West Fairmount Park
Open House
January 27, 2021
The land upon which we gather is part of the traditional territory of the Lenni-Lenape. The Lenape People lived in harmony with one another upon this territory for thousands of years.

During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed west and north, but some also remain among the continuing historical tribal communities of the region: The Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation; the Ramapough Lenape Nation; and the Powhatan Renape Nation, The Nanticoke of Millsboro Delaware, and the Lenape of Cheswold Delaware.

We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory.

In our acknowledgment of the continued presence of Lenape people in their homeland, we affirm the aspiration of the great Lenape Chief Tamanend, that there be harmony between the indigenous people of this land and the descendants of the immigrants to this land, “as long as the rivers and creeks flow, and the sun, moon, and stars shine.”
Maura McCarthy

Executive Director

FAIRMOUNT PARK
CONSERVANCY
Tonight’s agenda

- **Open House Housekeeping:** Maura McCarthy
- **Welcome:** Councilmember Jamie Gauthier
- **Welcome:** Kathryn Ott Lovell
- **Meet:** Jim Mako
- **What do we mean by “West Fairmount Park”?** Maura McCarthy
- **Place-based work and Capital Projects:** Allison Schapker
- **Community Programs:** Jennifer Mahar and Nicole Hameen
- **Q & A**
Who is who?

**FAIRMOUNT PARK CONSERVANCY**

- Nonprofit
- 27 employees
- Founded in 1997
- **Mission**: Fairmount Park Conservancy brings Philadelphia’s parks to life. We lead capital projects and historic preservation efforts, foster park stewardship, attract and leverage investments, and develop innovative programs throughout the 10,200 acres that include Fairmount Park and more than 200 neighborhood parks around the city.

**PHILADELPHIA PARKS & RECREATION**

- City agency housed in the Office of Children & Families
- Merger of Department of Recreation and **Fairmount Park Commission** in 2010
- 700+ employees
- **Mission**: The residents of Philadelphia own a treasure of facilities and resources they have entrusted to Philadelphia Parks & Recreation to manage democratically, equitably, and sustainably. Parks & Rec activates and stewards those treasures with programs and services that contribute to the wellness and prosperity of all.
Jamie Gauthier

Councilmember of District 3
Jim Mako
Manager of District 5
What is West Fairmount Park?

- Fairmount Park is 2,050 acres total
- **West Fairmount Park includes 1,400 acres** on the west side of the Schuylkill River (Chamounix Hostel to the north, Philadelphia Zoo to the south)
- Home to iconic vistas, cultural institutions, historic structures, artwork and natural areas.
Partners in West Fairmount Park

- Belmont Stables
- Belmont Plateau Trails Alliance
- Cancer Support Community Greater Philadelphia
- Centennial Parkside CDC
- Center for Adaptive Rowing
- Chamounix Hostel
- Constellation Culinary Group
- Friends of Chamounix Tennis Courts
- Friends of Concourse Lake
- The Mann Center
- Philadelphia Zoo
- Philly Pumptrack at Parkside Evans
- Please Touch Museum at Memorial Hall
- Shofuso Japanese House & Garden
- Treetop Quest Philly
- Underground Railroad Museum at Belmont Mansion
- Work to Ride at Chamounix Equestrian Center
Natural Lands in West Fairmount Park

- Forests
- Meadows
- Streams, creeks, rivers, wetlands and lakes

And why are they important?

- Natural Lands make up 60% of our city’s 10,200 acres of park land.
- They provide habitat for wildlife, prevent erosion, provide us with clean water, purify the air we breathe, and help combat climate change.
- You can find a listing of some of the species that live in West Fairmount Park at iNaturalist
In 2020, Fairmount Park Conservancy worked across West Fairmount Park and its neighboring communities.

- Capital projects - revisiting the Centennial District Master Plan
- Community programs & partnerships
- Architectural conservation
- Leasing
- Concessions
- Natural lands care
Goal was to support the visitor experience in Fairmount Park in the summer of 2020.

Temporary “Park Hubs” included wayfinding signage, hand-sanitizing stations, and portable restrooms.

West Fairmount Park:
- Chamounix Drive
- Concourse Lake
- Centennial District (near Black Rd.)

6 Park Hubs in total; 3 additional in East Fairmount Park.
In the summer and fall of 2020 the free Fairmount Park Scavenger Hunt encouraged park-goers to discover the facts and stories behind its historic houses, natural areas, and public art via self-guided tours and a smartphone app.

- **1,000+** summer and fall participants

**2021:** The series continues with the WinTOUR Scavenger Hunt and expansion to neighborhood parks; **1,500+** participants so far
Allison Schapker

FAIRMOUNT PARK CONSERVANCY

Chief Projects Officer
Care and Maintenance

- Ongoing trail maintenance includes a team that helps clear trees after storms and restore trail surfaces.

- Annual maintenance of Parkside Edge at Centennial Commons (41st St. to Belmont Ave. along Parkside Ave.) continued in 2020.

- We fund 3-4 employees from Parkside to provide clean up twice a week. These employees are contracted by The Centennial Parkside CDC each year.
Natural Lands Care

- Maintenance and planting of Chamounix, Belmont Plateau and Bittersweet meadows.
- Ongoing forest restoration at Fairmount Park Horticulture Center;
- Use of sustainable lumber from hazard trees for trail bridges.

2021: Natural Lands maintenance is ongoing and will include, but is not limited to, a forest restoration and gully repair project at the Chamounix Woods.
The Trolley Trail is a 4.5-mile multi-user loop that follows the old Fairmount Park Trolley line.

The Conservancy continued to build new sections of this soft surface trail with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and Belmont Plateau Trails Alliance.

The buildout of the 0.7-mile Lansdowne Glen Trail at the Horticulture Center was also completed as part of an ongoing forest restoration project.

2021: Expected completion of the Trolley Trail with trailheads and signage.
Pavilion in the Trees is an artistic installation from 1993 by Martin Puryear on the grounds of the Fairmount Park Horticulture Center.

Maintenance continues with our partners at the Association for Public Art.

Work includes cleaning biological growth from the wood and application of an annual preservative treatment.

2021: Conservators will continue to provide annual maintenance of the sculpture.
The Conservancy provides leases in historic park buildings in partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation:

- Ridgeland Mansion is leased by the Cancer Support Community Greater Philadelphia
- Letitia House is leased by the Centennial Parkside CDC
The Conservancy works with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation to bring new amenities to the park via concessions. A portion of their proceeds support the park.

- Constellation Culinary Group hosts events at The Fairmount Park Horticulture Center.
- Concessionaire **Treetop Quest Philly** opened their adventure course in 2018.
We’re moving to Ohio House!

- The Conservancy will be closer to our work in the park.
- Ohio House will see improvements with a new landscape, restoration of the building exterior, and new signage.
- We’ll use the building and 3 acres as a home base and starting point for park users, experiences, and events.
Parks Hubs will return in 2021 with wayfinding signage, portable restrooms, and hand-sanitizing stations.

Where do you want to see Park Hubs? Stay tuned for a survey in the coming weeks!

Public Programs: you’ll see a series of walks, hikes, rides, runs and classes and more scavenger hunts.
Coming in 2021 - Projects

- The Conservancy is working on new maps and signage in Fairmount Park to match standards developed by Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.
- Parkside Edge*- finish the landscape at Parkside Ave. in front of Welsh Fountain.
- Design and restoration of the Welsh Fountain* landscape to provide a safe and welcoming transition into the park.

*Progress on the Centennial District Master Plan
Jennifer Mahar

Senior Director of Community Programs & Partnerships
Our Park Friends Network is an amazing network of 100+ volunteer park friend groups. Together we host Love Your Park, offer peer learning opportunities, provide resources for community events and programs and help to build friend group capacity.

**Park Friend Groups in West Fairmount Park:**
Belmont Plateau Trails Alliance, Friends of Centennial Lake, Friends of Concourse Lake, Philly Pumptrack at Parkside Evans

**2021:** We aim to (re)establish a West Fairmount Park Coalition of neighborhood stakeholders and organizations in the park to help guide the future of the park.
Farm Philly supports urban agriculture projects on Philadelphia Parks & Recreation land.

**Carousel House Farm** grew 4,000 pounds of fresh produce this summer. All of the veggies were given to Parkside community organizations for their emergency food distribution programs.

**2021:** The Conservancy has hired a new FarmPhilly Coordinator, EmmaKate Martin, to lead stewardship efforts among community garden groups.
TreePhilly

A partnership between The Conservancy, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and TD Bank, TreePhilly connects residents with the resources they need to plant and care for trees.

300+ trees were distributed to local households at Carousel House giveaways in spring and fall of 2020.

2021: The Conservancy hired a full-time TreePhilly Program Coordinator, Lee Scottlorde.

TreePhilly will launch the Urban Forest Strategic Planning effort.
Love Your Park Solo was launched in summer 2020 in response to unprecedented park use and so many people reaching out to help.

- 460 free cleanup kits distributed
- 700 volunteer hours

**2021:** The Conservancy will be bringing back Love Your Park solo and will offer open volunteer opportunities each month. Please visit loveyourpark.org to learn more and to sign up.
The Conservancy helps to steward the “Reimagining the Civic Commons” initiative with partners Bartram’s Garden, Strawberry Mansion CDC and Centennial Parkside CDC. Together we have goals around our four guiding principles: civic engagement; environmental justice; diversity, equity and radical inclusivity; and local, equitable economic development.

2021: We will continue to partner with Centennial Parkside CDC on programming, employment opportunities and greening efforts in the community.
A partnership between the Conservancy, Parks & Recreation and the Department of Public Health, We Walk PHL is a free walking group that encourages members to take a walk in their local park, including Concourse Lake and Parkside Edge.

- **800+ participants during fall of 2020 in 12 parks**

**2021:** Expanding to 15 parks and embedding health and wellness, environmental learning and engagement, arts and culture programming into the walks. Please join the We Walk Facebook group page to find out more!
Most programming was on hold in 2020 due to the pandemic. In past years we have partnered with the community to offer Parkside Fresh Food Fest, We Walk PHL, West Park Arts Fest, GirlTrek wellness celebration at Letitia House, movie nights and a summer camp at Clayborn and Lewis Rec Center.

2021: We will partner with Centennial Parkside CDC to bring free programming to Parkside. Some things in the works:

- Movie nights
- Farmers Market
- We Walk PHL
- Black Men’s Conference & Family Day (June 18 - 20)
Save the Dates

EAST FAIRMOUNT PARK OPEN HOUSE
FEBRUARY 10, 2021 @ 5:30PM VIA ZOOM

FDR PARK OPEN HOUSE
APRIL 7, 2021 @ 5:30PM VIA ZOOM
Thank you!

- Thanks to all of our volunteers, members, donors, board members, and community partners.
- To learn more about supporting our work, please visit myphillypark.org

Contact us:

- **Call us:** 215-988-9334
- **Email us:** info@myphillypark.org
- **Social media:** @myphillypark on Instagram, Twitter, and @fairmountparkconservancy on Facebook
Q&A

More questions? Contact info@myphillypark.org