twice-monthly in the Rose Garden
- IBM Internship Program
- Kingsley Montessori School / Earth Day

- Marriott
- Copley Place
- Mass. General Hospital
- Northeastern University Orientation Leaders
- Northeastern University ACES Back-to-School Week
- The Philanthropic Initiative
- Park Serve Day / DCR
- Neighborhood Volunteers – JP & Back Bay/South End
- Youth Volunteers – Jackson Square

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### [3.] Youth & Family Programming

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For the third summer, PMAC, in partnership with Northeastern University and the Southwest Corridor Park Conservancy, has provided mini-grants to support youth and family programming in the park. The purpose of the mini-grant initiative is to support high-quality programming for youth and families, while raising awareness about the park and nurturing a next generation of park leadership. This summer, we provided five mini-grants:

- **Boston Explorers.** Boston Explorers is an urban summer camp enrolling 156 children this summer. Boston Explorers calls the Southwest Corridor Park their “main street” as they walk, bike and play along the corridor throughout the summer, and enjoy vegetable snacks from a community garden. This year, they partnered with the Boston Police Bike Patrol Unit for their second annual Bike Week. Through Boston traffic, Lt. David Murphy and three of his officers escorted 20 explorers and four staff members on a 15-mile round trip bike ride from Roxbury to Cambridge. This summer they also report expanded enrollment in their program with a partnership with two programs for homeless children. They are launching school vacation programming this year and look forward to continued opportunities to connect children to nature and community through the park and beyond.
- **Inquilenos Boricuas en Acción (IBA).** IBA’s Summer Learning Project 2018 was a 5-week, project-based academic enrichment program that aimed to stem summer learning loss, develop language and literacy, and support social and emotional development in 2nd and 3rd grade students. In our eighth year of programming, we welcomed 38 students from schools throughout Boston to explore the question, “What is Community?” Throughout the summer, students became researchers, explorers, and activists as they went on field trips to sites throughout the community – including the Southwest Corridor Park. Exploring the area with our staff, students learned about the history of the Park, as well as the importance of social justice and land preservation. They used their weekly walks through the South End and observations of the community around them to create two murals, which are now on display within the Park. Writings, artwork, and photographs from their explorations are included in the book that they published: *Celebrating Our Community: Then & Now*. The funds from the Mini-Grant were used both for the purchase of art supplies for the murals that are displayed in the park and towards the publication cost of this book.
- **United South End Settlements (USES).** The USES Children’s Art Center’s “club48” program held two “Paint-Outs” in the Southwest Corridor Park during the summer and plan another for the fall. Each child started off with a sketchbook and spent an hour going around and sketching different areas of the park, figuring out where they wanted to paint. After they had a few solid sketches, they picked their favorite one. Then they took the 16x20 canvases (many of the kids had never gotten to paint on something this size) and spent the next two hours painting the scene of their choice. Paintings are displayed in the program room for children and parents to enjoy.
- **Zumba With A Cop (E-13).** JPC: Tree of Life (JPC:ToL) worked with Boston Police Department District E-13 to sponsor the Zumba with a Cop series in the park, near Lamartine Street, behind English High School. Their goal is to utilize the Southwest Corridor Park to incorporate fitness and a healthy environment to build and foster healthy relationships between families and the police. JPC:ToL provided childcare for mother’s with

babies and toddlers who wished to participate. The sessions were widely attended and enjoyed, with 30 at the largest session, and generated positive publicity through social media and through BPD's website.

- **Mildred C. Hailey Apartments Tenant Organization (MCHATO).** MCHATO provided art and activities in the park for the mothers & toddlers group at Mildred Hailey (Bromley Heath) Apartments. The group met weekly to walk to different playgrounds in the park for park activities followed by outdoor art activities. Tennis was a highlight this summer. The program provides parenting skills and education, along with these activities.

**Jackson Square Children's Garden.** PMAC/SWCPC also continues the Children's Garden at Jackson Square, in partnership with the Mildred C. Hailey Apartments and the RealKidz program. Children garden in the raised bed garden next to the Lorber Family Playground and along the fence near the bike path. Many of the plants are edibles, with mint, borage, peas and hot peppers as favorites. This summer, children built wooden boxes to house composting worms. (The worms, donated last winter and now shared in several spots along the corridor, compost cardboard boxes as well as leaves.) Another highlight this summer was a chalkboard installed on the side of the garden wall that we used to draw and write, keeping track of what we were planting and harvesting. DCR staff help to support this garden, helping with the chalkboard, water barrel and more.

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#### [4.] Park History and Art

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The Southwest Corridor Park's rich park history continues to be a focus that brings people together. We consistently see that public art and neighborhood history are important to those who live and work around the park. Related activities in 2018 included --

1. Through our survey about the Rose Garden and Northampton Green, saw strong support for public art in the park;
2. Engaged in initial conversations about public art in the park;
3. Engaged in initial conversations about a commemoration garden and marker in Northampton Green;
4. Connected with two local authors who have written about the Southwest Corridor Park;
5. Partnered with the Boston Public Library's Levanthal Map Center's "Breathing Room" exhibit about parks and open space;
6. Displayed two murals painted by children in the Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción *Exploring Community* summer program;
7. Two volunteers painted two garden-themed electrical boxes in the park.

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#### PMAC Leadership Team and Committee Structure

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##### ***Nominees for 2019 Leadership Team:***

- **Jennifer Leonard**, Chair (Co-Chair)
- **Bob Barney**, Secretary / Park Stewardship Committee Chairperson
- **Tracy O'Brien**, Community Garden Committee Chairperson // **Nominated as Co-Chair**
- **Franco Campanello**, Volunteers/SWCPC
- **David Wean**, Bicycle-Walking Path Committee Chairperson
- **Frederick Vetterlein**, Greenway Extension Project
- **Scott Romney**, Carleton Court Dog Park // **NEW**