

Olmsted

"We are very proud of this picture (of a birdseye view of Volunteer Park has taken from the water tower recently)...inasmuch as it sets forth so comprehensively the great variety of landscape and other formal work which has been carried out in Volunteer park in accordance with your plan."
- Roland Cotterill to Olmsted Brothers, October 23, 1913

NEWS

FRIENDS OF SEATTLE'S OLMSTED PARKS

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Volunteer Park, view looking north from the water tower, 1930, Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives, Item No. 4134

Volunteer Park Landmark Nomination

In April FSOP submitted a landmark nomination for Volunteer Park to the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board. John C. Olmsted designed the park's grounds so that it would provide a place of respite and calm in the bustling city. His plans included irregular open lawns bordered by shrub and tree plantings, carefully framed and modulated views, and circulation loops. A landmark nomination will help us preserve the park's Olmsted legacy for future generations.

The Landmarks Preservation Board will hold a public meeting regarding the park's potential designation as a landmark. If they designate it a landmark, a Controls and Incentive Agreement will be negotiated with Seattle Parks and a second public meeting will be held regarding the agreement (which lays out the preservation "rules" for a landmark). At each of these meetings, the public is welcome to submit their comments to the board. Once the board approves the designation, a designating ordinance is forwarded to the Seattle City Council for their vote.

The nomination will be available on the FSOP website once the city's Historic Preservation Officer approves it for submission to the Landmarks Preservation Board.

Walking Tour - May 22nd

Please join us for a walking tour of Volunteer Park on **Saturday, May 22nd**. We will meet at the *Black Sun* sculpture, across from the Seattle Asian Art Museum, at 10:00 a.m. The tour will last approximately two hours.

SR 520 Update

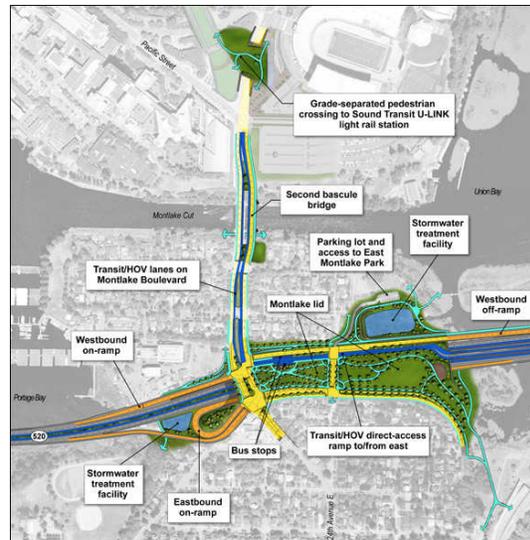
On Thursday, April 29th, Governor Gregoire unveiled the state's preferred alternative for the new Highway 520 bridge project. Happily, the freeway ramps that previous plans had connected directly to Lake Washington Boulevard have been removed. Traffic will enter and leave the freeway via Montlake Boulevard. HOV (3+) vehicles will be able to travel directly to southbound Lake Washington Boulevard. Because general purpose traffic will follow the same route to Lake Washington Boulevard, but then be directed west to Montlake Boulevard, compliance will be a concern..

Landscaped medians and boulevard plantings will be added to a four-block section of Lake Washington Boulevard and the Portage Bay section of Highway 520, and the speed limit on the Portage Bay section reduced to 45 m.p.h.

While we are thrilled that most of Lake Washington Boulevard will not be directly connected to the freeway, we are still concerned that the southbound Montlake Boulevard HOV/bus left turn lane encroaches on the historic park medians that have been in place for more than 100 years.

FSOP board member Larry Sinnott has worked tirelessly for over five years to help ensure this favorable outcome amidst an intense and complex public debate over competing visions for the bridge.

For more information information about the plan, visit www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/brhpdesign.htm.



Proposed Montlake Interchange, Courtesy Washington State Department of Transportation

Seattle Parks Projects

by Kathleen Conner, Parks Liaison to the FSOP Board

The Seattle Parks and Recreation Department has a variety of projects underway in its Olmsted Parks and Boulevards. Two city levies, the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy and the 2006 Bridging the Gap Levy (SDOT), have bolstered traditional capital project funding, affording more projects in Olmsted parks and boulevards. Seattle Parks and Recreation works closely with the FSOP to ensure the project designs are consistent with Olmsted principles and plans. These efforts have strengthened and improved the Olmsted system which, in turn, encourages more visitors to use and experience these wonderful places. Following is a list of current projects in Olmsted parks:

Brown Boulevard Signs. Between 2009 and 2015, Park boulevard signs will go up as part of the SDOT's Bridging the Gap Levy. Many of these boulevards that will have the brown signs were in the original Olmsted plan for Seattle. A number have already been installed.

Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum Lighting Replacement. SDOT and City Light will replace lighting in this section of the Boulevard to improve lighting conditions and to conserve energy with LED fixtures. Lighting options are currently being considered by FSOP and Seattle Parks and Recreation for this boulevard and others in the system.

Jefferson Park. This multi-phase project includes a grass turf area on top of the Jefferson Reservoir, a new play area, tennis courts, and a spray mountain feature.

Seward Park Trails. There are new trails in the upper, forested part of Seward Park. The community worked with the Parks Trails staff to formalize some of the undeveloped paths and to add signage, making navigation easier in the trail system.

Seward Park Play Area. The naturalistic play area project located at the park entrance is out to bid, and it is anticipated that construction will start in late June.

McGraw Square (Downtown, at 5th Avenue and Westlake). McGraw Square is owned by Seattle Parks and by SDOT. In the early 1900's, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., prepared a design for the square. SDOT designed the renovated plaza to improve pedestrian, bike, and transit circulation and to better showcase the statue of John H. McGraw, a Seattle resident who served as Washington's second governor. FSOP has publicly reviewed and critiqued SDOT's design for the square.

Kinnear Park. A schematic design was recently completed for the renovation of lower Kinnear Park in the Queen Anne neighborhood. The plans include new pathways, improved view corridors into the park, an off-leash area, and vegetation management. The project supporters are currently seeking grant funding for its implementation.

Queen Anne Boulevard. Work continues on the Boulevard with additional gravel paths and sidewalk seg-

ments, including some rubber sidewalks to protect mature trees. Landscaping and irrigation were also added in some key locations.

Gas Works West Entry Path. Work on the west entry was recently completed. The project included the extension of the gravel path to N. Northlake Place and landscaping. It provides excellent access from the west, as well as reinforces park boundaries.

Hiawatha Playfield. The grass playfield was replaced with a synthetic surface and the running track was replaced with a rubber track. A subcommittee of the FSOP played an important role in reviewing the plans to retain some vestiges of the original Olmsted plan for the park, including an "ovoid" shaped track.

Capitol Campus Program

On February 27th, an enthusiastic audience of well over a hundred attendees enjoyed a program in Olympia held in conjunction with the publication of the latest FSOP brochure, "Guide to the Olmsted Legacy at the Washington State Capitol." Anne Knight and Jerry Arbes, members of FSOP's Board of Advisors, spent many hours researching and creating the brochure, which is an invaluable tool for educating the public about the Olmsted legacy at the capitol.

Speakers included Norman J. Johnston, professor emeritus of the UW College of Built Environments; Michael Sullivan, principal of Artifacts Consulting, Inc.; Susan Olmsted, FSOP boardmember and landscape architect and architect with Mithun; and Eliza Davidson, FSOP and NAOP boardmember and principal of Arbutus Design, LLC.

Dr. Johnston provided a unique perspective of the campus, having spent several of his boyhood years playing alongside workers who built the Capitol Group of Buildings. His father, Jay Johnston, supervised the project for Wilder & White, the buildings' architects. Dr. Johnston recalled playing with the miniature railroad that encircled the Legislative Building to carry stone for its facade and riding his wagon down the building's broad entry stairs.

Michael Sullivan shared images of a number of documents he found while researching the Olmsted Brothers' role in the planning and design of the Capitol Campus.

Susan Olmsted discussed the campus plan's original design elements and the *Landscape Preservation Master Plan* for the West Capitol Campus that the Department of General Administration commissioned, including images showing what the full implementation of Olmsted's plan could look like. Through a series of drawings she showed the precarious status of the campus' tree cover, with many existing trees in need of replacement or immediate care to ensure their survival.

Eliza Davidson continued the discussion regarding the campus' trees by describing a tree inventory undertaken as part of the *Vegetation Management Plan* component of the *Landscape Preservation Master Plan*. She explained

the careful management needed for existing trees and identified practices that could be instituted to improve the overall health of the campus vegetation, including mulching, ivy removal, diversification of species, and innovative pruning methods that can reinvigorate aging trees.

Our thanks go to the League of Women Voters of Thurston County and the Sacajawea and Washington State chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution for helping make the event so successful by providing flowers, refreshments, and exhibits.

We would also like to thank the Department of General Administration for printing the brochure. Marygrace Jennings, Historic Preservation Manager for the Department of General Administration, generously provided her assistance to the project.

Not long after the program, in April, the Sacajawea and Washington State chapters of the DAR and the Department of Natural Resources donated elms that were planted along Capitol Way and in the greensward on Arbor Day. Several more trees will be planted this fall in Olmsted plan locations.

Additionally, the Department of General Administration is developing a formal tree donation program. This will enable the public to aid in restoring the campus' trees. Information about how to participate in the program will be announced later this year.

A-Y-P Forum in *Landscape Architecture*

The April 2010 issue of *Landscape Architecture* magazine features two articles relating to Seattle's 2009 A-Y-P Exposition centennial celebration. The first is a reprint of a piece written by James Frederick Dawson in 1909 that appeared in the first issue of *Landscape Architecture*. Dawson, an Olmsted Brothers associate, supervised landscaping work on the A-Y-P grounds for the Olmsted Brothers in the months leading up to the world's fair's opening.

The second article, "From Past to Future: The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition's Legacy is Evident on the University of Washington Campus," was written by Brooks Kolb, FSOP board president, and Anne Knight and Jerry Arbes, members of our advisory board. The article provides an overview of the physical legacy that remains from the exposition, including the Rainier Vista, circulation routes, and several buildings.

The article concludes with excerpts from the forum held on December 2, 2009 at the University of Washington. Panelists included Kristine Kenney, Susan Olmsted, Jeffrey Ochsner, Robert Sabbatini, and John Stamets. They discussed how to protect the Olmsted legacy on the UW campus and the issues that arise as a growing university works to find a balance between building for its future and protecting its heritage.

The April issue can be viewed online at <http://archives.asla.org/nonmembers/lam.html>.

Volunteer Park Conservatory

Seattle Parks, already struggling to maintain its operations due to earlier budget cuts now faces \$10 to \$12 million in cuts to its 2011 and 2012 budgets. This will require the department to close facilities, reduce maintenance staff, and/or eliminate programs. One of the programs that could be closed to meet the budget restrictions is the Volunteer Park Conservatory. While none of the possible cuts are desirable, the conservatory presents a special concern. If it is closed, its collection of plants and trees will not survive without the daily care of gardeners. A significant amount of capital would be required to replace the lost collection to reopen the Conservatory.

City departments will be deciding in the next month or two how to address the budget cuts. We encourage you to contact Seattle Parks to express your support for preserving the Conservatory.



Volunteer Park Conservatory, interior, 1970, Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives, Item No. 30487

Lower Kinnear Park Project

Friends of Lower Kinnear Park (FOLKPark), a community organization that is working to enhance lower Kinnear Park, recently presented their preliminary plans to the FSOP board. The park, established in 1889 and designed by John C. Olmsted in 1909, consists of an upper portion, on the bluff, and a lower portion with trails that run north-south from Mercer Place to West Prospect Street. Slides have intermittently blocked the trails and the hillside forest suffers from the presence of invasive exotic plants.

FOLKPark is currently working with Seattle Parks and the community to develop a plan to increase access, create gathering spaces and viewpoints, restore the tennis courts and the urban forest, and expand the trail system to the Helix Bridge at West Prospect Street, which would link the park to the Elliott Bay bike trail. For more information, visit their website at www.folkpark.org.



FRIENDS OF SEATTLE'S OLMSTED PARKS

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Membership Information

The Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to raising the awareness and protection of Seattle's Olmsted park and boulevard system. We depend on members' dues and donations to support our efforts. Dues for individuals are \$25/year and households \$50/year, which helps defray program, newsletter, and mailing expenses.

*Please Renew Your Membership
Address Correction Requested*

2010 Walking Tour Dates

Please join us for a series of walking tours of Olmsted-designed parks and boulevards and a bike tour of Lake Washington Boulevard this summer. All tours begin at 10:00 a.m. and last approximately two hours.

DATE	LOCATION	MEET AT:
May 22	Volunteer Park	<i>Black Sun</i> (across from SAAM)
June 26	U of W Campus	Flag pole south of the Burke Museum
July 17	Magnolia Boulevard	North end of Magnolia Park, parking lot on west side of boulevard, just south of West Howe Street bridge
August 28	Jefferson Park	Jefferson Park Community Center
September 26	Lake Washington Boulevard BICYCLE TOUR*	Colman Park parking lot
October 16	Washington Park Arboretum Pacific Connections Garden	Japanese Garden parking lot

* This tour will be held on one of the "Bicycle Sundays" taking place this summer on Lake Washington Boulevard. The boulevard will be closed to traffic between Mount Baker Beach and Seward Park from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on: May 2, 9, 23, 30, June 6, 13, 27, July 5 (Monday), 11, 18, 25, August 1, 22, 29, and September 5, 12, 19, 26. For more information visit: www.seattle.gov/parks/bicyclesunday.