



Open House

Approximately 200 people visited Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site on September 13, 2009 for an Open House from 1:00–4:00 PM. The public event is one of two this month as part of the civic engagement for the General Management Plan (GMP) being developed for the site. Visitors were offered ranger-led tours of the site, and the opportunity to meet the Superintendent and NPS staff. Visitors were told about the GMP process and were encouraged to ask questions, offer suggestions and fill out comment forms. Twenty visitors filled out comment forms, and those comments appear verbatim, below. The public will have the opportunity to comment further at the park website, www.nps.gov/frla, and at the September 23, 2009 public scoping meeting.



NPS Photo by Joel Veak

-Public Comments-

1. If there is a focus on conserving the archives, making electronic copies available ensures that research in future may take place while preserving the originals. This may also widen access.
A visitor contact station would be a nice way to increase access and visibility of this site for tourist in Boston. But maintaining neighborhood accessibility is also equally important.
2. It would be great to pull in images of Olmsted projects to have a sense of the scope of his work. Exhibits of contemporary cyanotypes in design area?

3. What connection exists with those exercising at the Reservoir? The proximity of Olmsted NHS and the possibility of walking the grounds could be made more available to them. Get the word out. Make use of signs.
4. This was a wonderful presentation and a great tour (Thanks, Celena!) I'll make other comments on the web site, but wanted to get this on paper while I was here.
5. Re: access to archives: Electronic would be great! No need to keep handling the originals!
Re: Satellite visitors center: Love the idea (with shuttle service). Too bad Pinebank isn't an option. Other buildings nearby: Jamaica Pond Boathouse and Ranger Station; Curley House; Franklin Park Golf Building. Farther away and not ready yet: Gatehouse in the Fenway
Re: Partnerships: Emerald necklace Conservancy & all the Park Friends groups, DCR, City of Boston, Town of Brookline, neighborhood associations
6. Archival storage: plan for system implemented below barn. Building raised, supported, renovated, and archives set below grade. Improved climate, safety, footprint, fire, access control.
7. The Good Neighbors program sounds like a wonderful opportunity for third graders, and I hope it will expand to other grade levels. The integration with business is excellent particularly considering the financial constraints school systems (even Brookline) have been facing. As a retired teacher I wish I had had the chance to participate.
8. Could the house install awnings like Olmsted's? If transportation is provided, very little, few people, limited times to preserve, maintain, and to have an uncrowded site for enjoyment.
9. Painters, especially plein air painters might enjoy a time when they could come and paint on the estate. Perhaps you could offer a landscape rendering class here for aspiring landscape architects as well. Associations with Brookline continuing education? Mass. College of Art? B.A.C. of course. You could have an art show at some culmination of a class or season? Also sponsor croquet games with period costumes?? Thanks for the opportunity to put in my 2 cents.
10. To provide opportunity for visitors and those participating in education program to hear about and comment and get involved in planning for Olmsted's vision of the parklands extending down Columbia Road to Castle Island and now RKG.

11. A satellite visitor center might help raise awareness of Olmsted—a shuttle sounds good, but some outdoor driving directions might also be posted in type big enough to be seen—and directional signs from Jamaica Pond, if allowed.

Online access great. If too expensive, could you get cash from, say Suffolk Construction, etc, if a note on the side mentioned their sponsorship? Any way to have general public events like MFA's First Fridays or the Gardner's Third Thursday? Open Longfellow weekends off season?

12. I love the idea of a satellite VC with shuttle service. Although I love my daily walks from Jamaica Pond to Olmsted Park to Longwood Ave, I am willing to share this beauty with others and would love Boston visitors to have an opportunity to know these parks. In the past, when I have visited the site, seeing the plans and understanding that each planting was intentional is especially meaningful. I am especially concerned with conserving the wild life that lives in the parks. Turtles, herons, owls, etc.

13. The educational component targeting grade 3 children doing hands-on creating of design is very exciting. I would like to see the same opportunity for grades 7&8, especially the partnering component that might open up new avenues of educational pursuits.

14. Thank you for the open house today. Much Appreciated! Two ideas I would suggest: 1) consider partnering with engineering schools and industry (like e-ink) to research and apply new techniques to digitize, distribute and display drawings. 2) explore design thinking. For example Davis [Perkins?] at Harvard Ed. School.

15. Although I see the value of conserving Olmsted Archives and preserving landscapes designed by Olmsted Associates, as a landscape architect I see tremendous importance to encouraging young audiences in the importance of stewardship of the land and exploring the design office environment of landscape architects.

16. Excellent Work!

Many Ideas!

Will Write.

17. The tour guides did an excellent job. I think the archival documents should only be available upon request online. The Olmsted NHS site information should have a request link and the information should be able to be sent electronically. Yet, if all the archive documents are easily accessible than [????] could take the information and just pass off the plans on their own. The request link should ask the people to site (sp) the drawing sources. Plus a request would help the NHS and Park Service get funding because they could show that there is a significant need or interest. Thank You!
18. Great Tour and the 3rd grade Fairsted project is unbelievably fantastic! So once the priorities of site upgrades/conservation are fully funded, the goal of preserving/perpetuating Olmsted's work heritage in the 48 states by 1) spreading the 3rd grade project and adding the 8th grade and university (maybe a module as well and 2) by notifying current owners of Olmsted projects of their history to encourage local interest preservation/education as a national heritage – a huge job over a quarter century but what a stimulus that might be...
19. Great Work! Very Informative I really like the secluded and intimate feel of the property. Provides a great understanding of the processes used at the time of the birth of the profession. I can't wait to see it finished!
20. I am very interested to get involved in the Good Neighbors program both as a learner and as a volunteer. I am available to be a volunteer for one or two classes (3rd grade) this upcoming semester.

