

Friends of Christopher Columbus Park  
Monthly meeting minutes  
September 9, 2014  
The Mariner House  
North Square  
Boston, MA

Joanne Hayes-Rines convened the meeting at 6:35pm with 20 in attendance

Meeting attendees introduced themselves

Horticulture committee

Ford Cavallari gave the report for Robyn Reed who was unable to attend the meeting

Roses continue to bloom and the garden looks lovely. One negative to report is the increase in more rat holes. Aside from making it challenging to work in the garden, this activity is stressing the roses and could potentially do more harm. This needs to be corrected. It is not good for long term endurance of plants.

The horticulture volunteers will continue working each Sunday morning at 9:30 am in the Fall. Wednesday evening work will discontinue when it becomes too dark.

Some Day lilies in the Crescent Garden are getting too thick and work needs to be done to thin them out and moved to emptier spots.

And finally, Ford reported that the locks on the rose garden gate have disappeared. It's not clear if the staff from the Parks Dept have them or not. Will report updated status next month

Website and Internet Communications Committee report - Christina Sperry

Two emails were sent out to our mailing list since the last monthly meeting

- 1) a special bulletin about the extension of the summer movie series, and
- 2) the September monthly newsletter

They all went to the usual number of recipients and were opened/viewed at the typical ~ 1/3 rate

As for the FOCCP website, August had less visitors than July, which was our all-time peak. This month, Christina shared how people have found our website so far in 2014.

Almost 40% of visitors came to the website via an external link, like from [cityofboston.gov](http://cityofboston.gov).

About 35% found us thru search engines (from the US and 34 other countries). About a quarter come to the website directly, like thru a browser bookmark. The rest of the visitors mostly came via social networks, such as Facebook

Christina reminded attendees to also visit the FOCCP online calendar of Park-related events and to visit FOCCP's Facebook page for pictures of these events and other happenings in the Park

Infrastructure committee report - Ford Cavallari

Ford reported that the Trellis Relighting Project is moving along. There was a informational meeting with the RFP Bidders which resulted in good interactions and some new issues to think through. Responses are due on Monday, 9/15.

City Electrical Inspector met with the Committee to review details. The inspection showed that indeed some of the older trellis wiring/boxes (from 1976) need to be replaced

Joanne, Ford and Bob Venuti will be meeting with city personnel and Parks Dept Commissioner to review the project and RFP

The annual Holiday Trellis Lighting is scheduled for Nov 24. The Mayor is expected to attend

Treasurer report - Audrey Tortolani

Total YTD Expenses \$31,875.95

Total YTD Revenues \$19,355.00

Trellis Lighting Project YTD \$6687.03

Insurance YTD \$1665.00

Audrey reports that of the YTD revenue, \$13,000 came in from membership!!

Thank you Beverly!

Fundraising Committee -- Patricia Sabbey

Patricia reported that the Marriott Hotel and Sunstone Corp will again be corporate sponsors. She reported that Joe's American Bar and Grill have also agreed to sponsor at the corporate level, after some years of not sponsoring the Park.

She reported that the Committee is again seeking donations at the Business level from neighborhood restaurants, condo associations and other neighborhood businesses.

Anyone who has a good relationship with a local business should feel free to use the FOCCP brochure to solicit some commitment for the Park. The committee will acknowledge these donations through annual report, local media etc

Oasis Project - Joanne Hayes-Rines

Joanne reports that the Project is moving forward. There have been meetings with landscape architect and design company. City landscape architect has requested some additional new designs. Further updates next month

Columbus Day event - Ann Babbitt

Ann reported that today she is sending an informational email on the event to all volunteers. The event schedule has been set and the need now is for lots of volunteers to help out during all or part of the event. A new activity, a scavenger hunt for the 6-12 year old children will be held.

All interested volunteers should contact Ann. A meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, 9/25 at 7pm.

She told the attendees that an After-Party for event volunteers will likely be held at Joe's American Bar and Grill, with a cash bar and approx \$20/per person. She will have more details at the 9/25 meeting. She also reported that the Italian Consul General will be attending and participate in the small wreath laying ceremony at the beginning of the event.

Annual Gala

The event is scheduled for Friday night, November 14 from 6:30 to 11:30pm at the Boston Harbor Hotel Wharf Room. The evening will include a cocktail hour, light buffet, dancing, silent auction and a speaking program to honor the Guest of Honor, Matt Conti. Tickets will be \$150 and are currently available to purchase on the website. The Mayor has been invited.

Meghan Denenberg and Ann Babbitt are chairing ticket sales. They are hoping that FOCCP members will take more ownership for selling tickets and highlighted the Boston Harbor Hotel as the new venue.

There will be 10 tables for 10 persons for sale at \$2000/ table. There will be other tables for 6 persons available for individual ticket sales

Laurie Cadigan, Auction Chair reports that she is soliciting ideas and donations for the wine and dine wall, which was such a success at last year's event. She is hoping that she will get more items this year.

Ann Babbitt has a list of those FOCCP members who solicited restaurants that donated last year or in the past and will ask those members to approach those restaurants again this year. Patricia Thiboutot will coordinate this when she returns from vacation.

Joanne reminded the attendees that it would be helpful to tell potential donors that, on average, the much-loved Holiday Trellis lights cost about \$30,000/year and that our all-volunteer group has made that possible

A Gala planning meeting is scheduled for Tues 9/16

Membership Committee - Beverly Knight

Beverly report YTD membership total at 313 members as well as 367 likes on our Facebook page.

Other business

Dianne Royle suggests draft minutes be uploaded to the FOCCP website before each meeting for members to read before meeting. She also suggested that the monthly minutes include the signature of the President, when approved. Further discussion with Patricia Thiboutot, FOCCP Clerk when she returns

Moved and seconded by Meghan Denenberg and Ann Babbitt that the minutes be accepted as written. Voted in the affirmative by the attendees

Adjourned 7:35

Minutes submitted by Liz Greene, Clerk pro tem