

**Southwest Corridor Park Management Advisory Council (PMAC)  
Annual Meeting Agenda & Annual Report Summary  
Tuesday, November 12, 2019**

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**ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA**

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- Annual Report Presentation - 2019 Highlights
- Presentation and Discussion by State Representative Liz Malia
- Recognition & Thanks
- PMAC Leadership Team Election

**2019 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 continuing to build our network of people and organizations who share interests in the Southwest Corridor Park.

Our annual meeting report and presentation 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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2019 Highlights – A highlight for the year has been our growing network, as we continue to bring awareness and communication to networks of people around the park.

A theme for this year is the importance of parks in building sustainable and resilient cities. Resilience has been an important theme, as we develop strategies for public health and safety during an expanding opioid crisis. The idea of resilience is also important as we talk with our network about assault and theft incidents along the park in Jackson Square. These ideas are also important as we network with neighborhood, university, bicycling, park and gardening groups as we learn about new development and transportation projects and the pressures of a rapidly growing city. Key networks with SWCP representation include:

- Neighborhood associations in the South End, Back Bay, Roxbury and JP.
- Bicycle Advocacy Networks
- South End Forum
- South End Forum Working Group on Addiction, Recovery & Homelessness (on Mass/Cass)
- Back Bay Station Ventilation CAC
- Northeastern University Community Advisory Board
- Mildred C Hailey Apartments Tenant Association
- Boston Park Advocates
- Agricultural Hall
- Herbstalk
- Boston Food Forest Coalition
- Wake Up the Earth / Spontaneous Celebrations
- Roxbury Heritage Park
- Welcoming new state representatives in three districts adjacent to the park
- Participating in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event of the People Before Highways movement.

This fall, we were pleased to lead a walk-through of the Southwest Corridor Park with DCR officials, focusing on accomplishments and challenges in the park. Our annual meeting presentation is modeled from this walk-through.



We were also pleased to meet with the DCR Universal Access coordinator to plan a visit that will take place later in the year. We continue to build channels of communication with City of Boston departments as the city seeks to expand options for green transportation.

THEMES of The walk	What we are proud of	What we advocate for
Park Stewardship	We have a long tradition of community involvement in caring for the park. Neighborhood volunteers and volunteer groups devote over 2,000 hours each year to hands-on park stewardship. The Conservancy raises funds to support this work, enabling a wider network of people to provide support. PMAC maintains communication with DCR and community members in support of this work.	DCR funding, staffing and communication systems to support maintenance of park infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fences, stonework, walkways, signage, etc.</li> <li>Special concerns: Attention is needed for the park’s aging water system;</li> <li>Continued attention needed for trees &amp; tree replacement where needed.</li> </ul> Grateful for: Our positive, very productive relationship with the SWCP DCR park staff.
Community Gardening	Our community gardens were among the first in the city; with a strong tradition of volunteers who coordinate our 11 community gardens.	Support for the incorporation of the Oakdale Community Garden to the park. Plus same as “Park Stewardship” concerns.
Bicycling / Walking Path	The SWCP is one of the most widely used bicycle routes in the city, and the path is also one of the most widely used routes for neighbors to walk to work, school and MBTA, walk dogs, bring children to playgrounds and schools and more.	Path striping and stenciling to improve safety and flow of bicyclists, walkers and others Path improvements to address accessibility issues (cobblestones, bricks).
Public Health and Public Safety	We have maintained open channels of communication among local leadership, neighborhood groups, public safety officials and park volunteers, during a very challenging period in the opioid epidemic.	Along with neighborhood groups, we support citywide and regional efforts to address the root causes of the opioid epidemic and to address the immediate impact on the South End and other Boston neighborhoods.
Park Features – Dog Park, Skateboard Park, Sports Facilities	Community groups have exercised leadership to create the Skateboard Park, to create the Carleton Court Dog Park and to seek a dog park in JP. PMAC serves as the network to support these efforts.	DCR funding, staffing and communication systems to move park projects forward. Grateful for: We are especially excited to see progress toward the Skateboard Park.
Youth and Family Programming	We support a wide array of youth and family programming, providing high-quality activities and raising awareness of the park for a next generation of park leadership.	Grateful for: DCR support for these activities.
Park History	Community members value the rich history of the Southwest Corridor Park.	Explore signage at Forest Hills and other locations to highlight park history, park maps and park highlights.

### 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.
- Over a dozen different 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
- Marriott
- Copley Place
- Mass. General Hospital
- Northeastern University ACES Back-to-School Week
- The Philanthropic Initiative / Red Pine Scholars
- Park Serve Day / DCR
- Neighborhood Volunteers – JP & Back Bay/South End
- Youth Volunteers – Jackson Square
- Capital One

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### [3.] Youth & Family Programming

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**Mini-Grants:** 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 minigrants to **Boston Explorers, Inquilenos Boricuas en Acción (IBA, United South End Settlements (USES, Zumba With A Cop (E-13, Mildred C. Hailey Apartments Tenant Organization (MCHATO, South Street Apartments: Mom’s Café:**, and our first school-year project to **Friends of the Rafael Hernandez School.**

\*\* For the first time, we will be supporting a school year program. The after-school program at the Rafael Hernandez School will provide nature study in the Southwest Corridor Park, working with a program from the Boston Nature Center.

**Jackson Square Children’s Garden.** PMAC/SWCPC also continues the Children’s Garden at Jackson Square, in partnership with the Mildred C. Hailey Apartments. 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.

**STEAM in the Park and Science Wednesdays.** PMAC/SWCPC continue the Science Wednesdays series, a year-round science program that grew out of the children’s gardening program. During the summer we meet outdoors, coordinating this year with the STEAM in the PARK series supported by DCR. During the fall, winter and spring, we meet indoors at 964 Parker Street, in the conference room of the 964 Collaborative and Metro Boston Alive.

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### PMAC Leadership Team and Committee Structure

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#### *Nominees for 2020 Leadership Team:*

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