

## **PRESS RELEASE: South Clintonville is About to Get Even Cooler**

On 12/1, United Crestview Area Neighbors (U.C.A.N.) board member Peter Kovarik received verbal confirmation that the Columbus Foundation has awarded both complimentary grant proposals from U.C.A.N. and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW). The purpose of these proposals is to create an urban arboretum to the north and south of Glen Echo Ravine in South Clintonville.

The chain of events that led to the grant submission was set in motion by Clintonville resident Julie Smiley. She had begun work with the Columbus Recreation & Parks - Forestry Division to have all Clintonville residential public right-of-way areas between the curb and sidewalk reforested over the next several years.

This led to the establishment of a U.C.A.N. working group which ended up discussing the benefits of planting only native species saplings to benefit wildlife, reduce runoff, and to restore the green canopy in our neighborhood that once connected this ravine with Walhalla Ravine to the north. This is when U.C.A.N. resident John Krygier came up with the idea of creating an urban arboretum, inspired by the campus-wide arboretum at Ohio Wesleyan University.

This also prompted a survey of the existing mature trees in the areas between the ravines in Clintonville. Trees were identified by Clintonville resident Dr. Dan Struve of OSU's Department of Horticulture and Crop Science Department. Although few in number, these tree specimens represent elements of the pre-settlement forest, and have existed in situ for hundreds of years. Brevoort Park, which represents a small fragment of the original forest in this area, provided a wealth of historic information. Dr. Struve was able to identify a total of 25 tree species via our survey work.

While the city supported the idea of planting only native trees, the working group learned of the city's limited supply of species that historically grew here. U.C.A.N. realized the need to augment the city's low inventory through outside purchases. Two sources, The Ohio State University Horticultural Nursery and Riverside Native Trees in Delaware, were located which sell saplings of sufficient size to be planted in the curb-lawn for less than \$20.00 each.

Realizing the greatest benefit to Glen Echo Ravine would be a two-pronged approach from the north and south, U.C.A.N. board members reached out to the Glen Echo Neighbors (GEN) civic association whose members border the southern rim of the ravine. GEN quickly signed onto the concept and appointed two of its members, Chris O'Leary and Craig Simpson, to join the existing working group.

The planting area was divided into two phases, the first would include planting saplings from High Street to Calumet in Clintonville, and the second phase would be rest of the U.C.A.N. area and all of GEN.

Both organizations submitted proposals to the Jeffrey Fund of the Columbus Foundation Grant this past fall. FLOW's Grant was to cover phase 1, and U.C.A.N.'s grant was to cover phase 2.

The final urban arboretum boundaries are Weber Road to the North, High Street to west, the railroad tracks to the east, and to the south it is Arcadia Avenue from High Street to Indianola Avenue and then Hudson Street from Indianola Avenue to the railroad tracks.

The total of both grants is a little over \$12,000 and provides funding for the purchase of canopy saplings, printing of brochures, a student intern stipend, and markers/signs for significant trees. Both grants also require that property owners of those lots identified in need of a sapling having the right to opt out, and decline the planting.

The Clintonville-Beechwold Community Resources Center has agreed to be UCAN's fiscal agent for the grant. Many other organizations and individuals have also volunteered their time and ideas to bring this project into being. My heartfelt thanks goes out to all of them. This is a reminder that great things can happen for the entire community when people can cross boundaries, reach out to others, and are motivated to work in the spirit of co-operation for the greater good.

U.C.A.N.'s grant proposal follows for your reference.

Mike McLaughlin,  
District #1 Clintonville Area Commissioner