

The Lower Olentangy Urban Arboretum (LOUA) steering committee will host a meeting for arboretum residents and other interested parties. Earlier today, Mike McLaughlin, arboretum steering committee member (ASCM) and District #1 Clintonville Area Commissioner announced that the meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Crestview Presbyterian Church, 350 E Tulane Road, from 7 to 9 pm. The meeting will be in the church's basement, and attendees are asked to use the Esmond Street entrance.

“The purpose of the meeting is threefold.” McLaughlin continued, “First, a brief history of the arboretum from its inception will be given. Second, arboretum residents will learn what they can expect to see happen this fall with the reforestation of tree lawns and right-of-way areas with native species canopy trees. Finally, ASCMs will lead attendees in a public discussion of what other items arboretum residents might want to see as part of the overall arboretum plan such as rain barrels, planted medians on High and Indianola, return to brick streets, flags and street sign markers to delineate the area, composting, and butterfly weigh stations to name a few.”

The LOUA was formed late last year when the Columbus Foundation awarded both the United Crestview Area Neighbors (UCAN) and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) grant requests with funds to purchase and plant canopy trees in the areas north and south of the Glen Echo Ravine. The goal is to begin the process of restoring the green canopy between area ravines.

Dr. Struve, ASCM and a professor at The Ohio State University (OSU) in the Horticulture and Crop Science Department stated “A concept of using street tree plantings to link our ravines and thus, potentially reducing habitat fragmentation, is a novel idea. Further, whenever possible we are using local seed sources to produce trees for the project.”

LOUA boundaries are Weber Road to the north, High Street to the west, the railroad tracks to the east, and the southern boundary is Arcadia Street from High to Indianola Avenue and then Hudson from Indianola to the railroad tracks.

LOUA is a collaborative effort with members of Glen Echo Neighbors (GEN), Friends of the Ravines (FOR), OSU, FLOW, and UCAN making up the arboretum steering committee. Efforts to formalize LOUA with a written constitution and by-laws is underway. This will enable the organization to apply for tax-exempt status, making it easier to handle public funds in-house, and give those who want to donate private funds some tax relief.”

“But none of this could be possible without the support of our city's Department of Recreation and Parks” added Julie Smiley, ASCM and member of FLOW. “The previous city forester Jack Low and the current acting forester Jim Gates have been extremely supportive of our efforts and I'm glad they are partnering with us.”

Kim Kovarik, ASCM, said “Arboretum residents and other interested parties can follow LOUA's activities by going to it's website at <http://lowerolentangyurbanarboretum.org/>”