



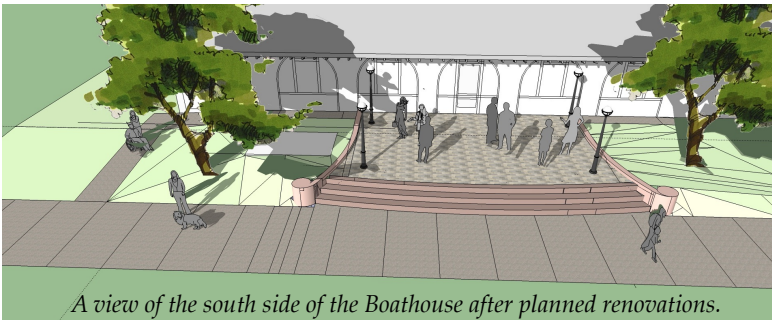
# ParkNotes

*a semiannual newsletter published by the Lafayette Park Conservancy*

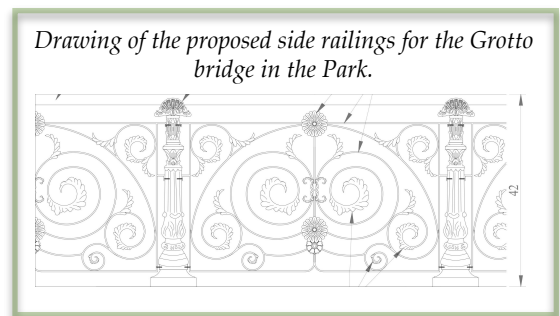
Issue 13

Winter 2013

## Fabulous Future for Lafayette Park



*A view of the south side of the Boathouse after planned renovations.*



*Drawing of the proposed side railings for the Grotto bridge in the Park.*

The Boathouse restoration has expanded to include two restrooms on the east side and a catering kitchen on the west side. The building will receive tuckpointing, heating and cooling and electrical systems and lighting—both indoor and outdoor. All doors and windows will be replaced using the original drawings as a guide. A deck will be added to the south side of the building, featuring a wide set of stairs facing the lake. The plans address current standards for handicapped access.

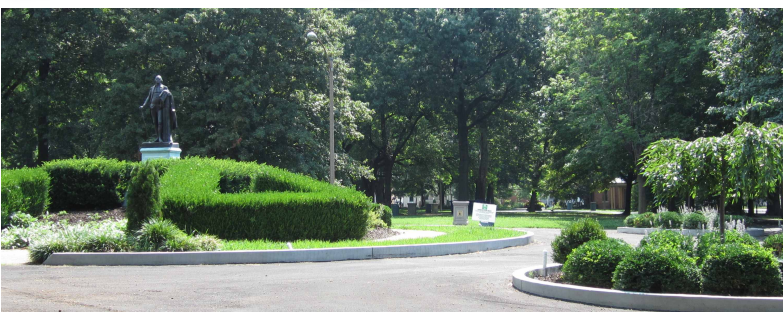
How much will the future cost?

Well, quite a lot. The projects range from \$63,000 for the Grotto bridge railings to \$550,000 for the renovation of the Boathouse. We have several revenue streams over the next few years that will help us complete many of these projects. There is a City of St. Louis bond issue, the Near Southside Improvement Corporation TIF funds and a sales tax increase, all of which will help fund Park projects.

Thanks to a grant from the Darden Foundation, paths in the southeast quadrant of the park were repaired and resurfaced. Planning for Pathways Phase Two is well underway with most paths in the other quadrants just needing to be resurfaced while restoring the original graceful curves where roads intersect.

Plans to rebuild the ruined Music Stand must address several issues that did not exist in 1876. Entry to the bandstand must comply with standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act and building codes related to safety features. Accommodations must be made for modern amplification, band equipment and lighting.

Drawings for rails for the Grotto Bridge were created using historic photos as a guide. The rails have to be taller to meet the current safety standard for rail height and filled in so that no spaces are greater than 4-inches. We are also determining the scope of renovation work needed to improve the Park fence.



*Curbing in the Washington statue area as part of the Pathways Project.*



*A crew constructing one of the cement curbs.*

## The Civil War Returns to Lafayette Park

The Civil War returned to Lafayette Park on October 6, 2013. The event, hosted by the Lafayette Park Conservancy was part of the ongoing commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. "Lafayette Park and the Civil War" celebrated the importance of Lafayette Park and its neighborhood in the war years.



*The 8th Missouri Infantry (US) Re-enactors of St. Louis* staged a bivouac as it might have appeared in the 1860s when Union troops were actually stationed in Lafayette Park as protectors of St. Louis from "rebel" attack. Visitors were able to observe up close, mingle and ask questions about the army life of a volunteer Civil War soldier.

Monologues were presented by *Etc. Senior Theatre* portraying prominent, Lafayette Park residents of the 1860s and 1870s. Costumed actors brought to life true

historical events and experiences at a time when Union and Confederate sympathies divided our neighborhood. *Dance Discovery St. Louis* performed Victorian dances and reels in authentic dress from the Civil War era with period music. For the finale the audience was invited to participate in a "Grand March", probably a familiar part of social gatherings for our 19th Century Lafayette Square neighbors.



As visitors strolled through the Old Police Station they encountered costumed ladies relating the experiences of family life in the war years, and stories of the role quilts played in the Underground Railroad. Baseball in St. Louis began in Lafayette Park just prior to the Civil War. Appropriately, the Perfectos and the Cyclones, resident Lafayette Park "base ball" teams, played two final matches for the Missouri Cup. Excited fans and visitors watched the Perfectos emerge as the season champs.

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## President's Report by Carolyn Willmore

This summer, the LPC Board was busy planning future improvements for the park, prioritizing the projects, and working to finance them. The Antique Sale held during Spring House Tour earned a little over \$4000. Many thanks to Tom and Lynn Keay for chairing the event and to all who donated or bought items.

Thanks to the Darden Foundation, the southeast quadrant of Lafayette Park now has smooth pathways. The City Streets Department did a great job repairing and resurfacing the pathways. Cement curbs and an automatic irrigation system were installed in the Washington Statue floral beds, saving countless volunteer hours dragging hoses from bed to bed.



Speaking of gardens, I wish to thank the dedicated volunteers who maintain them. Special thanks go to Mark Kalk, Sue Pinker-Dodd and Marilyn Lane who worked every week in the Grotto and Washington gardens. Thanks to all the outside groups for volunteering, especially to Tina Rein and Anabeth Weil, the city greenhouse staff and Flora Conservancy of Forest Park.

The Arts Council of Lafayette Park partnered with the LPC for the July Movie-in-the-Park. At that time, the Darden Foundation and LongHorn

Steakhouse were awarded plaques as a token of appreciation for the refurbished paths.

A handicapped accessible drinking fountain was purchased with the profit from Trivia Night. This fall the Parks Department installed the fountain near the playground.

Finally, I want to thank Cheryl Andrews for facilitating the \$5000 UPS Employee Grant. It was used to purchase two coated-metal picnic tables for the playground and two "Central Park" style benches to place along the park's paths.





## A Brief History to Answer a Frequently Asked Question

The Lafayette Park Conservancy received its charter on November 12, 2001, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of Ordinance No. 2741 which dedicated “Lafayette Square” as the first public park in Saint Louis. The mission of the Lafayette Park Conservancy is to restore and preserve the historic legacy of Lafayette Park, the first urban park west of the Mississippi River, and raise funds for this purpose.

A question frequently asked is, “Why create a separate organization for the park when the neighborhood already has a great organization, the Lafayette Square Restoration Committee?”

There are several reasons for forming the Conservancy.

- **Open membership.** Being a city park, LPC membership is open to everybody. You do not have to live or own property in Lafayette Square to be a member.
- **Singular purpose.** The only focus of the Lafayette Park Conservancy is Lafayette Park. Although the improvement of Lafayette Park has always been a goal of the Lafayette Square Restoration Committee (LSRC), that organization addresses other Square issues like safety, problem properties, and preserving the Victorian neighborhood.

In 2003, the LSRC helped fund a park master plan for Lafayette Park. After a series of 6 planning sessions held in the neighborhood, a master plan for Lafayette Park was developed. Lafayette Square residents and the St. Louis Board of Aldermen overwhelmingly approved the Lafayette Park Master Plan in 2004. To view the Master Plan, learn more of our history and see the projects we have accomplished, visit [www.lafayettepark.org](http://www.lafayettepark.org).

## Darden Grant Funds Path Restoration

Traveling around the southeast quadrant of the park is considerably easier these days thanks to a grant from the Darden Foundation and LongHorn Steakhouse. Working through the National Parks and Recreation Association’s “Great American Trails Program,” a \$15,000 grant was awarded to the St. Louis Parks Department to refurbish trails in a St. Louis park. Lafayette Park was the lucky recipient.

Because the City Streets Department did the paving, the whole southeast quadrant of the park was repaired and resurfaced. Alderwoman Phyllis Young was a great help during this process. Before the Washington statue area was paved, cement curbs were installed around the 5 floral beds. Pipes were laid under the paths for future irrigation of these beds.



*Awards ceremony for Park Pathways Project Phase 1: LPC President Carolyn Willmore, Alderwoman Phyllis Young and Longhorn representative Aaron Duckworth.*

This summer, the LPC paid for an irrigation system. The Near Southside Improvement Corporation has agreed to reimburse the Conservancy for these improvements. The Lafayette Park Conservancy wishes to thank all of our partners for our wonderful smooth paths. They are much appreciated by all who love and use our park.

## Take the Mystery Out of History

Your group can request two different PowerPoint slideshows from the LPC. They are “The Fascinating History of Lafayette Park” and “The Man Who Made St. Louis Beautiful”. The fee is \$50 for not-for-profit groups. Contact Carolyn Willmore (314-664-0106) to arrange a presentation. Also take advantage of our park tours by calling Kathy Marks-Petetit (314-588-9004).

## Gun Restoration Update

Wood for the next carriage under one of the Revolutionary War guns is due to arrive soon. Zymo Sculpture Studio will use the Ipe hardwood to construct the carriage while the gun is being reworked to fit the new carriage.

Friends are saying,  
"Join the Conservancy!"

I/we want to join/renew at the following membership level.

- \$35 - Friend
- \$50 - Family
- \$75 - Botanist
- \$150 - Historian
- \$300 - Preservationist
- \$500 - Benton Society
- \$1000 - Lafayette Society

Name(s):

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Address:

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Phone:

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Email:

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Memberships are valid for one year. The Lafayette Park Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. If your contribution is eligible for a matching gift, please include your company's matching form. Return with your check or money order to:

Lafayette Park Conservancy

2023 Lafayette Avenue

St. Louis, MO 63104

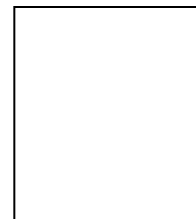
Or make your contribution on our website:

[www.lafayettepark.org](http://www.lafayettepark.org)

- I want to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Boathouse Project.
- I want to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Guns Project.



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[www.lafayettepark.org](http://www.lafayettepark.org)  
314.772.5724



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### Dates to Remember in 2014

February 17: DAR annual wreath-laying at Washington statue. LPC will host a reception at 9:00 am in the Park House.

March 15: 3rd annual Trivia Night and silent auction at St. Vincent DePaul Church Hall. Rock and Roll theme.