

Friends of Collins Park

Contact Information

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Friends of Collins Park Members and Key Personnel

Anthony D'Isidoro

Allston Civic Association,

Clara Wainwright

Artist and Abutter to the Park

Eth Wiseman

Artist and Abutter to the Park

Wayne MacKenzie

Resident

Galen Mook

Owner-Common Wheels

Less Arnold

Resident and Real Estate Agent

Marchelle Jacques-Yarde

Community Outreach, Boston Parks and Recreation

Michael O'Hara

Sergeant, Boston Police Department, District 14 Community Service Office

Oscar Lopez

Aide to State Representative Kevin Honan

Rick Hollahan

Allston Brighton Veterans Liaison

Ross Miller

Resident and Artist

Stuart Cody

Resident and Engineer

Tracie Smart

Resident

Jessica Gaddis

Resident

John Powell

Resident and ACA member

Dan Polanco

Aide to City Councilor Mark Ciommo

Partner Organizations- Boston Parks and Recreation Department
Boston Police Department

The Friends of Collins Park is not a 501C3 but the Boston Parks and Recreation Department does have a 501C3 in order to process grants such as the Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund. Boston Parks and Recreation will also be the entity that will be receiving the funds if the grant is awarded to the Friends of Collins Park.

Project Information

The Friends of Collins Park is looking to renovate and improve the current park located at the intersection of three streets, Franklin, Holton and Fern Streets. This park was originally dedicated to an Allston Resident and World War II casualty, James Finbar Collins. James Collins enlisted in the US Army Air Corps in January 1944. As a Staff Sergeant his plane was lost over the China Seas on May 23, 1945. He posthumously received the Air Medal for his actions.

The park dedicated to his name has seen some minor repairs in recent years but it has also seen a precipitous decline in recent years as the feasibility of maintaining it in its current state has become untenable. The "Friends of Collins Park" would like to bring the location back to a place that is not only more accessible to the residents but also a place that can be used a quiet gathering spot, as well as a place for quiet contemplation. Currently there are two trees that are in danger of overtaking the park and are clearly too large for the location. There are also shrubs that are at each corner of the park that have become overgrown. This overgrowth has created an area that has made the park very inhospitable and unfortunately a place where people are "curbing" their dogs. This is not a fitting tribute to the man whom this park is named for nor is it a suitable place for residents to meet.

Our proposal is to completely renovate this location. The group would like to see the Park stay as a tribute to Staff Sergeant Collins while at the same time seeing it improved to accommodate the large artist population that resides and also works in the immediate vicinity. The general plan is to see everything but the wrought iron entrances removed and see a location developed so that it would be low maintenance and aesthetically pleasing. The vision would include an extension of the park boundaries all the way to the current curb that abuts the park but incorporating this space into the design plan for the park itself. The new design would have 16-18 inch curb stones on the edge making it nearly impossible for people to "ride up" or park on the island without significant damage to their vehicle. Other design plans include but are not limited to raised planters making it difficult, if not impossible for people to use them as a location to "curb" their pets. Stone seating areas would also be included, but the stone seating would be designed in such a way to discourage skateboarders from using it as a "skate-park". The group would also like to see the park paved with granite or some sort of easily maintained stone work. We also envision a larger flagpole with adequate lighting to be a not just a suitable tribute to Staff Sergeant Collins but to also increase safety in the immediate area. We would also like to see some sort of water service to the park. This would enable the city or the "Friends" the

ability to clean the area on a regular basis. The water would be regulated and provided by the City of Boston Parks and Recreation Department. While we do not have a specific design for the park yet, we do have a limited scope for our plans and only await the design by a landscape architect.

This project really speaks to all the aspects of what the HAPRFF is about. The proposal will not only enhance the community but it will become a focal point of the community accenting an area that should be recognized for the vitality that it already encompasses. The square will become an aesthetically pleasing location and will enhance public safety by giving the area a more "cared for" appearance. This proposal has already been met with overwhelming community support with letters of support from many of the residents and also active support from the Friends of Collins Park which represents a broad collaboration of residents and businesses in the immediate vicinity.

Boston Parks and Recreation has also indicated their support for this project and has committed to assist with funding if the budget is not completely met by the Grant proposal.

The HAPRFF is being requested because this project is a special project outside the usual realm of park improvements performed by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. While the Parks Department has done great work on some of the larger active use fields in the area, they often times look to private sources of funding for projects such as Collins Park. While we don't have a final design for the park we don't anticipate the costs exceeding our initial request.

If the funds are granted we would look to put the project out to a landscape architect as early as the Fall of 2016. We would then hope to get the group approval and all city department approvals by the Spring of 2017. We would then anticipate the actual construction of the project beginning in the Summer of 2017 hopefully being completed by the Fall of 2017 with an outside completion date being Spring of 2018.

With the design improvements such as improved lighting, cleaner surface areas and easier accessibility for residents we would look for this project stand for 15-20 years without any major improvements. The design improvements that the "Friends of Collins Park" is looking to perform on the current site will make this a destination location becoming the heartbeat at the center of Allston.

Anticipated Budget:

Landscape Design \$35,000.00

Construction Costs \$315,000.00- Materials and Labor

Total project cost \$350,000.00