



# Emerald Necklace

CONSERVANCY

Connecting People and Parks and Conserving the Emerald Necklace

BACK BAY FENS \* RIVERWAY \* OLMSTED PARK \* JAMAICA POND \* ARNOLD ARBORETUM \* FRANKLIN PARK

December 3, 2015

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Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Attn: Phil Cohen  
One City Hall Square, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Re: Goddard House Development at 201-205 S. Huntington Ave, Jamaica Plain, MA

Dear Mr. Cohen:

I am writing to respectfully request an award of \$50,000 in community benefits funding to support Emerald Necklace Conservancy projects and programming in the Riverway, Olmsted Park, and Jamaica Pond sections of the Emerald Necklace park system as mitigation measures for proposed redevelopment of Goddard House at 201-205 S. Huntington Avenue in Jamaica Plain. These three parks along with the Back Bay Fens and Franklin Park are the focus of the Conservancy's restoration and maintenance agenda.

The proposed residential development will decrease the tree canopy in Boston with the removal of 18 non-invasive trees valued by the project proponents' consultants at \$63,217. Every healthy tree removed reduces the capacity of the urban forest to cool, absorb carbon, and retain storm water. The development also will impact the Emerald Necklace park system by bringing additional pedestrians, cyclists, runners, vehicular traffic and park users into the parks and parkways.

With 167 units proposed in this development, a conservative estimate of 200 new residents will be moving into the area. Many of these residents will use the park as their front and back yard; they will use the pathways and parks for recreation and some for commuting to and from work. It is both a benefit to have additional housing next to the park because it increases the number of residents with a direct interest in ensuring the park is well-maintained and of course it increases park use and all the incumbent costs associated with same. An appropriate way to help address new residents' impact on the park would be to support restoration and maintenance work and Conservancy programming within this parkland and along the parkways.

The Conservancy was founded in 1998 as the first and only organization to bring together the Necklace's residential neighbors, community and business leaders, park advocates, and government officials to work for the renewal of this entire historic park system. The mission is clear: restore and improve the Emerald Necklace for *all*. This year the board, overseers and staff completed a 5-year strategic plan, identifying areas where we will focus our work and providing a work plan for increasing the Conservancy's impact in the park and the City. Our strategic goals will:

- Strengthen park management in collaboration with our public partners by completing the restoration and rehabilitation of the tree canopy, the Muddy River and selected other initiatives;
- Educate and engage youth, adults and families through new programs designed to utilize the Emerald Necklace as an outdoor classroom and expanded free activities from yoga to concerts; and,
- Advocate to improve access for all by upgrading the bicycle and pedestrian paths in the Emerald Necklace and between the Emerald Necklace, surrounding neighborhoods and the larger Emerald Network of bike and pedestrian friendly paths and roads.

We are particularly excited to increase our free park programming, expand our volunteer program, and continue the implementation of the Emerald Necklace Tree Management Plan and request mitigation funds to put toward these efforts:

- The Emerald Necklace Volunteer Program brings over 1000 volunteers into the park to clear invasives plants that threaten the health of the urban forest, prune roses, pick up litter, and refurbish park paths with stone dust or mulch. We hired our first full-time Volunteer Coordinator in 2015 and increased the program by 34% in this first year. Budget: \$68k.
- Free Park Programming features Summer on the Emerald Necklace, a series of 8 movies and musical performances at Jamaica Pond and Olmsted Park; 500-800 attendees per event. In 2016, the conservancy plans to offer new fitness and wellness programs. Budget \$35k annually.
- The Emerald Necklace Tree Management Plan is designed to address years of neglect in the Emerald Necklace through tree pruning, soil aeration, and feeding to improve tree health and planting new trees to replace those lost due to age and calamity. In the past year, the conservancy completed \$75k of tree pruning at Jamaica Pond and in the spring we will undertake a \$200k project to plant 150 northern Red Oaks along the Jamaicaway and Riverway. The Conservancy has agreements with Boston, Brookline and the Commonwealth to restore the urban forest in the Emerald Necklace and to fund 50% of the estimated \$7.5m project over five years.

We are eager to partner with the BRA and the developers to improve the park experience for the new residents of 201-201 S. Huntington and everyone in Boston. If selected for a \$50,000 award, the Conservancy will allocate funds toward the Volunteer program, free Summer on the Emerald Necklace programming at Olmsted Park and Jamaica Pond, and to planting and maintaining new trees.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Crockford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Julie Crockford, President

[jcrockford@emeraldnecklace.org](mailto:jcrockford@emeraldnecklace.org)

cc: Chris Cook, Boston Parks & Receptions  
Peter Sourgarides, Samuels & Associates  
Noah Maslan, Eden Properties  
Matthew Kiefer, Esq., Goulston & Storrs