



THE PACT:

THE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL TRIBUTE NEWSLETTER

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Friends of the Parks Contact Information



17 N State St
Suite 1450
Chicago, IL 60602-3315



(312) 857-2757



www.Fotp.org
Email: Info@fotp.org



www.facebook.com/
friendsoftheparks



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CLARENDON PARK: PAC & COMMUNITY CELEBRATING 100 YEARS



stargazing with the Chicago Astronomical Society. In June, Clarendon Park's Arts Partner Kuumba Lynx celebrated the beginning of their 20th year with Sound Da

Clarendon Park Community Center, 4501 N. Clarendon.
Submitted by Melanie Eckner from Clarendon Park Advisory Council.

In 1916, the Chicago Plan Commission heralded Clarendon Municipal Bathing Beach as proof of concept for what it described as the "Reclamation of the Lakefront for the People." Nearly half a million visitors from far and wide flocked to the beach during its first season, and the beach flourished throughout the 1920s. Yet fewer than twenty years later, Clarendon Beach was filled in for the northward extension of Lake Shore Drive and Lincoln Park, leaving the towered beach house to find a new purpose amid newly created land.

Over the next 80 years, the former grand beach was transformed into Clarendon Park and Community Center,

where this year we celebrated what Park District historian Julia Bachrach described in her Centennial talk as "100 years of healthful recreation"! Offerings over the years ranged from scouting and a senior hub to an acclaimed boxing program and all-city skating championships. Clarendon today offers a lively roster including football, basketball, softball, karate, camp, yoga, and hip hop. The park also offers its thousands of neighbors a rare opportunity to enjoy cherished time in nature—tending gardens on summer evenings, running carefree over open grass, swinging in the leafy playground, or walking the dog as the winter sun sets.

Clarendon Park's Centennial year saw many special days ... in April, the Chicago Park District and One Earth Film Festival offered an Earth Day film and

Alarm, a 5-day Chicago Hip Hop Theater Fest featuring KL alumni and other artists creating works in the hip hop arts. Through its "Coastal Tour," the First Annual Uptown Garden Walk in July highlighted our Sunshine and Community Gardens and the park's special past. In October, the Garfield-Clarendon Model Railroad Club, resident at Clarendon for over 40 years, opened its doors to over 1,500 visitors for Open House Chicago, where docents also offered tours of the historic community center.

On Oct. 1, 2016, the Chicago Park District and Clarendon Park Advisory Council celebrated Clarendon Park's Centennial with the Uptown community. Attendees enjoyed model trains, sweets and treats, a robot-making station, facepainting, ping pong, a community photo, and just being — *continued on page 2*



Photo courtesy of the Chicago Park District
continued from page 1 — together. A little bit of rain didn't dampen the spirit of the pre-party bike ride with Slow Roll Chicago and the ICA-USA. Julia Bachrach's Centennial talk offered

insight into Clarendon's unique coastal legacy. Singer Cherrelle Sullivan and band Black Cherry Soul shared their musical gifts and made everyone's heart happy.

Generous support was provided by the Garfield-Clarendon Model Railroad Club, Kuumba Lynx, Seeds of Joy Daycare, Uptown Food Town, Chiu Quon Bakery, Lakeview Towers Residents Association, Sarah Velinsky Designs, and other kind donors and volunteers. Clarendon Park Advisory Council is grateful to the Chicago Park District staff who did so much—as they so often do on many “ordinary” days!—to make Clarendon Park's Centennial Celebration extra special.

PAC RESOURCES: Whole Foods Market

As we enter into a new fiscal year for businesses, this may be a good time for those who seek sponsorship or donations to consider who you plan to approach this year. Each chain and “big-box” store has their own policies for donating to local community groups. Some of them will allow each individual store their own discretionary funding, others require that you work with the corporate office. Some have rolling funds throughout the year, some have deadlines. Feel free to ask a store manager about the business' donation procedures. In the case of Whole Foods, each location operates with an independent budget and works with partners within the immediate neighborhoods surrounding it. For example, the Lincoln Park store tends to work with Lincoln Park, Old Town, West Town, Bucktown, Wicker Park, and Humboldt Park. They suggest 8 weeks notice for donation requests and limit their donations to each organization to one per year.

FOTP ARCHIVES: Neighborhood Parks Greening Initiative & Seed Grant Funds

In the late 1990s, Friends of the Parks focused on our Neighborhood Parks Greening Initiative. There were two foci: 1) add and preserve parkland in Chicago's neighborhoods; and 2) focus on community outreach and advocacy to develop an active and effective community participation component. As part of this second focus, in 1999 Friends identified the need for an organizing tool to draw together neighborhood park advocates to work on small enhancement projects in their local parks. Friends offered small “seed” grants to park advisory councils and Adopt-A-Park groups for resident designed and implemented park projects. In 2000, the first Seed Grant recipients received funds and since then we have awarded over \$150,000 in grants. These Seed Grants require a commitment to a specific project and provide the opportunity for small successes in parks, with the hope that they build on existing community assets, advance the credibility of local park groups and lead to even larger accomplishments. Some of the objectives of the grant program were to promote and develop leadership skills, and to support projects that educate children, celebrate cultural diversity and incorporate the arts. Visit www.fotp.org to apply for a 2017 Seed Grant, due February 3, 2017.



Above: Washington Park was one of the first to be awarded a Seed Grant in 2000 to implement their vision for youth

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER '16 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING UPDATES

“Rules” and CPD Governance of PACs

Cecilia Butler, President of Washington Park Advisory Council, spoke during the Chicago Park District's November Board meeting's “People in the Parks” section. She reminded the Board of Commissioners and Superintendent Michael Kelly that in June of 1990, the Chicago Park District had a 3-day workshop for Park District and PACs to work out “kinks.” She said that now presents itself with a similar opportunity, because of recent email communications from Park District about “directions” for PACs to follow. She responded, “We're here because you didn't do what you're supposed to, in the past....This is no more than a reminder that it was a top-down process. If you want to give us rules, let us be at the table and let's talk about it.”

The Park Enhancement Committee

During December's Board Meeting, Jackson Park Watch, an advocate and watchdog organization, spoke out during the “People in the Parks” section about the lack of transparency in Jackson Park and how the Yoko Ono sculpture did not get approval from the District's Park Enhancement Committee (PEC). In response, Jessie Ruiz, the President of the Board, asked one of the District's lawyers, Tim King, to clarify. Mr. King responded that not all projects have to go through the PEC and that not all projects have the same process. He did not explain what the processes were and how they differ. Jessie Ruiz said that they, the District, should put this information on their website and have more public clarity around the processes.

To watch these videos and all others from the past three years, visit: <https://chicagoparkdistrict.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>. To speak on these topics or others during the Commissioners' January 11th Board Meeting, call the District at (312) 742-4299 or email signuptospeak@chicagoparkdistrict.com by 4pm on January 10th, and provide the following information after the recording or in the email: 1) Name; 2) Contact information (phone and email); 3) Relevant Title or Park Affiliation; and 4) Issue to address. The January meeting will be held at 541 N. Fairbanks, 8th Floor Board Room at 3:30pm.