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**FAIRMOUNT PARK CONSERVANCY ANNOUNCES MERGER WITH  
FAIRMOUNT PARK HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST**

**PHILADELPHIA – April 21, 2015 – Two non-profit organizations that support the City of Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park system have merged to form one organization, the Fairmount Park Conservancy.** The Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust was formed in 1992 as a public/private venture to innovate historic preservation in Fairmount Park. The Fairmount Park Conservancy was originally established as the Fairmount Park Foundation in 1997 as the fundraising arm for the Fairmount Park system. The new organization will be called the Fairmount Park Conservancy and its updated mission will champion both natural and physical assets within the Philadelphia park system.

The newly merged Conservancy takes on the unique responsibility of stewarding Fairmount Park’s cultural legacy – including the many historic properties and cultural institutions that inhabit it – and amplifying the park’s unique role in shaping our region’s social history. While the Conservancy has become widely known as an emerging leader in the city’s growing open space movement and the champion of Fairmount Park, the newly merged Conservancy is dedicated to stewarding, interpreting, and preserving a multifaceted cultural landscape surrounding the past, present and future of the entire Fairmount Park system.

While the merger was approved by the two organizations’ Boards of Directors and became effective on January 1, 2015, the staff has worked over the past few months to consolidate operations and develop a brand identity that is reflective of the organization’s now broader mission. The new brand includes a logo identity and a just-launched website: [fairmountparkconservancy.org](http://fairmountparkconservancy.org).

The merger represents a natural progression for two organizations that have worked closely together for many years. In the past, the Conservancy has maintained a daily presence in the City’s parks, and the Trust has worked diligently to elevate the park’s many historic properties. The merger places the ongoing stewardship needs of the Fairmount Park system’s natural and physical assets under the leadership of a stronger organization.

The combined organization will have an annual operating budget of approximately \$2 million, and a staff of 16 people. The Executive Director of the merged entity will continue to be Kathryn Ott Lovell, who has been the Conservancy's Executive Director since March of 2011. Lucy Strackhouse, the Executive Director of the Trust, will become the Senior Director of Preservation and Project Management for the Conservancy, continuing to oversee operations of historic preservation for the organization. All staff from both organizations will remain employed, with no positions lost in the merged structure. The new Board of Directors will be consolidated from the Boards of the two organizations. The Board's president will be John Gattuso, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Urban & National Development for Liberty Property Trust. Other officers will be: John K. Binswanger, Chairman; James J. Bloom and Joseph M. Manko, Sr., Esq., Vice Presidents; Carol S. Eicher, Treasurer; and Sandra W. Weckesser, Esq., Secretary.

“We have talked about bringing these great organizations together for a long time and we are thrilled to finally make things official,” said **John Gattuso, President of the Fairmount Park Conservancy Board of Directors**. “We share a similar mission and purpose – namely preserving, improving, and promoting Philadelphia's incredible park system. Combining these two high-performing organizations into one entity will allow us to more effectively serve a world-class park system we have each served so well.”

“Together, the two organizations will strengthen and expand our programs to preserve historic properties, improve the park visitor experience and promote the unique assets in the Fairmount Park system,” said **James J. Bloom, President of the Board of Directors of the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust and a vice president of the newly consolidated board of directors**. “The diligent efforts by the staff of both organizations to accomplish this merger is to be complemented.”

“With an ongoing need for increased resources for our beloved park system, this newly-merged organization will be empowered to expand its programs, increase revenue for our parks, and build on the already stellar reputations of the Conservancy and Trust, all while simplifying the public's relationship with the agencies that serve Fairmount Park. This is great news for our parks and park users,” stated **Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter**.

**Michael DiBerardinis, Deputy Mayor for Environmental and Community Resources/Parks and Recreation Commissioner, City of Philadelphia**, said, “The city is thrilled that the Conservancy and Trust are formalizing their already successful partnership. Both organizations have been critical partners to us. We are grateful for their service and leadership and look forward to working closely with the newly-merged Fairmount Park Conservancy as we work to advance our collaborative vision for the parks.”

The Fairmount Park Conservancy's expanded mission reflects its role as a leader on collaborative projects involving both infrastructure and green space through the [Reimagining the Civic Commons Initiative](#), which was launched last month with \$11 million in funding from the Knight and William Penn Foundations. The Civic Commons Initiative will explore whether reinventing and connecting public places as a network of civic assets will help cities attract workers, advance economic opportunity, encourage residents to engage in community-building, and begin to level the playing field between more affluent and lower-income neighborhoods.

### **Background on Fairmount Park Conservancy and Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust**

**The Fairmount Park Conservancy** raised more than \$20 million for Philadelphia parks over its first 10 years while increasing public awareness of Fairmount Park's role in contributing to the Greater Philadelphia region's health, vibrancy and economic development. Over the last three years, the Conservancy's mission and work has evolved above and beyond solely fundraising to position the organization as a collaborative leader and partner of the park system, focusing more on planning, project management, program development, and community outreach endeavors. Today, the Conservancy works closely with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation to develop and implement projects and programs that support, improve, and enhance Philadelphia's parks and serve the communities that depend on them through park stewardship, civic initiatives, and environmental education.

**The Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust** provided professional preservation services to non-profit organizations and city agencies that manage historic buildings, public art, and cultural landscapes. The Trust's interdisciplinary staff offered expertise in architectural conservation, preservation and maintenance planning, and adaptive use. As a non-profit organization, the Trust worked collaboratively with stewardship organizations to identify preservation needs, raise funds, and implement projects from start to finish. The Trust grew the park's stakeholder base by attracting organizations and businesses to lease and adaptively use underutilized buildings, facilitating more than \$10 million in investment into park properties and projects.

### **About The Fairmount Park Conservancy**

**The Fairmount Park Conservancy** exists to champion the Fairmount Park system. Its mission is to work as a collaborative partner to lead and support efforts which preserve and improve Fairmount Park to enhance the quality of life and stimulate the economic development of the Greater Philadelphia Region. The Fairmount Park Conservancy fulfills its mission by leading signature capital projects, innovative programs, and historic preservation efforts throughout Fairmount Park; by developing and leveraging resources for the park; and by promoting the parks' unique assets and contributions, including nearly 50 historic properties now under Conservancy management.

The Fairmount Park system covers more than 10,200 acres and is considered one of the largest urban park systems in the world. It includes a network of more than 100 neighborhood parks and contains some of the region's most famous treasures and attractions. For more information, please visit [fairmountparkconservancy.org](http://fairmountparkconservancy.org). Like the Fairmount Park Conservancy on Facebook at [facebook.com/FairmountParkConservancy](https://facebook.com/FairmountParkConservancy) and Follow on Instagram and Twitter @myphillypark.

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