

MEMO

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Christine Doty, President & CEO
DATE: May 21, 2019
SUBJ: Report

1/ City of Hartford

- **License Agreement Renewal**

Last week, I received an email from Michael Looney, Deputy Director of DPW for the City of Hartford, officially notifying the Elizabeth Park Conservancy that our License Agreement with the City of Hartford has been renewed for an additional 5-year term, ending May 30, 2024.

- **Permitting Process for Stage and Garden area of Park**

Kathy and I met with Don Chapman, City Director of Community & Small Business Development, and Kyla Hudson, City Special Events Coordinator, about permitting the new stage and events in the Garden area of the park. They agree that the Conservancy should be given the right to approve (or not) requests for permits for special events in the garden area and will contact us about these on a going-forward basis. Before this change can become final, they need approval from the Mayor's Office.

2/ Projects

- **Visitor Center Project—**

Public notice inviting contractors to bid on this project were published in the Hartford Courant during the week of April 29, with bid materials being available beginning on May 1. We held a mandatory site walk-through for contractors on May 8, which seemed quite well attended—14 contractors were represented at the walk-through. Bids are due on May 29.

- **Permanent Stage**

Our landscape architect and architects are accepting bids on this project, and we will have more information about this project near the end of the month—re contractor and construction schedule.

- **Wetlands Boardwalk in Western Loop**

As a follow up to our regularly scheduled quarterly meetings, I spoke with the trustees of the Ethel F. Donaghue Trust about the difficulty of funding the proposed boardwalk through the western loop, given the cost estimate of \$1million plus placed on the proposed project by landscape architect Anne Penniman and Associates. I described the top two fundraising priorities of the Conservancy as 1/ the Visitor Center and adjacent parking lot and 2/ the greenhouses and headhouse. The trustees have agreed that the next distribution to us from the trust (in June of \$105,000) should be applied to the Visitor Center, particularly the parking lot where funds may not yet be adequate to complete this part of the entire Visitor Center project and that the Western Loop Boardwalk project should be put on hold for now.

- **Fern Street entrance**

We are awaiting further work by the landscape architect on this project before discussing it further with the two interested donors.

- **Tree Planting**

The tree planting of 70 trees made possible by the gift of Tai Soo Kim has been completed, except for 6 remaining trees only. In addition, we have applied for and been granted Level I Arboretum status for Elizabeth Park. Collections of woody plants (trees and shrubs) are accredited by Arbnet, which is sponsored by the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, IL in partnership with the American Association of Public Gardens. We will be publicizing this exciting news soon.

3/ Events

- The final lecture of the Garden Lecture Series will take place on Thursday, May 16 with Linda Holden talking about her book on Bunny Mellon's gardens to a fairly large group of more than 75 guests.
- There was a good meeting of the Ambassadors on May 1, with several new Ambassadors welcomed. One of the new Ambassadors, Avery Buell, is an MDC Commissioner, and he has arranged a meeting with an MDC rep about drainage issues in the park for the first week of June.
- We have secured a June 11 private tour of Martha Stewart's estate for 6 people and will use this as an auction item for Wine & Roses.