



FRIENDS OF Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park

1920 Eagle Drive, Baltimore, MD 21207
www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org

Spring 2019

Latest News on the BGE Pipeline

The BGE Pipeline a "Sweetheart" Deal?

In 2018, BGE constructed a gas pipeline through 2.1 miles of the park, permanently removing 12.23 acres of forested land to be maintained as a utility clear-cut "in perpetuity." The pipeline is here and it's not going away. We get that.

However, to take public parkland out of use as a park, Baltimore City is required by the City Charter to enter into a Franchise Ordinance with BGE at the start of the process. The ordinance need to come first so that the City has the leverage it needs to negotiate a fee with BGE at "the largest amount it is able to obtain." Instead of a negotiation with BGE, the process became a deal in which the City accepted \$2 million from BGE for the lost parkland, much less that the property is actually worth.

The City's own Recreation & Parks Department reportedly

valued the parkland at \$14 million. The City has refused to value its own parkland for what it is truly worth. It is willing to ignore citizen outrage about the city's deal with BGE. Most significantly, it has violated the City Charter. The process was severely flawed, to the detriment of the citizens of Baltimore and all park users. Therefore, on April 11, 2019, The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park filed suit against the City, the City Council, and BGE. We are asking the court to require the City to obtain an independent appraisal of the 12.23 acres taken from the citizens of Baltimore based on the park's unique assets, not as "undeveloped property."

It is necessary that the City follow its own laws when removing parkland from public use. In doing so, it must obtain the "largest amount" it can and it must honor its role as guardians of the City's parks on behalf of the taxpayers of the City.

JOIN OUR FIGHT

Make a donation to help us fight this corrupt deal

Count me in! I support the fight for our precious Gwynns Falls Leakin Park.

Recommended

amounts: ___\$1,000, ___\$500, ___\$250, ___\$100 ___\$50, ___other →

On your check, please note,
"Granite Pipeline." Mail your
check to:

**Friends of Gwynns Falls
Leakin Park
1920 Eagle Drive
Baltimore, MD 21207**

Read more about BGE's pipeline in the *Baltimore Brew*

"Is BGE pipeline price a sweetheart deal between the utility and the Pugh administration?" 2/28/19

"City Council to push ahead with BGE pipeline deal in Leakin Park," 4/16/19

"Amid campaign contributions and Healthy Holly purchases by BGE and Exelon officials, pipeline bill advances," 4/26/19

"Is it \$2 million or 1.4 million? BGE pipeline deal enters new phase of secrecy," 4/30/19

"City lawyers defend pipeline agreement with BGE," 5/1/19

The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park (FOGFLP) was established in 1983. Gwynns Falls Leakin Park is Baltimore's largest park at 1,950 acres. It was identified as "the second-largest urban wilderness in the US" by the National Wildlife Federation. The park was envisioned by the distinguished Olmsted Brother landscape firm. It has been referred to as "the lungs of the city" because of its environmental significance.

To learn more about the recreational activities, ecology, and history of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park, the work we do, and to join the Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park, please go to our website: <https://friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org>

The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park is a 501(c) (3) Contributions are tax-deductible.



Follow The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park
on Twitter (@FOGFLPMEDIA or @FOGFLP
or on Instagram (FOGFLPMEDIA)



Remedy for a very muddy Trail

A very muddy section of the upper Fort Trail in Leakin Park has two new sections of boardwalks that were created by two Eagle Scout projects in conjunction with FOGFLP and the Carrie Murray Nature Center. In March of this year Trent Williams (Eagle Scout) sourced materials from Home Depot and FOGFLP to create four eight by 48" sections of boardwalk on the upper Fort Trail which had been a problem muddy spot all of last year. The sections were built at the CMNC and transported to the site requiring eight to ten people. The area was so bad that another section of boardwalk had to be built. This time the Mountain Club of Maryland together with FOGFLP sourced the materials and tools. Colin Carr (the other Eagle Scout) organized a crew to help build three sections at the CMNC and these too were transported to the site by hand and were put in place.

Much more digging had to be done for the second section to be completed due to various wet streams running across the trail. This trail is heavily used by hikers and school kids visiting the CMNC and is one of the main paths down to the Winans Meadow area from the both the Crimea and CMNC areas via the Ridge (Heide's) trail

Stream Restoration Update

In the Fall of 2018, FOGFLP submitted a position paper to the Department of Public Works, Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks, and a long list of individuals and agencies with a connection to this topic. Our position opposed MS4 Permits proposed by DPW in GFLP. FOGFLP has continued to follow this issue closely and has collected a great deal of information and knowledge about stream restoration. Projects targeted for GFLP have yet to be initiated and FOGFLP continues to engage with DPW and Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to advocate for continued exploration of methods that are best for the environment, GFLP, and Baltimore City. If you would like more detailed information about this topic, please contact me and I can put you in touch

with FOGFLP members who have become quite educated in this area and instrumental in moving this issue forward in GFLP and other City parks.(mccbrid@gmail.com)



Thank You ———Thank You ———Thank You

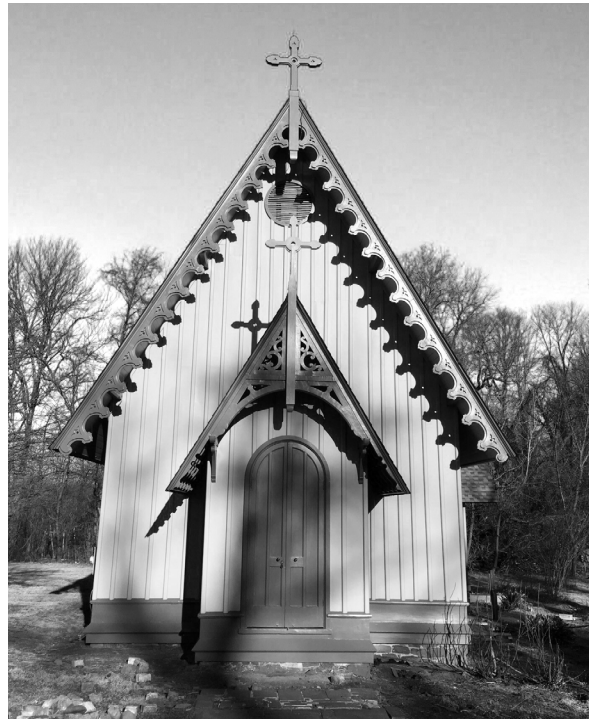
The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park (FOGFLP) would like to thank you for your donations and pledges of support on behalf of our effort to obtain fair compensation for the placement of the BGE Granite Pipeline in Gwynns Falls Leakin Park. This endeavor is not over, we believe it is very important that

we continue to forge ahead in our effort to protect and improve our park for the good of Baltimore City residents, visitors, trees, 4-legged creatures, all wildlife, our children, our children's children, and the universe. We are grateful for your interest in preserving our natural world.

Milestone in the Winans Chapel Preservation Project

Just in time for the Baltimore Herb Festival, held on May 25th, the work on the preservation of the exterior of the Winans Chapel was completed. The 2,000 plus people who attended the festival walked past this historic gem, freshly painted and with all the intricate wood work looking amazing.

Preparing for the ribbon cutting event held at the festival, I identified three components that have been key in this preservation effort; vision, means, and will power. For the vision we remember Mary Lou Wolfe, the founder of the Baltimore Herb Festival. In 1987, she built the organization with three goals in mind. The first mission was to bring people into Leakin Park, which was facing a very imminent threat from a proposed route for I-70 which would have taken it directly through the park. The second goal was to raise awareness of the many benefits of herbs and plants. Finally, the Baltimore Herb Festival was to preserve and maintain the historic Winans Chapel. When festival attendees ask about where the money raised by the festival goes, we point to the Chapel. The means to undertake this project were supplied by an amazing variety of donors: individuals, non-profit foundations, corporations and the City of Baltimore. It was noted many times in discussions with various non-profit foundations that the variety of types of donors was quite unique. Major donors included the following; The Baltimore Herb Festival, Baltimore National Heritage Area, BGE, Baltimore City Recreation and Parks, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, and the France-Merrick



Foundation. Special thanks to the Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park for your significant donation to the Chapel fund, as our closest partners in this effort this donation was especially meaningful. We are so very grateful to all our many donors, and to recognize and thank them, the Chapel Committee of the Baltimore Herb Festival commissioned a plaque listing all of them. It will be installed within the Chapel. We truly had an entire community supporting the preservation project.

Finally, for the will power component we have an amazing committee of eight volunteers who for four years have worked to raise the funds needed and to consult closely with our partners: Leslie Harris, our architect from Harris-Kupfer Architects, Inc., and the team from C&H Restoration and Renovation, LLC, who painted and preserved the exterior woodwork so beautifully. The committee members will be familiar to the FOGFLP community because so many are FOGFLP members: Mike Blair, Heather Higgins, Art Lien, Bob O'Hatnick, Jo Orser, Ed Orser, Ed Simmons, and Richard S.B. Smith, Sr.

Special thanks is owed to Jo Orser, the chair of the committee, her patience, perseverance and singlemindedness were truly amazing and very effective. We are so appreciative for the support of this dedicated group of dedicated volunteers who worked to bring the vision of a preserved Winans Chapel into a reality.

What's next for the Winans Chapel? Like a historic house, the work continues: new porches and stairs, repaired doors, and a handicap accessible ramp are next. These important items will be handled in phases, with work for the entrances and preserved doors already beginning.

FOGFLP Annual Meeting

On April 7, 2019, FOGFLP's Annual Meeting was held at the Orianda Mansion. Our guest speaker was Matt Rescott. Matt is Chairperson of the Baltimore City Forestry Board and has worked in the environmental consulting industry for 15 years. He is a certified arborist and is primarily focused on wetlands and forest issues for public infrastructure projects. His presentation focused on practices used in stream restoration in forested areas. He showed slides of both good and bad practices being used. This topic is very relevant to GFLP and other City parks in light of recent and proposed projects by DPW.

Awards were presented to dedicated parkrun volunteers who show up every week to make sure that parkrun is available every Saturday morning in Winans Meadow. Honorees included Doug Jones, Tom Hornik, Kristie Metz, Iman Newman, and Bob Lessick. (For more info about parkrun, go to www.parkrun.us/leakinpark)

Robin Gunkel, Nature Art in the Park, was also presented with an award for her tireless efforts to support Nature Art in the Park in Gwynns Falls Leakin Park. (Check out NatureArtBaltimore on Facebook for more info)



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Dypski Pavilion-Are you curious?

FOGFLP was approached by the Office of Capital Development Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks in December of 2018 with a proposal to relocate the Dypski Pavilion to the ball field area of the park along Windsor Mill Road. For several years, Capital has been in discussion with FOGFLP and local groups who run sports teams on the playing fields about upgrading the ball fields with no mention of a pavilion. Because the Dypski Pavilion was built in 1873 and is considered historic, it must be preserved. It is no longer desired at its current location in Canton as the local residents want to use that area as a playground for young children and

the pavilion takes up a large area of their small space. Several FOGFLP members were initially not in favor of moving the pavilion to GFLP considering its age and appearance. However, after several meetings with Capital and representatives from the sports teams, we supported the placement of the pavilion in the ball field areas, especially for the benefits that it will provide to the sports teams. We have been shown before and after pictures of the pavilion once it is relocated to GFLP. The projected “mock ups” greatly improve the appearance of the pavilion and we hope that the renovations will be satisfactory in the flesh. If you are interested in more information about the Dypski Pavilion and its history, let me know.(mccbrid@gmail.com)



Dypski Pavilion rendering picture near ball field area of the park along Windsor Mill Road

Website Update

I hope that most of you have taken a look at our new and improved website. We are very grateful to David Platt for all of the hard work he has done to move us forward in this fast moving digital world. We are in the process of implementing online features such as membership options, donations, a seasonal newsletter, and regular news updates. There is a calendar on the website which lists ongoing and unique events in the park. Please make sure to check it regularly so you don't miss out on things to do in GFLP. Thanks to Amy Stump for keeping our calendar up-to-date. Please contact us if you are interested in adding an event to our calendar. Our address has not changed so take a look, www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org