

## PART 2

Respectfully Submitted to the Pittsfield Parks Commission

Elizabeth Kulas, Ward 1 Resident

Friends of Springside Park, Founding Member

Vincent J. Hebert at Springside Park, Founding Member

# We Have A Choice before us with Springside Park

~ Our history can inform our decisions ~

## Springside Park History

### Conduct of Municipal Affairs, 1891-1916, Excerpt page 119

Kelton B. Miller, in 1910, conveyed to the city a tract of land at Springside, for which the consideration names in the deed was "the affection I bear to the City of Pittsfield". The conditions of the conveyance were that the city should acquire certain land adjacent to this tract and should maintain forever and reasonably improve the whole for the enjoyment of the public. By the city these conditions were gratefully accepted so that Pittsfield became the owner of the pleasant ten acres of land then

### History of Pittsfield, Massachusetts

1876 - 1916

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Within a few years, Mr. Miller added substantially to his original gift. The first name of the park seems soon to have slipped into disuse, and the title "Springside Park" to have officially substituted for it.

#### THROUGH THE YEARS: SPRINGSIDE PARK

In 1910, Kelton B. Miller of Pittsfield, with affection, bequeathed to the city of Pittsfield a parcel of land known as Abbott Park. He stated, "This land is to have and to hold forever as a public park." Two conditions were stipulated: "That it be maintained as a public park and that it be reasonably improved forever."

known as Abbot Park, and so named in honor of Rev. Charles E. Abbot, who conducted a boys' school nearby from 1856-1866. Within a few years, Mr. Miller added substantially to his original gift. The first name of the park seems soon to have slipped into disuse, and the title "Springside Park" to have been officially substituted for it.

*Excerpt: Conduct of Municipal Affairs, 1891-1916, Page 119*

#### CONDUCT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, 1891-1916 119

Common was partly equipped as a playground and provided with walks, benches, and shade trees, and thereto was moved a band stand from a triangular plot which until then it occupied in front of the Athenaeum. In 1906, the city purchased seventy-six acres next northerly of the land which it already owned on the shore of Onota Lake, raising its holdings there to about 190 acres. In 1910, the city bought a parcel of land south of its former high school site, on South Street, and graded the entire area of three acres for use as a small common.

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In 1913 the mayor appointed a park commission of five members, who chose Fred T. Francis as chairman, and to whom were entrusted the maintenance and development of Pittsfield's system of parks; and in that year the commission began proceedings which soon resulted in the acquirement for the city of ten acres of woodland on the south shore of Pontoosuc Lake. Various small plots at the intersections of streets were by the commission protected and in appearance improved.

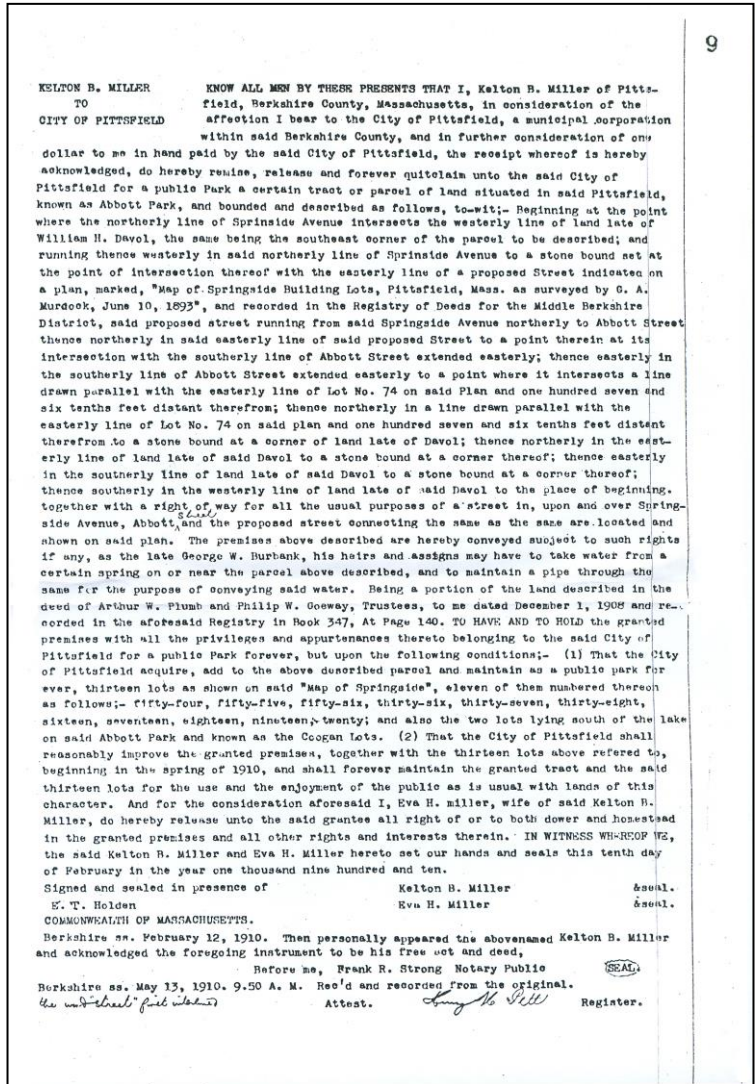
Of much more vital importance was the maintenance of the city's public playgrounds, which the commission assumed in conjunction with a Park and Playground Association of private citizens. As has been heretofore mentioned, the provision of a system of public playgrounds was initiated by this association in 1911. Pittsfield was among the first cities in the Commonwealth to accept by vote a statutory referendum authorizing municipal

**Deed 1910**

**Kelton B. Miller To City of Pittsfield**

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS THAT I, Kelton B. Miller of Pittsfield, Berkshire county, Massachusetts, in consideration of the affection I bear to the city of Pittsfield, a municipal corporation within said Berkshire County, and in further consideration of one dollar to me in hand paid by the said City of Pittsfield, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby remiss, release and forever quitclaim unto the said City of Pittsfield for a public Park a certain tract or parcel of land situated in said Pittsfield, known as Abbott Park, and bounded and described as follows, to-wit;- Beginning at the point where the northerly line of Springside Avenue intersects the westerly line of land late of William H. Davol, the same being the southeast corner of the parcel to be described; and running thence westerly in said northerly line of Springside Avenue to a stone bound set at the point of intersection thereof with the easterly line of a proposed Street indicated on a plan, marked, "Map of Springside Building Lots, Pittsfield, Mass. as surveyed by C.A. Murdock, June 10, 1893", and recorded in the Registry of Deeds for the Middle Berkshire District, said proposed street running from said Springside Avenue northerly to Abbott Street thence northerly in said easterly line of said proposed Street to a point therein at its intersection with the northerly line of Abbott Street extended easterly; thence easterly in the southerly line of Abbott Street extended easterly to a point where it intersects a line drawn parallel with the easterly line of Lot No. 74 on said Plan and one hundred seven and six tenths feet distant therefrom; thence northerly in a line drawn parallel with the easterly line of lot N. 74 on said plan and one hundred seven and six tenths feet distant therefrom; thence northerly in a line drawn parallel with the to a stone bound at a corner of land late of Davol; thence northerly in the easterly line of land late of said Davol to a stone bound at a corner thereof; thence easterly in the southerly line of land late of said Davol to a stone bound at a corner thereof; thence southerly in the westerly line of land late of said Davol to the place of beginning, together with a right of way for all the usual purposes of a street in, upon and over Springside Avenue, Abbott Street and the proposed street connecting the same as the same are located and shown on said plan. The premises above described are hereby conveyed subject to such rights if any, as the late George W. Burbank, his heirs and assigns may have to take water from a certain spring on or near the parcel above described, and to maintain a pipe through the same for the purpose of conveying said water. Being a portion of the land described in the deed of Arthur W. Plumb and Philip W. Goeway, Trustees, to me dated December 1, 1908 and recorded in the aforesaid Registry in Book 347, At Page 1450. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the granted premises with all the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging to the said City of Pittsfield for a public Park forever, but upon the following conditions:- (1) That the City of Pittsfield acquire, add to the above described parcel and maintain as a public park forever, thirteen lots as shown on said "Map of Springside, eleven of them numbered thereon as follows:- fifty-four, fifty-five, thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty; and also the two lots lying south of the lake on said Abbott Park and known as the Coogan Lots. (2) That the City of Pittsfield shall reasonably improve the granted premises, together with the thirteen lots above referenced, beginning in the spring of 1910, and shall maintain the granted tract and the said thirteen lots for the use and the enjoyment of the public as is usual with lands of this character. And for the consideration aforesaid I, Eva H. Miller, wife of said Kelton B. Miller, do hereby release unto the said grantee all right of or to both dower and homestead in the granted premises and all other rights and interests therein. IN WITNESS WHEREOF WE, the said Kelton B. Miller and Eva H. Miller hereto set our hands and seals this tenth day of February in the year one thousand nine hundred and ten.

Signed and sealed in the presence of Kelton B. Miller, Eva H. Miller  
 E.T. Holden  
 COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
 Berkshire February 12, 1910. Then personally appeared the abovenamed Kelton B. Miller and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed, Before me, Frank H. Strong, Notary Public  
 Berkshire May 13, 1910. 9:50 A.M. Rec'd and recorded from the original. Attest. Register.



Signed and sealed in the presence of Kelton B. Miller, Eva H. Miller  
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KELTON B. MILLER  
TO  
CITY OF PITTSFIELD

I, KELTON B. MILLER, married, of Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, for consideration paid, (less than \$100), grant to CITY OF PITTSFIELD, a municipal

corporation located in said County of Berkshire, Massachusetts, with QUITCLAIM COVENANTS, the land in said Pittsfield bounded and described as follows:- Beginning at the southeast corner of the parcel to be described at a stone bound in the westerly line of North Street, being also the northeast corner of land of E. N. Huntress; running thence northerly in the westerly line of North Street, thirty and six-tenths (30.6) feet to a Highway Monument marking an angle in the westerly line of North Street; thence deflecting to the right 18° 51' and running northerly along the westerly line of North Street, one hundred forty-four and four one-hundredths (144.04) feet to a stone bound; thence deflecting to the left 92° 12' and running westerly about seventy-nine (79) feet to the water line of Pontoosuc Lake; thence southerly following said water line to the northwest corner of land of said Huntress; thence easterly along the northerly line of land of said Huntress about forty-four (44) feet to the place of beginning. Being the same premises conveyed to me by Jerry Manus et ux by deed dated February 18, 1938 to be recorded. The premises are conveyed subject to the 1938 taxes. I, Eva-Miller, wife of said grantor, hereby release all rights of dower and homestead and all other interests in the granted premises. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals this 16th day of June, 1938.

Kelton B. Miller  
Eva H. Miller

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Berkshire, ss June 16, 1938 Then personally appeared the above-named Kelton B. Miller and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed,  
before me, Mabel A. White Notary Public 

Berkshire ss. July 7, 1939. At 3:20 P.M. Received and recorded from the original.

**Deed 1938-1939, Kelton B. Miller To City of Pittsfield Volume 484**

I, Kelton B. Miller, married, of Pittsfield, Berkshire county, Massachusetts, for consideration paid, (less than \$100), grant to CITY OF PITTSFIELD, a municipal corporation located in said county of Berkshire, Massachusetts, with QUITCLAIM COVENANTS, the land in said Pittsfield bounded and described as follows:- Beginning at the southeast corner of the parcel to be described at a stone bound in the westerly line of North Street being also the northeast corner of land of E.N. Huntress; running thence northerly in the westerly line of North Street, thirty and six-tenths (30.6) feet to a Highway Monument marking an angle in the westerly line of North Street; thence deflecting to the right 18° 51' and running northerly along the westerly line of North Street, one hundred forty-four and four one-hundredths (144.04 ) feet to a stone bound; thence deflecting to the left 92° 12' and running westerly about seventy-nine (79) feet to the water line of Pontoosuc Lake; thence southerly following said water line to the northwest corner of land of said Huntress; thence easterly along the northerly line of land of said Huntress about forty-four (44) feet to the place of beginning. Being the same premises conveyed to me by Jerry Manus et ux by deed February 18, 1938 to be recorded. The premises are conveyed subject to the 1938 taxes. I, Eva-Miller, wife of said grantor, hereby release all rights of dower and homestead and all other interests in the granted premises. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have here unto set our hands and seals this 16th day of June, 1938.

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Berkshire ss. July 7, 1939. At 3:20 P.M. Received and recorded from the original.

Attest Walter s. Dickie Register

## The Millers Legacy

The Millers described their gift of land to Pittsfield's Springside Park as a **public Park forever** [1910 Deed] and said, "*The land now in question was given by us for use only as a park, playground or recreation center and it is so expressed in the deed accepted by the City of Pittsfield in May of 1939.*" [1939 Deed]

### Millers state firm opposition to land taking in Springside Berkshire Eagle July 6, 1972

The Miller family, donor of a large portion of Springside Park, announced today firm and final opposition to any taking of the park property for school purposes.

In a brief statement brothers Donald B. and Lawrence K. Miller said they would not allow a school in the park regardless of whether compensatory land is acquired to replace the school site.

The statement appears to terminate the year long struggle of Community School Commission to acquire a 6.7 acre Springside parcel for a school to replace the 1890 vintage Rice School on Winter Street.

"It looks like the issue is dead," said a disappointed Thomas M. Connolly, cochairman of the community School Commission.

The parcel in question, in the southeast corner of the park, was given by the brothers to the city in May 1939. The deed reads, in part, "To be used only as a park, playground or recreation center by said grantee."

...today's statement by the Millers ensures that Springside Park will be protected, according to lawyers acquainted with parkland law.

Connolly, while visibly downcast, said the stand of the Millers can be justified. "They have a point," he said. "They want to retain open land. They are the only guys in the city who have ever given any land to the city."

The Millers' statement follows: We are opposed to the taking of Springside Park property for school purposes. *The land now in question was given by us for use only as a park, playground or recreation center and it is so expressed in the deed accepted by the City of Pittsfield in May of 1939.*

July 4, 1972

## Millers state firm opposition to land taking in Springside

The Miller family, donor of a large portion of Springside Park, announced today firm and final opposition to any taking of the park property for school purposes.

The opposition of the Millers' side, there is doubt as to whether the legislature would approve the bill anyway because of the strong reservations of Sen. Andrea E. Nucifora.

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Struggle terminated

The statement appears to terminate the year-long struggle of the Community School Commission to acquire a 6.7-acre Springside parcel for a school to replace the 1890 vintage Rice School on Winter Street.

"It looks like the issue is dead," said a disappointed Thomas M. Connolly, cochairman of the Community School Commission.

Connolly's statement appears to hold water. Although the commission has asked the state legislature to authorize use of Springside Park, provided the land is replaced with an equal amount, some legal spokesmen says the government cannot and will not go against the wishes of the land donors.

Nucifora's reservations

The parcel in question, in the southeast corner of the park, was given by the brothers to the city in May 1939. The deed reads, in part, "To be used only as a park, playground or recreation center by said grantee."

The Miller brothers, owners of The Eagle, said in their statement that the city should buy necessary acreage adjacent to Springside Park for the Morning-side school.

Connolly said the next step is up to the full commission. He said he personally doesn't think there is any suitable site adjacent to the park that wouldn't require house-taking. "And we don't want to do this," he said.

"At this point, the community school concept in the Rice district is dead," he said.

The Millers' statement follows: "We are opposed to the taking of Springside Park property for school purposes. The land now in question was given by us for use only as a park, playground or recreation center, and it is so expressed in the deed accepted by the City of Pittsfield in May of 1939. If land in this neighborhood is needed for a school purpose, the necessary acreage for the school site should be acquired adjoining the park. In our opinion the Miller family made a mistake in permitting North Junior High School to be built on choice Springside Park property. Further land taking in the park for schools would be a mistake and regretted in the years to come."

Connolly, while visibly downcast, said the stand of the Millers can be justified. "They have a point," he said. "They want to retain open land. They are the only guys in the city who have ever given any land to the city."

The Millers have already agreed to relinquishing some four acres in Coolidge Park for a West Side community school. The Miller family gave a portion of that park to the city.

The bill authorizing use of Coolidge Park passed the House yesterday and now goes to the Senate.

Poor kids' loss

But, referring again to the lost Springside site, Connolly said, "It's the poor kids who lose out in the end. Maybe someday it'll be rectified."

7.14.72  
Pittsfield

In Keeping With This History  
Mayor's Ann Wojtkowski's proposal to name the Arboretum at Springside Park

## **The Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park** was unanimously approved by the City Council on January 9, 1990.

### **Hebert Arboretum At Springside Park**

When I was a child it was a very big deal to get out of the normal routine of the daily life of my town and come to the big city to go to the Museum or to Onota or Pontoosuc Lake for a day of swimming and picnicking. Springside Park could be such a destination.

Mayor Anne Wojtkowski bequeathed the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum to the City of Pittsfield and Vinny Hebert, long time director of the Pittsfield Parks Department in gratitude for his many years of service. An Arboretum was Vinny's dream, his vision for Springside Park, 237.5 acres of pristine wilderness right here in the heart of the city. Vinny had this plan "The Arboretum at Springside Park" prepared in October of 1963, by Richard C. Page, in anticipation of his vision becoming a reality. In order to have something you have to imagine it first and he did.

Vinny put together a proposal for an arboretum at Springside Park and submitted it to Pittsfield Beautiful and its leadership an advisory group was formed in 1996 that established a Board of Directors and thus, the Arboretum began by cleaning up the park, incorporating the organization, and creating programs to get people into the park.

In 2009 Hebert Arboretum received an Official Citation from the State Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in recognition of "Maintaining a wide diversity of trees and other plants for the public's enjoyment in Springside Park, the crown jewel of Pittsfield's park system". Thanks go to State Senator Benjamin Downing for shepherding this citation.

**An Arboretum is a living tree library and trees are the lungs of the earth.**

One day when a volunteer and I were planting baby Rhododendrons she said to me "But we'll never see these."

I told her, "Someone will. Someone will be able to enjoy their beauty." That was Vinny's attitude. I reminded her of Vinny's lilac walk. Vinny loved lilacs. As a result of that we received \$6,000 worth of world class lilacs were planted in Vincent J. Hebert Lilac Walk in his memory. We have that beauty because he desired it. He never smelled any of those lilacs, but we can. That was his gift to us. Vinny created beauty.

This week I had to carefully designate my time between speech preparation and weeding the front flower garden.

I looked forward to weeding and smelling the blue irises because their fragrance is intoxicating and restorative. Their beauty is extraordinary. You can imagine my surprise when I found many of them whacked off and laying on the ground to die. There was one left and I inhaled it deeply and I have next year. I'll be here, the irises will be here and hopefully the person who whacked them won't be.

This experience reminded me that every day we have a choice to create beauty or destroy beauty. Every day we have a choice whether to destroy life or create life. Join us in doing so here at the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park. Maybe you have an idea like Vinny did that you'd like us to explore.

If you like to create beauty and do good things, I welcome you to get involved with Hebert Arboretum or help in any way you can. Just see me at our table. We have many wonderful projects to get involved in: a Bluebird Restoration Program, The Butterfly & Humming Bird Gardens, The Memory Garden, the educational Conifer Garden, Daffodil Hill, the Lilac Walk, Interpretive Trails, Nature Walks and a Summer Concert Series. And if you like Get Outdoors Day sign up with us to help put it on next year. Thank you for enjoying our park with us today.

**Elizabeth Kulas**

Hebert Arboretum At Springside Park

To get involved 413-443-5348 ~ [www.hebertarboretum.org](http://www.hebertarboretum.org)

**Speech at Get Outdoors Day June 8, 2013**



The HEBERT ARBORETUM

# Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park History



CITY OF PITTSFIELD

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, ANNE EVEREST WOJTKOWSKI, MAYOR, CITY HALL, 70 ALLEN STREET, PITTSFIELD, MA 01201 413-499-9321

January 9, 1990

To the Honorable Members  
of the City Council  
of the City of Pittsfield

Dear Councillors:

Submitted herewith for your consideration is a proposal to name the Arboretum at Springside Park the **Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park** to honor a man who has devoted forty years of service to this City.

The Arboretum has been planned by horticulture students of the University of Massachusetts and the City will promote its continued development and expansion through donations from the private and public sectors.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Everest Wojtkowski  
Mayor of Pittsfield

fcw

January 9, 1990

**Ann Wojtkowski**

*Mayor of the City of Pittsfield.*

Mayor's Ann Wojtkowski's proposal to name the Arboretum at Springside Park the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park was unanimously approved by the City Council on January 9, 1990.

City Council Minutes read:

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, proposing to name the Arboretum at Springside Park the "Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park", was read. Councilor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted on unanimous vote.

The accompanying order, entitled "An order appropriating \$30,000 for two new patrol vehicles in the accounts of the Police Department", was read. Councillor Arlos moved to refer to Committee on Finance and it was so voted with Councillor McCaffrey, Doyle and Stockton voting "Nay".

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, submitting an order for the appropriation of \$4,823 for payment of the final invoice of Barnes and Jarnis, Engineers for the Airport Connector Road, Dan Fox Drive, was read, accepted and placed on file.

The accompanying order, entitled "An order appropriating \$4,823 for payment of the final invoice of Barnes and Jarnis, Engineers for the Airport Connector Road, Dan Fox Drive", was read and adopted with Councillor Anderson voting "Nay".

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, submitting an order for the transfer of \$2,000 within the accounts of the Police Department, was read, accepted and placed on file. The accompanying order, entitled "An order transferring \$2,000 within the accounts of the Police Department", was read and adopted by unanimous vote.

\*\* Councillor Betters left her seat ---President LaMountain asked Councillor Arlos to take the Chair due to conflict with next item to be discussed. LaMountain left the Chair.

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, submitting an order authorizing the city to execute a land disposition agreement relative to a certain parcel located in the Jubilee Urban Renewal Parcel 3-B, was read, accepted and placed on file.

The accompanying order, entitled "An order authorizing the city to execute a land disposition agreement relative to a certain parcel located in the Jubilee Urban Renewal Parcel 3-B", was read. Councillor Anderson moved for approval and on roll call vote it was adopted, with Councillor Arlos, Biss, McDeffrey, Stockton, Goculski, Anderson, Doyle, Polantri and Levesque voting "Yea" and Councillor Betters and LaMountain out of seats.

\*\* Councillor Betters and LaMountain returned to their respective seats.

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, submitting correspondence from Capt Spozzaforno relative to two positions in Police Department, was read. Councillor Biss moved to accept and place on file and on roll call vote it was so voted, with Councillor Stockton voting "Nay". President LaMountain explained that the matter was before the Committee on Finance relative to the position of Dog Officer increase in salary.

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, proposing to name the Arboretum at Springside Park the "Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park", was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted on unanimous vote.

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, submitting recommendation from Parking Advisory Board relative to Maxwell Avenue Extension, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval of the report and it was so voted.

A late communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski submitting correspondence relative to Downing Connector Road, was read, accepted and placed on file.

#### APPOINTMENTS

The appointment of David J. Pelcaro, Jr as Collector of Taxes and City Collector, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted by unanimous vote.

The appointment of Eugene L. Videll as Director of Maintenance, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted by unanimous vote.

The following appointments were taken up at the same time:  
Appointment of Daniel L. Bianchi as Assistant to the Mayor for Administration & Finance.  
Appointment of Daniel L. Bianchi as Acting City Treasurer.

President LaMountain asked City Solicitor Corrier if he was aware of a State Ethics Commission ruling in 1988 whereby the same person cannot hold both positions? City Solicitor Corrier said he would research the matter and suggested holding the item until later in meeting. Councillor Anderson moved to table the appointments until later in meeting and it was so voted.

The appointment of Robert J. Dumorty, Jr. as Buildings Commissioner, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted by unanimous vote.

The appointment of Paul M. Orsater as City Solicitor, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted, with Councillor LaMountain, Biss and Betters voting "Nay".

The appointment of Attorney Richard X. Brennan as Associate City Solicitor, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted by unanimous vote.

The appointment of Robert B. Bone, Jr as Purchasing Agent, was read. Councillor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted by unanimous vote.

A TRUE COPY, ATTEST:

*M. Anderson*  
PITTSFIELD CITY CLERK

## **A Celebration of Pittsfield Parks Honoring Kelton B. Miller & Family; "I Remember When" A Paper by Ted Giddings, 1999**

*An historical sketch on the efforts of Donald B. Miller and Lawrence K. Miller to acquire and protect lands throughout the Berkshires.  
Berkshire Natural Resources Council, 20 Bank Row, Pittsfield, MA*

K.B. Miller had the foresight way back in 1910, while still a comparatively young man, to buy and deed to the city the 10 acres which was the nucleus for this park in the Northeast quadrant of the city. It was an area of great natural beauty and included a small pond. Two years later he added 2 1/2 acres to the property which initially was known as Abbey Park. page 1

In 1939, two years before their father's death, Donald B. and Lawrence K. Miller, bought the so-called Stevens Farm of 74 acres contiguous on two sides to the original park. It consisted of a large house, gardens and several out-buildings. The purchase was made after professional advice had been sought from the foremost consulting firms on park layout. The consultant acknowledged that the physical characteristics and location of the tract adapted it to development as a major city park. page 2

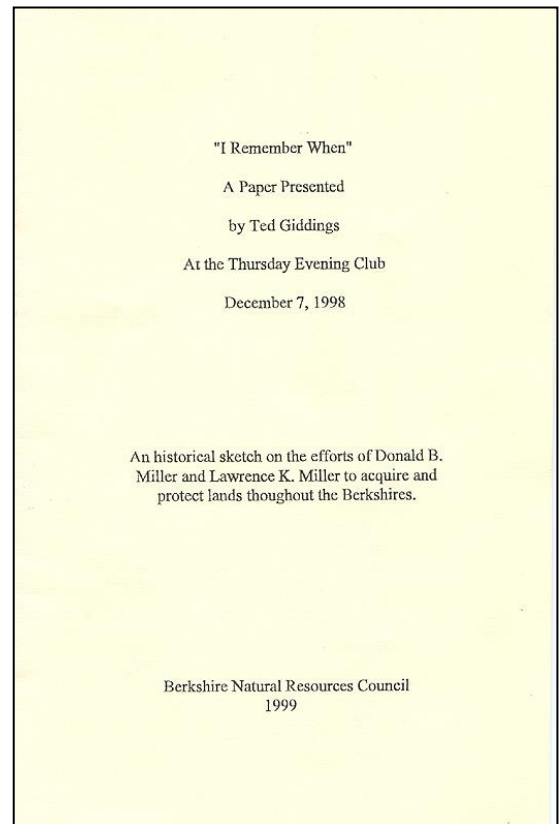
In tribute to their father, the Millers deeded the former farm to the City of Pittsfield with the proviso that the city would purchase another parcel of 36 underdeveloped acres immediately to the north and east of what became Springside Park. Known as the Anna Wilde Pierce lot which had been used for years as a pasture, the property was acquired by the city for the modest sum of \$2,500. page 2

In 1950 the city embarked on a comprehensive plan to build two junior high schools and three elementary schools. The site chosen for one of the junior highs was Springside Park. As donors of the bulk of the acreage for Springside, the Millers were consulted as to their feelings. "With the greatest reluctance," to use their exact words, they agreed to the use of 20 or 25 acres of the park for a school site providing the city would compensate by purchasing 38 acres of undeveloped land to the north and east. The city agreed. page 2 & 3

Later the commission that built Taconic High School and the Community School Commission sought big chunks of Springside as school sites but in vain. The Millers contended that Pittsfield is as worthy of having a centrally located large park as Springfield with its Forest Park, Albany with Lincoln and Washington parks, Northampton with Childs and Look Parks, Worcester with its Elm Park, Greenfield with Veterans Memorial Park, and Brattleboro, VT with its Living Memorial Park. page 3

The Millers contended that Pittsfield is as worthy of having a centrally located large park as Springfield with its Forest park, Albany with Lincoln and Washington Parks, Northampton with Childs and Look parks, Worcester with its Elm Park, Greenfield with Veterans Memorial park, and Brattleboro, Vermont with its Living Memorial Park. Excerpts pages 3 and 4

The Miller philosophy on parks was well expressed in a letter which Donald B. Miller sent in July 1964 to the then Pittsfield mayor, Robert B. Dillon, who was hopeful that part of Springside could be used as a high school site. He wrote in part and I quote "Would anything be left of Boston's Common or New York's Central Park if their acreage were nibbled away in the name of 'free land' whenever those cities needed land for some municipal facility? The pressure for underground parking and additional services in those big city parks even now gnaws away at the concept of open green spaces in an urban setting. In many metropolitan instances physical necessity has required compromise. No such necessity prevails here." page 3 & 4



October 1963

**Vincent J. Hebert**, Retired Superintendent  
Parks and Recreation for the City of Pittsfield

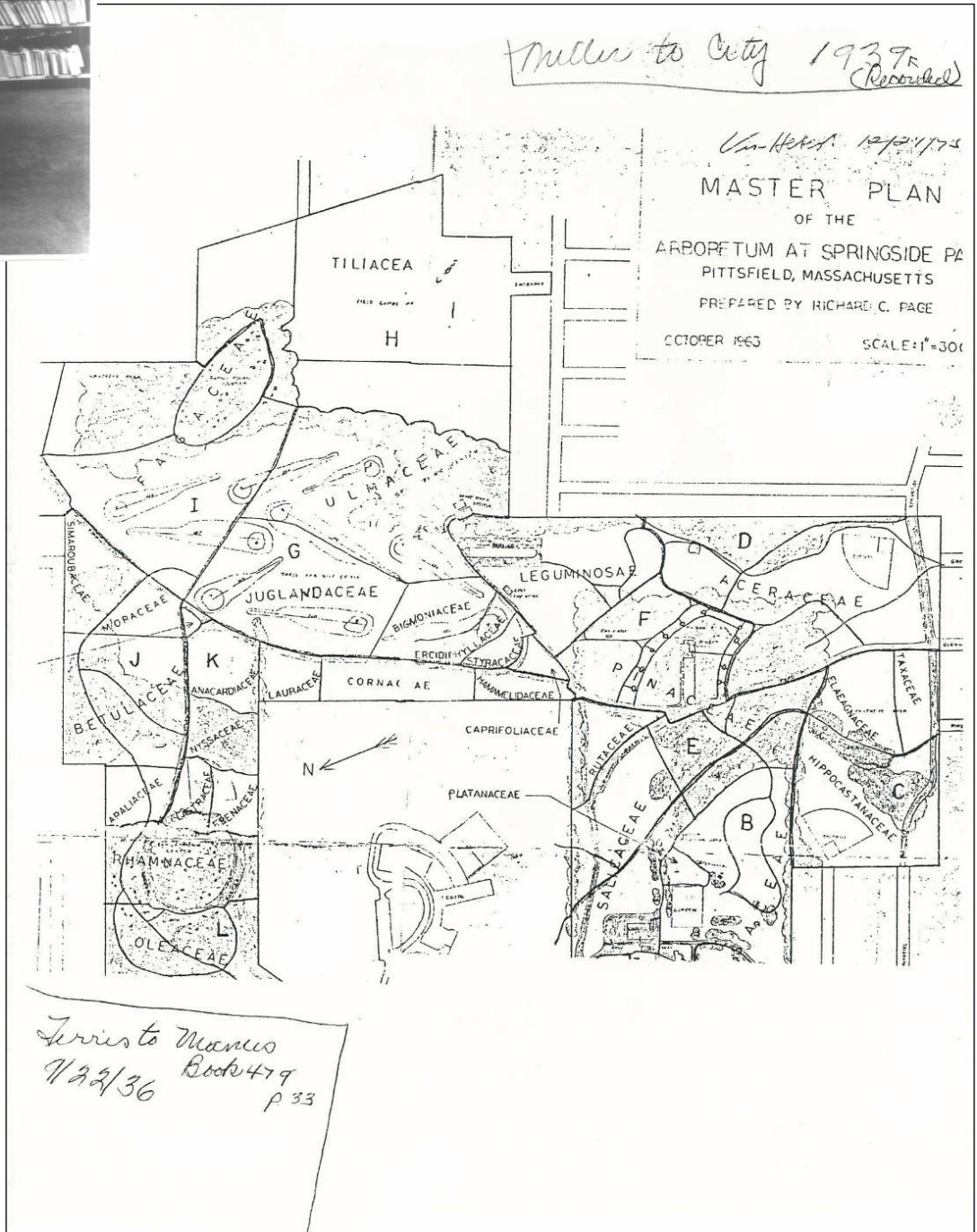


Vin Hebert commissioned a Master Plan of an Arboretum at Springside Park prepared with the help of Richard C. Page called **Development of The Springside Park as an Arboretum** to provide a wide variety of trees for the enjoyment and education of the public.

My present my mission is to seek help in the planning, promotion and recruitment of workers for the arboretum, one of the principal features of the development of Springside Park. In 1963, the Department of Parks & Recreation was fortunate to obtain the services of a graduate student from the University of Massachusetts, Mr. Richard Page, who was working on an advanced degree in forestry and landscaping.

He divided the park into various sections and designated different species of trees and plants for different areas – in fact, he included 34 families and 338 species and varieties – the overall plan was to provide a wide variety of trees for the enjoyment and education of the public. Mr. Page stated in his plan “that this arboretum can be a great asset, not only to the citizens of Pittsfield, but to the entire region. It can function as a classroom where student from nearby schools can meet to observe, study and enjoy the wide variety of trees assembled here.”

**Vincent J. Hebert**  
**Arboretum Proposal**  
**to Pittsfield Beautiful**  
**Vinnie Hebert,**  
**March 19, 1990**





# 1963 Master Plan of The Arboretum at Springside Park, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Prepared by Richard C. Page October 1963

The original manuscript of this plan was handed to Elizabeth Kulas, Hebert Arboretum board member, to keep in the arboretum archive. Vinny Hebert said, "This is the Master Plan for the Arboretum at Springside Park that I commissioned Richard Page to create".

## Development Of The Springside Park As An Arboretum

**Purpose: To provide a wide variety of trees for the enjoyment and education of the public.**

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPRINGSIDE PARK AS AN ARBORETUM

**Purpose:** To provide a wide variety of trees for the enjoyment and education of the public.

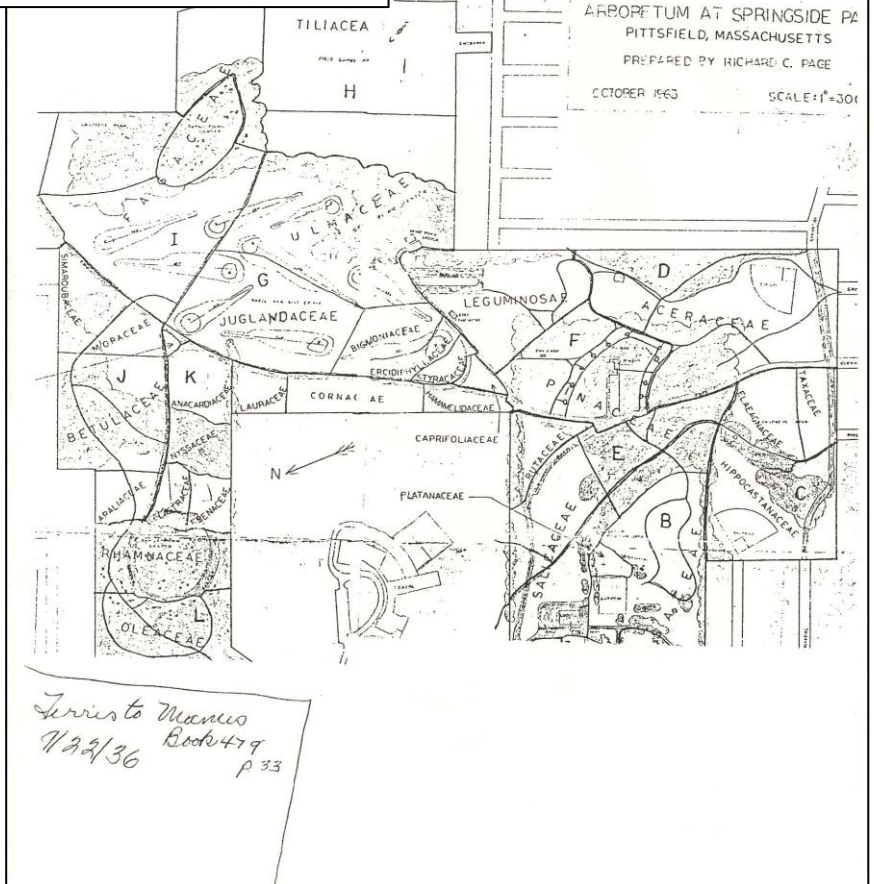
As each section or facility of the park is developed, the designer or landscape architect responsible for the planning of this area should refer to the arboretum plan and use primarily those plants belonging to the plant family indicated for that particular section of the park. The area of the park assigned to a particular plant family should contain one or preferably more representatives of each species or variety of that plant family recommended in the accompanying plant list.

As each section or facility of the park is developed, the designer or landscape architect responsible for the planning of this area should refer to the arboretum plan and use primarily those plants belonging to the plant family indicated for that particular section of the park. The area of the park assigned to a particular plant family should contain one or preferably more representatives of each species or variety of that plant family recommended in the accompanying plant list.

The list of trees recommended for the Springside Park Arboretum includes 34 families and 338 species and varieties. During the preparation of this list an attempt was made to include the trees native to Berkshire County. The many trees on the list that are not native to Berkshire County were chosen with the idea of getting as wide a variety as possible of the most outstanding ornamental trees that are hardy in the region. The trees on this list should all be reliably hardy in the Pittsfield area, however, this list should not be considered complete. There are other trees that would grow in the Pittsfield climate if they were placed in a sheltered location. By observing trees growing in the Pittsfield area, it is probable that several more species could be added to the list. Perhaps the Japanese maple and some oriental cherries would survive with some protection. Sufficient room has been left between the proposed plantings to allow for the addition of species and varieties not included on the list of recommended trees.

This arboretum can be a great asset, not only to the citizens of Pittsfield, but to the entire region. It can function as a classroom where students from the nearby schools can meet to observe, study, and enjoy the wide variety of trees assembled here.

It can serve as a meeting place for garden clubs and other interested groups to see living examples of ornamental trees that can be used in landscaping the home.



It can be an area for relaxing and enjoying the beauty of nature. There will be trails through many sections of the arboretum, however, the arrangement of the crab apples and the absence of trails in that area permit the visitor to roam at will among the trees and enjoy the beauty and fragrance of the flowers.

There is also an economic factor that is involved in this arboretum that would benefit the Pittsfield area. Tourists and visitors would come for many miles to see the outstandingly beautiful display of crabapples when they bloom. This increase in the tourist trade will bring additional income into the area.

An undertaking as ambitious as this arboretum must have the public support. An intensive publicity and educational campaign should be started and continued to familiarize the public with the goals and progress of the arboretum. Newspapers and other available news media would be very helpful in this effort. The garden clubs in the area could be very valuable supporters and quite possibly they would donate trees from time to time. The cooperation of the immediate neighborhood is also very essential if vandalism and unintentional damage is to be kept at a minimum. Perhaps support from the schools and school children could be gotten by encouraging them to participate in Arbor Day ceremonies and by founding Arborist Clubs in the schools.

#### *Procurement of Plants*

The wide variety of plants recommended for the arboretum most certainly will not be found in one or two nurseries. When seeking plant materials it would be wise to contact the local nurseries first. If this is unsuccessful, the Weston Nurseries, Weston, Massachusetts, and the Princeton Nurseries, Princeton, New Jersey, are two nurseries with quite a wide selection of stock. If one of these did not have the sought after plant in stock, they could probably tell you where it could be found.

A very helpful book is the Plant Buyers Guide. It lists most plants that are grown in cultivation and several nurseries where they can be bought.

#### *Planting*

Even the most beautiful tree will not grow and thrive if it is planted in poor soil. If the soil is not good, it would be wise to remove one cubic yard of soil and replace it with good topsoil or compost wherever a tree is planted. Although this will slightly increase the initial cost, it will result in healthier trees more vigorous growth and less replacement of dead trees.

Perhaps arrangements could be made with power companies and tree companies to obtain wood chips which could be used as mulch around the newly planted trees. Mulch would also make mowing easier since the lawnmower would not have to come so close to the trees. This would also result in less mower damage to the trunks of the trees.

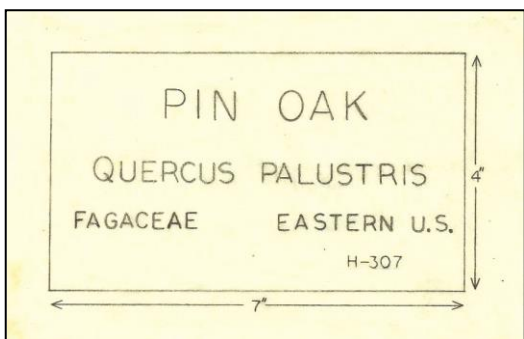
#### *Labeling of Plants*

In order to achieve the second purpose of the arboretum, that of education, each of the plants should bear a label stating the common and scientific name of the plants. It is also quite common to include on the label the family to which the plant belongs, the region of the world to which the plant is native, and the identification number of that particular plant. Hybrid plants would be so indicated.

Ideally, every tree should be labeled. However, where a grouping of the same species or variety of tree occurs, it would be permissible to omit labeling some of the individuals in the grouping.

The temporary labels presently on the trees are far from ideal, because they are not easily legible from a distance of several feet. More efficient labels should be constructed and installed as soon as this improved type of label can be used without excessive vandalism.

The following is an example of a satisfactory label.



A label of this type could easily be constructed from a wood which is decay-resistant or has been chemically treated. The lettering would be permanently grooved into the wood. The sign could be painted or left its natural color, in either case, the lettering should be painted a color that will make it plainly legible against the color of the sign.

The label could be fastened on the tree by rustproof nails or screws. However, as the tree increases in diameter the label should be moved outward every couple of years to prevent the tree trunk from growing over it. This should also be done with the temporary labels that are on some of the trees at the present time. Labels for some of the smaller trees could possibly be best displayed on stakes driven in the ground near the tree.

A project of this sort would be a good way to utilize the manpower available to the

Park Department on a cold, winter day when the weather is too bad for outdoor work.

#### *Immediate Procedures*

In order that the arboretum may more rapidly become a reality, planting should begin immediately. Some of the first trees that should be planted are the groups of Canadian Hemlock near the parking lot and house, the Scarlet Oak south of the house and some Ginkgo trees northwest of the house. These trees in particular should be planted right away, so they will have time to gain some size in case the large trees presently growing near the house should have to be removed. The Carolina Hemlock hedge along the southern boundary of the park could also be planted now, so it will grow and fulfill its purpose sooner.

The trees just mentioned should not pose any problem if and when the large Elm trees, particularly those near the house, have to be removed. However, some of the proposed planting would be in the way. Simply felling trees is much less expensive than removing

them limb by limb while they are still standing. So to prevent damage to any of the newly planted trees it would be wise to plant other areas first and delay planting near the Elms as long as possible or until they have been removed. The delay in planting pertains only to the Crabapples and Pears in the immediate vicinity of the Elms and not to the trees mentioned in the paragraph above, since they would not be in the way.

As it was previously stated, this arboretum can be a valuable asset to Pittsfield and the surrounding area. So the sooner it is developed the sooner its worth will be enjoyed by the public. I urge all possible haste toward the completion of this project.

This memorandum below was tucked into the back of this master plan.

## MEMORANDUM

To Mr. Vincent J. Hebert

Date May 13, 1965

Subject Springside Park

Message The enclosed page from the Berkshire Evening Eagle dated December 31, 1938

might prove a wedge to stir some of the people of Pittsfield into action. We should have had a Park years ago, but Pittsfield people are great for talking a subject to death, but doing nothing.

A great many people in the City are behind you in your efforts to get a Park for the City. Most other places have parks for the pleasure and beauty of individuals living in the area. In fact, many people travel to see some of the lovely parks.

We firmly reject the building of a High School anywhere near Springside Park. In fact, what will happen to the Berkshire Community College if and when they build. Let's hope it will be used and not stand idle for many years.

Good Luck in your efforts.

DON'T TELL IT—WRITE IT

M 506

*(Henry W. Houder)*

From

*Phyllis C. King  
17 Shinton Ave. #1*



Dear Judy,

Your contribution to the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum in Vin's memory is greatly appreciated.

Building the Arboretum was a special dream of Vin's. He had great visions of enhancing the Park's growth.

He valued your friendship and involvement in this effort. He worked tirelessly on many community projects.

Sincerely,  
Pearl E. Hebert

Just knowing that in countless ways our family and friends are with us, makes the way easier.

Thank you.

The family of  
Vincent J. Hebert

To: Board of Park Commissioners and members of the Pittsfield Arboretum Committee  
From: Vincent J. Hebert, Retired Superintendent of Parks & Recreation Department  
Date: September 12, 1997  
Re: Park land use, preservation and protection

In an effort to caution those who may be of the opinion that the use of public park property for purposes which might not be in the best interests of the majority of our Pittsfield residents and their visitors – today and in the generations to come – I would like to share a few ideas with you on the subject.

Many years ago, when I was doing some research work on the proper use of park land, it was my good fortune to read an address given in 1958 at the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the American Institute of Park Executives by Robert Mann, Conservation Editor of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois who stated:

“Park men are trustees and custodians of public lands for recreational use, lands essential to the spiritual and physical well-being of the people. It was no easy task to acquire those lands; that took foresight and courage as well as money. Now they are irreplaceable and priceless. They are intrinsic to the enjoyment of freedom itself. It is our job to preserve them, protect them from encroachment or dissipation and add to them for the benefit of generations yet unborn.\*

We are land managers who must have the long view in an era of rapid revolutionary changes when our problems of preservation and protection become so acute that they dismay the fainthearted. Other local governments and short sighted planners, thirsty for land, are covetously seeking to acquire park properties for schools, hospitals, libraries, parking spaces and even shopping centers. Autocratic engineers, thinking only in terms of alignment, gradient, and “cheap” right-of-way, project new expressways and toll roads across fine park properties without regard for the values destroyed or any other public need.

The pressures are so tremendous and such demands are so difficult to combat that we tend to become near-sighted or fatalistic. As my boss Charles G. Sauers, pointed out: “We have been in error for many years in permitting ourselves to be placed in poor and defensive positions in the many struggles against the usurpation of park lands and the destruction of park values.” We need to take a stubborn stand-a militant stand-and announce in clarion tones that all may hear: “Park properties are precious. They may not be violated.”

The thoughts expressed in this address I believe are of exceptional value today as Park Commissioners are continually confronted with important issues and the Arboretum Committee is in the process of preparing a Mission Statement to guide them in their future endeavors.

The importance of time spent on the care and development of public parks was recently increased in my opinion upon reading an excellent book by David Shenk, a 1995-96 Fellow at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, entitled DATA SMOG Surviving the Information Glut.

**We may all soon learn that a quiet, unhurried walk along a trail in Springside Park is just as important as a pressure-driven, speedy search in the “Information Highway”.**

Thank you for your attention on the above and Good Luck on your Future Endeavors.

Respectfully, Vincent J. Hebert  
Retired Superintendent Parks & Recreation

*\* Please read Park Men and Women, members of the Pittsfield Arboretum and all citizens, young and old.*

**December 29, 1995**

**Arlia S. Bailey**, *President*  
*Pittsfield Beautiful, Inc.*  
*Founding Member of Hebert*  
*Arboretum at Springside Park*

Springside Park is more or less centrally located in the city of Pittsfield . . . a two-minute drive from the central business district; access by foot to a large population made up mostly of low income families; easy access by foot to a large middle school and a community school made of K-5 children; and by car, there would be very few Pittsfield residents who could not reach the Park within 10 to 20 minutes.

There are many species of trees in Springside Park which can be used for educational purposes on many age levels. The Senior Center is only 4 or 5 blocks away.

There is a loosely knit group of people in the park's immediate neighborhood called "Friends of Springside Park" which is a source of volunteer help.

This grant would provide us an opportunity to 'focus' on one of Pittsfield's oldest parks and to acquaint the citizens of the community with its diverse landscape and opportunities for learning.

Visiting an arboretum always gives a person something to take back home . . . a kind of 'wish list' for trees to plant in the neighborhood or on home grounds.



PITTSFIELD BEAUTIFUL, INC.  
P. O. BOX 725 PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01202

**Goals and Objectives for the Springside Park Arboretum Project:**

1. Have in place by the end of 1996 a "Steering Committee" for the Springside Park Arboretum . . . to encourage community use.
2. Have an updated inventory of existing trees in the arboretum to include species, classification, size, health, location.
3. By the end of the project there should be clear, achievable recommendations for future development of the arboretum, including a plan for citizens to make contributions for memorial trees.
4. To work directly with neighboring schools (Reid Middle School adjacent to the Park) & (Morningside Community School, two or three blocks South); teaching the students how to measure trees, identify trees, and care for trees in a general way.
5. To work with an existing group located in the Park, called The Springside Greenhouse Group which was organized in the 1950's and which has a membership of about 80, to conduct on-going workshops, provide guest speakers on Urban Forestry, and to open these workshops and lectures to the public.
6. To engage organized youth groups and job-training groups in activities associated with tree planting and maintenance.
7. By the end of the project we hope to have a corps of trained volunteers in knowledge of tree planting and maintenance who will take this knowledge back to their neighborhoods.
8. We look forward to having a video showing "before and after" shots of the arboretum as well as activities occurring during the related to tree care, etc.
9. To have a working model of Springside Park and its arboretum in particular for the express purpose of presenting it to the public attending the Springside Greenhouse Group's 3-day Spring Fair in May; and, to have both it and the video for presenting to organized groups which may request them. This will be publicized through the media and newsletters. The video will also be shown over Pittsfield's Channel 5.
10. We hope to have this project completed by the end of 1996 and a special presentation of what has been achieved presented at the 8th Annual Reception and Annual Meeting of Pittsfield Beautiful's Board of Directors.

SPONSORED BY **PITTSFIELD CENTRAL**  
**BERKSHIRE GARDEN CLUB**

**January 2, 1996, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management**

**Arlia S. Bailey**, *President and Chair of Special Projects, Pittsfield Beautiful, Inc.*

By the end of this project [Springside Arboretum's Educational Project] we hope to have a better informed community on the value of a healthy urban forest; and, to have a citizenry willing to participate in achieving a healthy urban forest.

**February 4, 1996**

**Urban Forestry Grant Proposal Press Release**

**Arlia S. Bailey**, *President, Pittsfield Beautiful, Inc.*

This grant would provide us an opportunity to 'focus' on one of Pittsfield's oldest parks and to acquaint the citizens of the community with its diverse landscape and opportunities for learning. Visiting an arboretum always gives a person something to take back home . . . a kind of 'wish list' for trees to plant in the neighborhood or on home grounds.

## 1996 Pittsfield Beautiful – Project Request

**Vincent J. Hebert**, retired Park Superintendent on behalf of the Parks Commission.

4. BACKGROUND – in 1963, a preliminary plan was prepared for the Parks Commission and although some progress has been accomplished, the plan should be updated based upon the ability of the city and hundreds of volunteers to properly develop, maintain, protect and preserve the area.

## Thursday, July 17, 1997, VJH Arboretum Committee Meeting Report, Springside House

**Mark Miller**, President

Mark noted that Springside Park is a multi-use park.

## September 22, 1997, Parks Commission Minutes

Arboretum Activities Update – Judy MacPherson, Mark Miller and Vincent Hebert were present at the meeting to update the commission on the planned activities of the Arboretum Committee. They will have an urban forestry intern to assist them in drawing up a master plan for the arboretum. Ms. MacPherson would like to have brochures made up for the arboretum that identify trees and leaves on selected trails.

Commissioner Massimiano made a motion to approve the brochures, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan and so voted. Commissioner Massimiano made a motion to approve the ordering of name tags, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan and so voted. Commissioner Massimiano made a motion to allow the marking of the two trails with spray paint, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan and so voted.

## January 14, 1998, Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum Advisory Committee Report

**Mark Miller**, President

What is the arboretum? A draft mission statement defines it as follows: “The Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum displays a wide diversity of woody plants in formal landscapes and larger natural areas for people’s enjoyment, refreshment, inspiration, and better understanding of the living world. Throughout a city park, it offers educational programs, promotes land preservation and environmentally sound gardening and landscape practices, and is compatible with a variety of other community activities.”

While the 80 or so acres nearest Springside House have been the focus of the first year and a half of the Arboretum Advisory Committee’s existence, the committee really has designs on all of the park. None of the park’s existing goals need be affected at all, except for the better. Gradually, new plantings and better care of the whole park will be a part of its “arboretumization.” We are starting small and learning as we go along.



## February 4, 1998, Press Release

**Arlia S. Bailey**, President Pittsfield Beautiful, Inc.

The Arboretum located in one of Pittsfield’s oldest parks is in a prime location for tourists visiting the city.

## April 6, 1998

**Pamela B. Weatherbee**, Botanical Consultant

Your list of wildflowers in Springside Park is an impressive list, and indicates this is a special site, certainly worth saving. An area such as this, which would be classed as a Rich Woods Plant Community, is unusual, and one of the specialties of Berkshire County, with its marble bedrock and ample moisture. I hope there is no threat to this natural garden. I would think it would be a wonderful educational and pleasurable resource.

## May 4, 1999, Excerpt Letter to Brown & Rowe, Landscape Architects

**Mark Miller**, Hebert Arboretum President

The arboretum is now about 80 acres in the southwest corner of Springside’s roughly 230 acres, but a long range goal is to “arboretumize” the entire park while keeping what we do fully compatible with all of its uses.

**May 20, 1999, Observations and Issues, Firm Approach and Relevant Experience, Master Plan: Preliminary Scope of Work**

*Walter Cudnohufsky, Walter Cudnohufsky Associates*

Pittsfield needs a regional draw and additional identity. The parklands are an incredible asset of great diversity, history, and natural interest. Large and diverse it supports a diverse constituency of users. Public interest in gardening and environmental issues is high and still accelerating. Park has a prominent public presence. Tie the future of the Arboretum to Pittsfield's own regeneration

The case for an Arboretum at Springside Park is compelling, broad based, multi-faceted, and long standing. It is based on a unique physical reality, a growing support network and an increasing public desire to understand and celebrate its natural resources.

Master plans are of two basic types: strategic and overall master plans. Master plans are both documents and a process and they require a committed client. They are critical in relation to major fund raising. They are the guides—not a restrictive prescription.

**September 30, 1999, Excerpt from a Letter to James McGrath, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission**

*Mark Miller, Hebert Arboretum President*

Good city parks, as a new biography of Frederick Law Olmstead reminds us, are critically important and will become more so as the years pass. Springside Park, next to a school and bordered by residential neighborhood, has many recreational uses, all compatible with the arboretum. Like Pontoosuc Lake, the park lends its grace to the northern approach of Pittsfield, much as the grounds of the Country Club of Pittsfield and Berkshire Life Insurance Company and adjacent land do to the south and Hancock Shaker Village does to the west.

A first-class arboretum throughout Springside's 231 acres will make this resource more valuable to residents of Pittsfield and the Berkshires and can be a key attraction in the region's already impressive mix. As a restored Colonial Theater will enhance downtown's attractions on South Street so will the developing arboretum on North Street just north of Berkshire Medical Center.

Vinnie Hebert lived and breathed parks and recreation programs for more than 30 years after World War II as the city's commissioner of them and continued to promote them in retirement until his death this spring. We hope that long after people who knew him are gone his legacy will continue here and the park that is transformed in his name will be emulated elsewhere.

**Pearl E. Hebert, *Vin Hebert's wife***

Building the Arboretum was a special dream of Vin's. He had great visions of enhancing the park's growth.

**January 19, 2000, Minutes Hebert Arboretum Planning Committee**

*Jim McGrath, President Hebert Arboretum*

The Master Plan will be a tool for the Arboretum to develop long range physical plans relative to the existing goals and objectives. This committee will guide a Design Group doing the work. The Visual Plan is one of the best ways to delineate the locations and organizations of plant materials and their related natural systems, outline methods to improve educational and visitor's services, and address existing building usage and needed infrastructure improvements. The specific graphic plan is also the tool necessary to promote the Arboretum.

**February 10, 2000, Excerpts from a letter to the Pittsfield Parks and Recreation Commission**

*Jim McGrath, President Hebert Arboretum*

The Board understands the value of short and long-rang planning, and has embarked on an ambitious project to develop a comprehensive Master plan for the Arboretum. A mission statement for the Arboretum exists, as do goals and objectives. A Master plan will be a natural outgrowth of this. The Board encourages the participation and welcomes the support of the Commission as this project moves forward.

Springside Park is a wonderful asset to the City of Pittsfield and will one day be the crowning jewel of the City parks system. The Board looks forward to the involvement of the Parks Commission in the planning of the Arboretum's future.

**February 16, 2000, A Plan for Development of the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park**

*Jim McGrath, President Hebert Arboretum*

The Arboretum is an incredible asset of great diversity and natural interest, supported by a diverse constituency of users. Much more than a collection of specimen trees, the Arboretum serves as a host for educational programs, community interaction, and

the nourishment of the soul. Development of a Master Plan is a first critical step towards a world-class arboretum for the Berkshires.

**March 23, 2000 Pittsfield Gazette "Park Planning, Jim McGrath hopes Arboretum group maps productive route"**  
*Jim McGrath, President Hebert Arboretum*

Creation of a thriving arboretum at Springside Park was a dream of the Late Vincent Hebert, and the longtime city park advocate lived to see the dream begin to take root. The arboretum's future growth is now in the hands of a volunteer group, which is preparing to take the project to the next level.

"Our vision is to create a world-class arboretum at Springside Park," says Jim McGrath, the president of the Vincent Hebert Arboretum. "We would like it to be a real family oriented place that not only offers self-guided tours, lectures and other educational programs but also a quiet contemplative place for people to really enjoy.

McGrath emphasized that the goal is not to radically alter Springside, but to enhance the setting with plantings, trails and groves. One of the reasons that the group has set its sights on Springside Park is that members believe that the basis for an arboretum exists in a mostly natural state.

"What we're really trying to do is enhance the beauty of trees and plantings at Springside for the enjoyment of the community," McGrath said.

The Pittsfield Gazette March 23, 2000

## Park planning

### Jim McGrath hopes Arboretum group maps productive route

By Anthony Fyden

Creation of a thriving arboretum at Springside Park was a dream of the late Vincent Hebert, and the longtime city park advocate lived to see the dream begin to take root.

The arboretum's future growth is now in the hands of a volunteer group, which is preparing to take the project to the next level.

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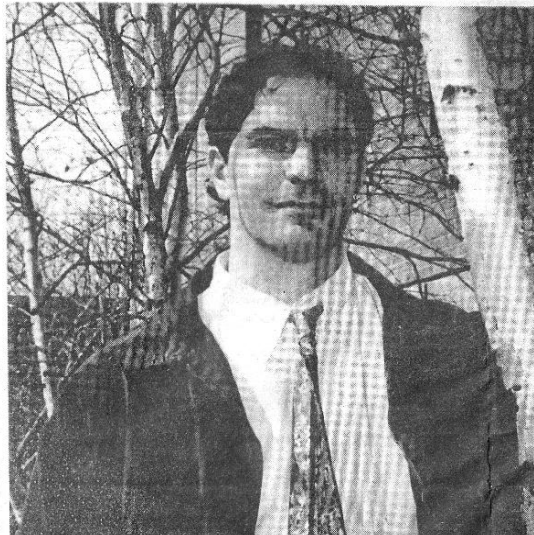
corporated status and begin fundraising. And, utilizing a grant from Pittsfield Generating, Inc., the arboretum group will contract with the Conway School of Landscape Design to create a "master plan" for the arboretum.

McGrath expects the master plan process to kick off in April and be complete by July. At that point, he said, the group plans to hold a series of community meetings to gather input and support from the community, particularly the residents who live in neighborhoods surrounding the expansive park.

McGrath emphasized that the goal is not to radically alter Springside, but to enhance the setting with plantings, trails and groves. One of the reasons that the group has set its sights on Springside is that members believe that the basis for an arboretum exists in a mostly natural state.

"What we're really trying to do is enhance the beauty of trees and plantings at Springside for the enjoyment of the community," McGrath said.

Over the last several years, the group has made slow but steady progress. Volunteer Bill Carrington built a functional kiosk on the lawn near Springside House. Identification labels have been attached to many trees.



Jim McGrath and other volunteers hope to create a "world class" arboretum, honoring the late Vincent Hebert, at Springside Park.

Members have also held park cleanup and pruning sessions along with bridge and trail work. The group has also sponsored an annual "winterfest" celebration at the park, with events such as snowshoeing, sliding, snow sculpting and tree identification.

Those interested in learning more about the arboretum project may attend an Arbor Day celebration at Springside on April 28. The event will include speakers and activities, including a lilac walk, another legacy of Vin Hebert's.

McGrath, a Stockbridge resident, became interested in the arboretum after speaking with Pittsfield Beautiful founder Tommie Bailey. The concept intrigued McGrath, who works as a planner for the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, and once he visited Springside, he was hooked.

"That sort of sparked my interest," he said. "In an urban setting, people do really need to be connected to the landscape; and I think that's what Springside offers."

In addition to his work as a planner, McGrath, who is a native of New Hampshire, has a background in for-

estry.

One challenge for the organization will be to work cooperatively with other groups which have an interest in Springside. The park is home to the Springside Greenhouse Group and the Friends of Springside Park.

The city's parks commission has final jurisdiction over Springside and any enhancements must be cleared through this board. McGrath said that, so far, the parks commission has been "totally supportive."

Outreach efforts to other organizations, he added, will be ongoing. "These are all volunteer efforts and we're all working within a city park," McGrath said. "What we're trying to do is foster partnerships. We're kind of a newly formed board and we're trying to make sure that this is a united effort. We're reaching out to the community."

McGrath believes that as people learn more about the potential for a renewed Springside Park, support for initiatives such as the arboretum will grow.

He also believes that a renewed Springside would complement a city on the rebound. "I'm a real advocate for this city," McGrath said. "I think that there is a lot of potential in Pittsfield."

For more information on the Arboretum project, call the parks department at 443-9343 or visit the Arboretum group web site at [www.vvernet.net/nee/](http://www.vvernet.net/nee/)

The Pittsfield Gazette  
**M.V.P.**  
Most Valuable Pittsfielders

would like it to be a real family oriented place that not only offers self-guided tours, lectures and other educational programs but also a quiet contemplative place for people to really enjoy."

Although the arboretum concept has been evolving for several years, McGrath and other supporters believe that the time is right to take a more formalized approach.

The group, which has operated under the auspices of Pittsfield Beautiful, plans to achieve non-profit in-



So . . . what's an Arboretum . . . By the time I finish up here, hopefully you'll realize that we view this Arboretum as a place that can offer more than just trees. This Arboretum is about community improvement, community involvement, and creating a special place for us all.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with our Arboretum project, let me just say this . . . "It's Happening". On this small parcel of land high up on this hill in Springside Park, we're working to carry out the vision of the late Vin Hebert – I think he'd be proud of what we've accomplished. Vin's dream was simple: to see people enjoying this place, relaxing in it, learning in it, and learning to love it.

**David Bloniarz, Ph.D.,** USDA/UMASS

**What is the arboretum?** An arboretum is a place for the scientific study and public exhibition of rare trees. It's a plot of land where different trees and shrubs are grown for study or display. An arboretum is a 'library' of trees.

**June 27, 2008**

***National Register of Historic Places.***

Springside Park and Springside House were accepted on June 27, 2008 for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

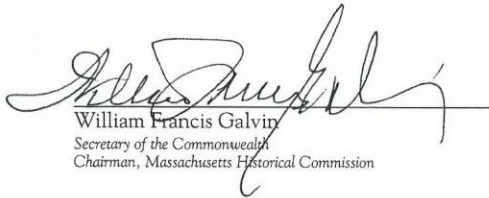


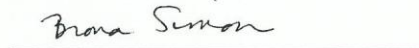
*Springside Park*  
*Pittsfield, Massachusetts*

was accepted on *June 27, 2008* for inclusion in the

*National Register of Historic Places*

The National Register is the nation's official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures, and objects that retain their historical character and are important to our local, state, or national history. The National Register was established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and is administered in the Commonwealth by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

  
William Francis Galvin  
Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission

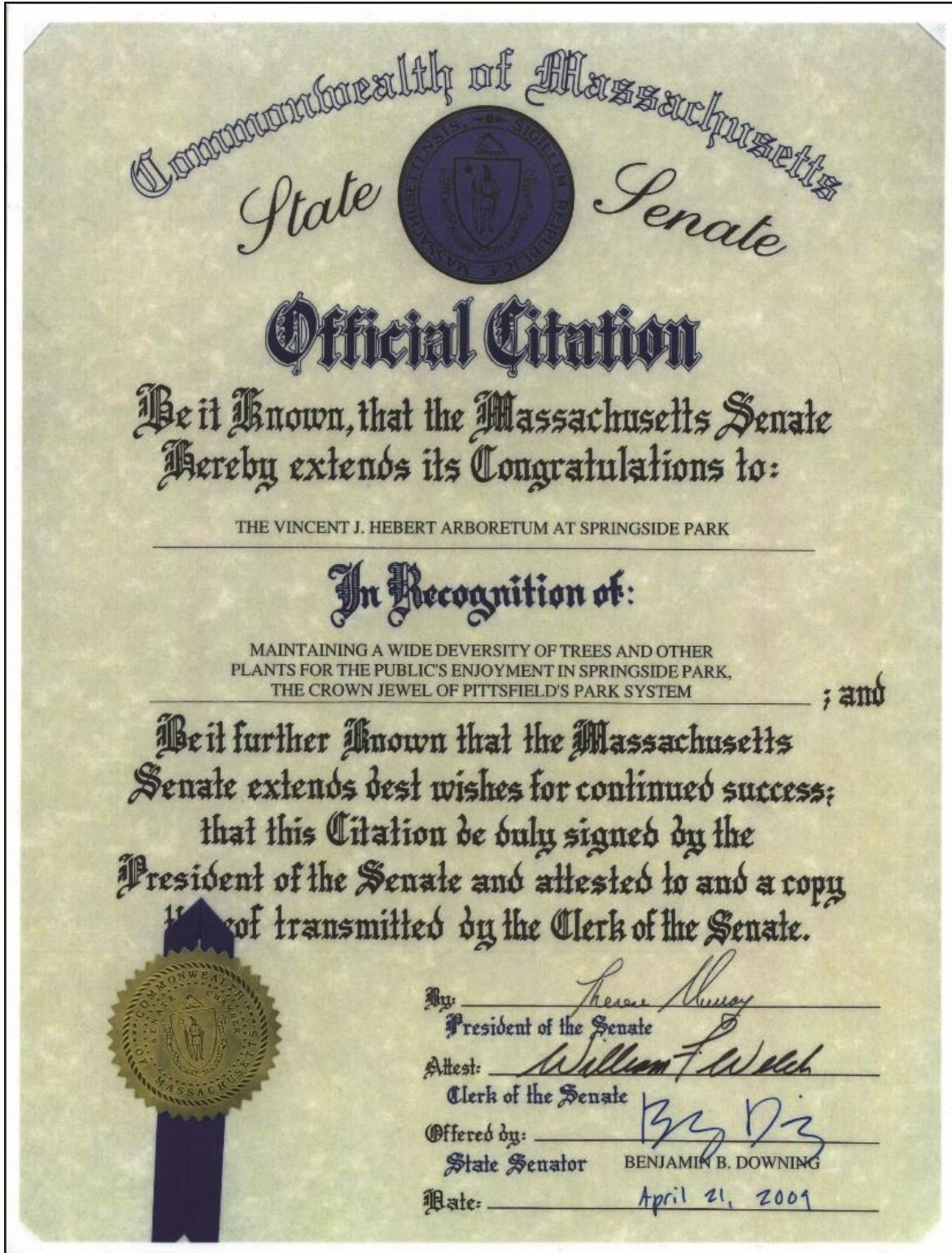
  
Brona Simon  
State Historic Preservation Officer

**MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
A Division of the Secretary of the Commonwealth

April 21, 2009

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Senate Official Citation*

The Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park received the State Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Official Citation in recognition of: "Maintaining a wide diversity of trees and other plants for the public's enjoyment in Springside Park, the crown jewel of Pittsfield's park system." Many thanks go to Massachusetts State Senator Benjamin Downing for shepherding this project through the halls of the State House. This citation signed by President of the Senate, Therese Murray, Clerk of the Senate, William F. Welch and our State Senator Benjamin B. Downing also extends their best wishes for the VJH Arboretum at Springside Parks continued success.





*The* **HEBERT ARBORETUM**  
*at Springside Park*

874 North Street  
(Route 7)  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts  
*"Just North of Downtown"*

Attention:  
Brona Simon  
Executive Director  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

To whom it may concern,


We, the undersigned, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park, strongly endorse the initiative by the City of Pittsfield in taking steps to examine the restoration of former Elmhurst mansion known as the Springside House.

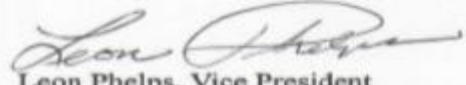
Long time parks director Vincent Hebert, whose decades of efforts to preserve the park's natural grandeur and establish an educational Arboretum there, and who himself once resided in the building during its long tenure as the headquarters of city park activities, indicated on more than one occasion his belief that the legacy of this house was tied intimately to the future of this flagship park. The Springside House, located within the northwest corner of the Arboretum at Springside Park, is a historic and aesthetic cornerstone to this, the city's largest natural park area. Its unique history, architecture and location make it an extraordinary asset to the city and its residents, and there is widespread agreement among members of the community that every effort should be made to ensure its preservation.

This house was donated to Pittsfield in the 1930s by the Miller family, to adjoin the park created by a parcel of the estate thirty years earlier, and has functioned as the symbolic and practical hub of what has evolved into a 237 acre natural park and educational arboretum. Abutting a number of residential neighborhoods, the park directly impacts a substantial proportion of the population, and is enjoyed by visitors throughout the county, and Pittsfield residents have shown an increasing interest in improving and maintaining this asset. Restoration efforts at the Springside House represent a critical component in this community wide effort.

The constituency and city government of Pittsfield have demonstrated a renewed commitment to the preservation and restoration of this essential landmark, consistent with the requirement of original grant of the Springside Park property that it be "maintained and reasonably improved upon" for all time.

The restoration of this, Pittsfield's only city owned historic mansion, would have a substantial impact on the economic development, quality of life and cultural heritage of the community and is therefore a project that very much merits support.

  
Elizabeth Kulas, President

  
Leon Phelps, Vice President

## MISSION

**The Hebert Arboretum** displays a wide diversity of trees and other plants in formal landscapes and larger natural areas for people's enjoyment, refreshment, inspiration and better understanding of the living world. Throughout a city park, it offers educational programs, promotes land preservation and environmentally sound gardening and landscape practices, and is compatible with a variety of other community activities.

**AN ARBORETUM** is a place for the scientific study and public exhibition of rare trees. It's a plot of land where different trees and shrubs are grown for study or display. An arboretum is a 'library' of trees.

~DAVID BLONIAZ, PH.D. USDA/UMASS

#### THE HEBERT ARBORETUM

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**CONCERTS IN THE ARBORETUM** take place on Tuesday evenings at 7pm during the summer and are made possible through grants and donations by individuals attending the concerts.

**DAFFODIL HILL** on the southern slope of the southwest corner of Springside Park started as an idea by city resident Rena Haines. These daffodils provide some of the first spring color to delight our eyes.

**GARDEN AND TREE CARE** work parties are scheduled on Saturdays throughout the spring, summer and fall. These provide hands on training for participants, plants to take home, as well as needed care for the trees and plants in Springside Park.

**NATURE WALKS** are a good way to view this unique, lush sanctuary for plants and

animal life where the wild continues to thrive in the middle of our city. Springside Park is host to over 34 families and 338 species of trees and plant life. You can walk a short distance into a deep experience of nature at its most powerful and transcendent. There are many ecological habitats; rolling hills, meadows, woodlands, streams, brooks, springs, marshes, swamp and ponds; home to dozens of mammal and bird species.

Relic New England woods comprise more than 50 species of native trees and shrubs and innumerable types of flora and fauna. Upland New England field succession, complete with herb, forb, and pioneer species, a migratory bird 'migration funnel' that provides rest and sanctuary to migrating warblers, vireos, and other migrating songbirds, micro-niches and vernal pools for wood frogs, salamanders and fairy shrimp can all be found in Springside Park. There is a tremendous wildflower diversity of over 135 species in amazing abundance.

**VINCENT J. HEBERT LILAC WALK** was a dream of Vinnie Hebert, long time director of the Pittsfield Parks Department and for whom the arboretum is named. Vinnie loved lilacs and this planting displays a range of color and scents during the spring.

To Volunteer for any of the above projects call **Hebert Arboretum** at 413-443-5348  
[www.hebertarboretum.org](http://www.hebertarboretum.org)

*Hebert Arboretum is a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3)-tax status. Your contribution is tax-deductible as defined by IRS regulations.*

*In cooperation with The City of Pittsfield Parks Commission, Department of Community Development/Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources and Springside Park Conservancy, Inc.*



The Hebert Arboretum



### HEBERT ARBORETUM AT SPRINGSIDE PARK

874 North Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201  
P. O. Box 344, Pittsfield, MA 01202

## Activities at Hebert Arboretum



#### 2019 At Springside Park, 874 North St., Rt 7, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Join Friends of Hebert Arboretum & Springside Park for a meaningful stroll or a concert or help us in caring for this *Jewel in the Heart of the Berkshires* where you may receive hands-on instruction in gardening and the care of trees and shrubs, all in good company. All events are free to the public.

June 8, Saturday, 11am	Lilac & Shrub Pruning & Gardening
July 13, Saturday, 11am	Lilac & Shrub Pruning & Gardening
July 23, Tuesday, 7pm	Eagles Concert Band
July 30, Tuesday, 7pm	Housatonic Philharmonic Concert
August 10, Saturday, 11am	Lilac & Shrub Pruning & Gardening
August 6, Tuesday, 7pm	Wintergreen Folk Music Concert
August 13, Tuesday, 7pm	Eagles Big Band 'Swing' Music
August 20, Tuesday, 7pm	Rain Date for the concerts
Sept. 14, Saturday, 11am	Lilac & Shrub Pruning & Gardening
Oct. 12, Saturday, 11am	Lilac & Shrub Pruning & Gardening

Hebert Arboretum will be partnering with:

**Berkshire Lyme Alliance** to host informational **Lyme & Coinfection Meetings** at **Berkshire Athenaeum, Ground Floor Auditorium**

1 Wendell Ave., Pittsfield, MA **Saturdays 1-3 pm**, June 15: Co-Infections, July 6: Testing & Clinical Diagnosis, August 3, September 7, October 5, November 16, December 7. All are welcome. Refreshments served.

**Don't Miss Pruning** with Bob 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of Each Month at 5-6:30 pm

**Weeding Wednesdays** at Springside Park's Chestnut Seed Orchard 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of Each Month at 6-8 pm

**Don't Miss The Eagles Concert Band**

Pittsfield Commons Pavilion, Tues. June 25 & Thurs. August 1 at 7 pm

*In cooperation with The City of Pittsfield Parks Commission, Department of Community Development/Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources and Springside Park Conservancy, Inc.*

Information: Elizabeth Kulas at 413-443-5348 [www.hebertarboretum.org](http://www.hebertarboretum.org)

# Concerts in The Arboretum

2019 Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park, 874 North Street (RT 7), Pittsfield, MA 01201



## **Eagles Concert Band** July 23, Tues. 7 PM

Join conductor Carl Jenkins, former West Point band oboist, and the Eagles Concert Band for music ranging from classical to avant garde, to pop-style; music we've come to know and love.



## **Housatonic Philharmonic**

July 30, Tues. 7 PM

Performing old-time traditional, Celtic & American Folk Music using a hammered dulcimer, piano, penny whistle, fiddle, banjo & spoons.

## **Wintergreen** August 6, Tuesday 7 PM

Performing traditional and contemporary music from the British Isles and America, as well as their own compositions.



## **Eagles Big Band 'Swing'**

Music August 13, Tuesday, 7 PM

Classic Big Band "Swing Music" of the Thirties & Forties.

**Don't Miss Eagles Concert Band** Pittsfield Commons Pavilion Tues. June 25 & Thurs. Aug. 1, 7 PM

**MEET Behind Springside House** **FREE ~ Donations appreciated. ~ 413-443-5348**

*All ages welcome. Bring lawn chairs or blankets and come early to picnic or tour the gardens. **Rain Date: Aug. 20, 2019***

*Sponsored By: The Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum in cooperation with The City of Pittsfield Parks Commission, Department of Community Development/Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources and Springside Park Conservancy, Inc.*

## *Some About The Existing Value of Springside Park*

**Springside Park** is a natural resource of forests, open meadows, wetlands, streams and animal life; a unique wild habitat unparalleled, bountiful, a source of beauty, comfort and inspiration for all. Springside Park is a unique sanctuary for plant and animal life where the wild continues to thrive in the middle of a city. It is host to over thirty-four families and three hundred and thirty-eight species of tree and plant life. You can walk a short distance into a deep experience of nature at its most powerful and transcendent.

There are many ecological habitats over its more than 231 acres of rolling hills, meadows, woodlands, streams, marshes and ponds; that are home to innumerable types of flora and fauna. Relic New England woods comprise more than fifty species of native trees and shrubs; upland New England field succession, complete with herb, forb, and pioneer species; a migratory bird 'migration funnel' that provides rest and sanctuary to migrating warblers, vireos, and other migrating songbirds; micro-niches and 'vernal pools' for frogs and salamanders. There is a tremendous wildflower diversity of over one hundred and thirty-five species and wetland habitats that are home to dozens of mammal and bird species.

Animals who complete their life cycle in this open space—giving birth, nurturing their young, growing old and contributing to the ecosystem include bear, deer, fox, raccoon, opossum, and skunk. The musical voices and striking colors of many birds that call Springside Park home are heard and seen through its trees and across its fields and ponds. They include - sparrows, robins, woodpeckers, chickadees, wrens, warblers, orioles, thrushes, osprey, and hawks among them.

There are over thirty-five identified species of trees in the park, in wooded clusters or bordering streams, ponds, and meadows.

Many are over seventy-five years old and are remnants of the ecological system that surrounded Pittsfield hundreds of years ago. These include deciduous hardwoods such as sugar maples, cottonwoods, northern red oaks and white ashes, as well as four kinds of birch, spruces, hemlock, dogwoods, adler, willows sycamore and black cherry, to name a few.

Plant life include raspberries, blackberries, asparagus, skunk cabbage and blueberries, some of who fruits make an unexpected snack while walking on one of the park's many trails. Grasses and flowers show their changing shapes and hues during the cycles of our four Berkshire seasons—the quiet and starkness of winter, the smell and excitement of reborn earth and flowering in the spring, the maturation and abundance of the summer, and the explosion of color, sound, and fragrance, flooding the eye, ear and nostrils in the autumn. Among the wildflowers are hepatica, bloodroot, coltsfoot, pussy willows, may flowers, trillium, lilies, aster, six kinds of fern and over a dozen types of goldenrod.

One other species is part of Springside Park's heritage, people. We walk, jog, picnic, photograph, play music, sing, dance, meditate, sleep, play or simply relax and enjoy the natural beauty. We do these activities with respect for and in harmony with nature, as part of the ecosystem ourselves in cooperation with the plants, animals, birds, and other living things that call the park home. While playgrounds and athletic fields dot the exterior of Springside Park, we feel that the park's interior area must be kept as the priceless natural resource that it has been and intended to be for nearly one hundred official years and thousands before.

Our love of Springside Park is for the sacredness of its undisturbed natural beauty and power, a refuge for people and other living things to step back and contemplate their lives in a fast-paced, and often complex world, and as the fount of the deep connections we all need with nature that is the center of our being.





## The Friends of Springside Park

**The Springside Park Wildlife Sanctuary** contains at least five different wildlife habitats and a rich wildflower/tree community which should be preserved as part of the Springside Park Master Plan.

**I Natural woods:** of a typical New England, mesic forest community dominated by oaks, maples, cherries, ash hickories, and other tree species. At least 50 species identified so far.

**II Wetlands:** containing cattail marsh, vernal pools, and ponds, and which is home to a rich variety of wildflowers, invertebrates, mammals and migratory water fowl and song birds.

**III Relic New England field/forest interface:** composed of extensive deciduous ecotone and mature deciduous forest. A valuable living laboratory for school kids as part of an environmental education program.

**IV Examples of Upland New England field succession:** complete with herb, forb and tree pioneer species.

**V A Migratory Bird ‘Funnel’:** Because Springside Park is at the heart of Pittsfield, during the spring and fall, dozens of migratory birds species, Wood Warblers, vireos, tanengers, and other songbirds (including raptors) pass through, nest and use the park as part of their migratory route.

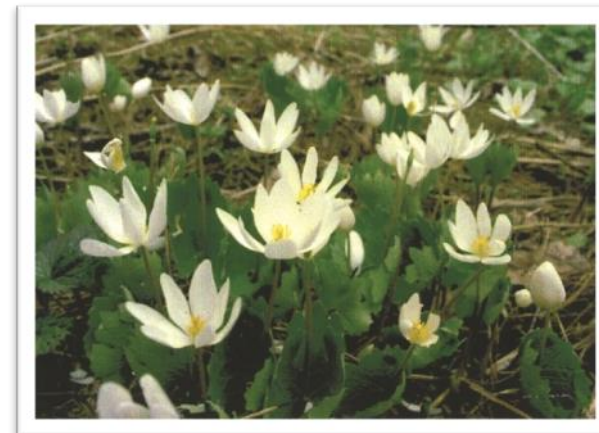


**VI Edaphic Soil/Plant Community:** Because of the limestone bedrock underneath much of Springside Park, and because of the basic water P.H. there is a tremendous variety of wildflower, shrub and tree species; unique to mild soil type. There are over a hundred species of wildflowers identified so far. Springside Park is one of three places out of nine that Phyllis Pryzby has visited in Berkshire County, which has flowers that grow in the limey soil around the springs. The other two places are Tyringham Cobble and Bartholomew’s Cobble. This should be preserved, because we might have a rare animal or plant species, unique to Berkshire County.

**VI Micro-Niches and Habitats:** Within the ‘critical’ area

of Springside Park these are home to animals and plants found nowhere else in the park, because of limiting ecological factors, i.e. moisture, soil temperature, light, succession stage and ‘micro-climate.’

**VIII Relic Forest:** Springside Park has relic tree and plant communities dating to the turn of the century and should be preserved, if for no other reason as part of a living environmental classroom. Specifically old Sugar Maples (*Acer*



*Saccharum*), Black Cherry (*Prunus Serotina*), American Beech (*Fagus Sp.*), Northern Red Oaks (*Quercus Robur*), Canadian Hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*), and White Pine (*Pinus Strobus*).

It is imperative that Springside Park's unique natural history be considered as part of the overall Master Plan, as part of a systematic state wide plan for conservation of plant and animal communities in the state of Massachusetts. Very few parks in the state have an ongoing "environmental education" component complementing the other aspects of park use. Springside Park could be one of those parks!

### **Resident Bird Species of Tree and Shrub Species of Springside Park**

Blue Jay, Black-Capped Chickadee, White-Breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Crow, Rave, Fish Crow, Pigeon, Starling, House Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, White-throated sparrow, Downy Woodpecker, Flicker, Hairy, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwing, Robin, Bluebird, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Goldfinches, Red-polls, Cardinal, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Screech Owl, Saw-Whet, Long Eared, Great Horned Owl, Herring Gull, Black Duck, Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, Slated-colored Junco. These are species which live in Springside Park year-round, with minor migratory variations.

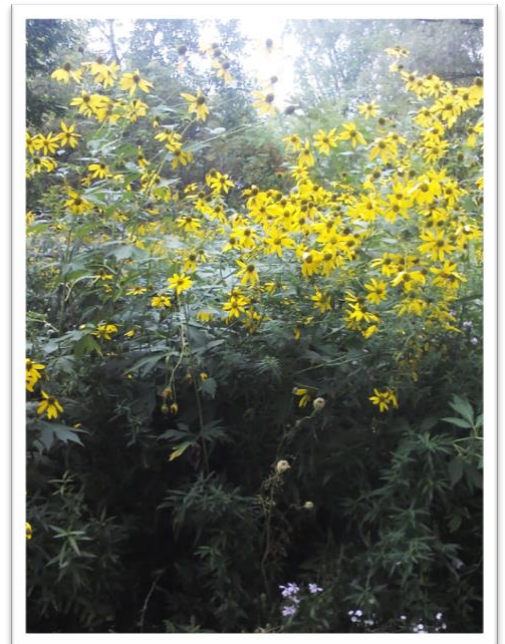
### **Healing Herbs: Healthful Plants and Beneficial Botanicals Found In Springside Park**

In the exciting film, "Medicine Man", starring Sean Connery, we are greeted with an exciting and romantic scientific search for the cure of cancer, deep in the heart of the South American rain forest. Faced with the ever impending destruction of the jungle around them, Sean and his equally determined female assistant are forced by haste, scientific mistakes and the vagaries of botanical folklore to hurry and find that elusive plant which may spell salvation for millions of ill people in the world. In the end, Sean and his partner, must go deeper into the woods with their Indian friends, to escape the bulldozer and the chain saw, in order to continue their field work.

In reality, the world's rain forests may indeed have the cure for cancer, but already botanical science has identified hundreds of chemical compounds found in nature, outside of the jungle (such as the Pacific Yew in the Northwest, which has Taxok, that helps people with Ovarian cancer). But time is running out for the determined scientist to find the 'magic bullet' hidden in the leafy issues of some tropical plant. Here in the Berkshires, the Native Americans used many of the local plants for everything from constipation, malaria, to broken arms, menstrual problems and toothaches. And its' exciting because we have re-discovered the knowledge that "Nature's Drugstore" is just outside our doorsteps!

### **Healing Herbs**

It is extremely important to know what kind of plant you are looking at in order to determine if it is beneficial in use. If you are unsure, do not pick it! A mistake could be fatal. Queen Anne's lace for example, is a native carrot, but it could be confused with Poison Hemlock, because of the lacy leaves. Consult an expert in botanical identification reputable field guides and use only the parts of the plant which contain the therapeutic properties and in the season they are most potent. The following list will give you an idea of some plants found here and in the Berkshires that fall in the category of Healing Herbs. Heal-all or self-heal: leaves used for sore throat gargle. Common Plantain: leaves and seeds source of laxatives. Psyllium seeds. Butter and Eggs: crushed leaves used as ointment for piles and skin eruptions, Jewelweed: leaves and stems used as poultice for Poison Ivy rash. Red Clover: flowers used as a blood purifier, expectorant, sedative, a cure for bronchitis, athlete's foot, colic, boils, ulcers and the famous Hoxsey cancer treatment. Chicory: besides the coffee substitute in its root, chicory has also been used as a diuretic and a laxative, "cardiotonic" and sedative. Peppermint: leaf tea used for headaches, indigestion, gas, insomnia, nervous tension, extracts have been proven effective against Herpes and Newcastle Disease. It stops smooth muscle cramps. Spearmint: leaf tea used for stomachaches, anti-septic, anti-spasmodic, folk remedy used to treat diarrhea, colds cancer, fevers, and headaches. Wild Ginger: foots used for cough and sore throat, contains anti-tumor chical Aristolchic acid, makes you sweat. Also used for "female ailments." Pineapple Weed: an alien plant which makes an excellent tea.





3/28/91

VICTOR C. CAPELLI

## The joys of Springside in spring

One damp, drizzly day in March, I took a squishy walk through Springside Park on one of its many trails. Down behind the Springside Greenhouse and below the hill towards the marsh, I trudged over the winter remnants of wildflowers, bushes, grasses and downed branches. The view towards Southeast Pittsfield was cloudy and the mist trickled over the massive trees next to the wetlands with a surreal quality. Traffic noise was muted and muffled.

As I walked, my naturalist's eye inspected the forest glade along the trail, next to the broad and sprawling meadow. The first skunk cabbage, with its peculiar green hoods, could be seen down next to the brook. Red-osier dogwoods — which have a bright, crimson color to their branches — raspberry canes and blackberry bushes made an impenetrable tangle to walk through. This edge or ecotone habitat is where dozens of bird species make their home in spring — including Yellow-throated Warblers, Catbirds, Mockingbirds, Wood Thrushes, wrens, sparrows and many others.

Further down along the margin, I entered the steep, pitched bank into the woods, where large red-oaks, sugar maples, smaller birches and alders presented a "classic" example of mature and deciduous forest. In the spring and summer and into the fall; this sub-forest habitat with its filtered light provides for a fantastic

variety of wildflowers—including Meadow-Rue, six kinds of ferns, Lady-Slipper, Solomon's Seal, Canada Mayflower and over a dozen types of goldenrod, aster and other species.

Over the footbridge (recently constructed) and into the moist, riverine-like habitat along the brook, I saw the remains of a campfire and above, the early morning sun broke through the branches of Sycamores

*Here, in the middle of a city, is a place where the wild continues to thrive.*

and Shagbark hickories. The tree and shrub variety is considerable in Springside with over thirty-five species identified and recorded, so far. Climbing onto one of the trails, I heard the calls of a Pileated Woodpecker (the largest Woodpecker in the Northeast) ringing through the trees. I saw several songbird species; including Tufted-titmouse, downy and hairy woodpeckers, robins, and of course, Black-capped chickadees.

Since its inception back in 1910, Springside Park has been well known for its many ballfields, trails, greenhouse and botanical diversity. Springside's 237 acres, though, has a hidden and quite, overlooked aspect to it, nestled within the center. There are many, many ecological habitats here; ranging from woods to field to swamp and home to many species of animals like raccoon, opossum, deer, skunk and fox.

Bounded by North Street, Crane Avenue, Benedict and Springside—this park has all the ingredients for a wildlife sanctuary, in addition to its other integral features. In fact, as a naturalist I have become jaded by other more exotic wild places like Acadia, up in Maine or even by Canoe Meadows and Pleasant Valley nearby. But here, in the middle of a city is a place where the wild continues to thrive and where, with the

minor exertion of a Sunday stroll you can experience nature—every bit as good.

Soon, the profuse network of shrubs and cover for birds and wildlife will become alive with spring migrants; such as wood warblers, vireos, tanagers and orioles. As I made my way back up the hill past the greenhouse and towards the parking lot, I paused to look at the city out past the towering Norway Spruces and hemlocks. Isn't it funny that often we look for a place of relaxation and discovery, far from the streets we call home, when that place far from the maddening crowd is often just around the corner?

*Editor's Note: A guided "Get to Know Your Park" walk will be offered Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. at Springside Park. Ken Gooch, Elizabeth Kulas and Kevin Phelps will serve as guides for this free event.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Springside Park is living laboratory

To the Editor of THE EAGLE:—

Nancy Eppley's comments on preserving Springside Park's natural habitat [letter, July 1] and other people's comments regarding the revitalizing of Springside Park in view of the recent master plan presentation by Brian Gibbons are both critically and intensely important items in the conservation of Berkshire County's natural resources. Springside Park has the potential of becoming the best and most beautiful of all Western Massachusetts's city parks, equally in the master plan development of the Vincent J. Herbert Arboretum and in the preservation of Springside Park's critically endangered "wild" areas.

In the last two years, visitors and residents of the city have enjoyed participation in the wildflower walks conducted by Phyllis Pryzby and environmental education programs, slide shows and demonstrations presented by yours truly, but only because Springside Park has the unique offering of so many diverse and overlapping natural habitats. These include: Relic New England woods comprising more than 50 species of native trees and shrubs, Upland New England field succession, complete with herb, forb and tree pioneer species, a migratory bird migration "funnel" that provides rest and sanctuary to migrating warblers, vireos and other migrating songbirds, micro-niches and

"vernal pools" for frogs and salamanders, tremendous wildflower diversity — which now numbers more than 135 species (as compiled by Phyllis Payzby, myself and Elizabeth Kulas), and wetland habitats that are home to dozens of mammal and bird species.

On a recent bird walk, I identified a black-throated gray warbler in Springside Park, which, according to Norma M. Purdy (the person who records bird sightings for the Berkshire Museum) is an avian event! According to the records, the last sighting of this warbler was on Dec. 8, 1923 in Lenox. But it was an immature bird and was found dead the next day. I can't even begin to describe the variety and bird "noise" from migrating songbirds in Springside Park that have been witnessed by many birdwalk participants.

In addition to the biological diversity exhibited in Springside Park, the ecotone (the edge) between the Arboretum, with its established formal plantings, new gardens and the potential of "new" horticulture developments is a vital "living laboratory" in the midst of a modern urban landscape. Pittsfield residents, Berkshire County residents, visitors, and concerned environmental scientists should all take advantage of the opportunity to visit Springside Park, volunteer their services to help protect and improve the park and participate in the park's various environmental educational programs.

The infrastructure that is growing in Springside Park, complete with trails, birdhouses, foot-bridges, recreational facilities and picnic areas, should go hand in hand with the environmental protection of the park's wild and "undeveloped" zones. It is imperative that Springside Park's unique natural history be considered as part of the overall master plan, as part of a systematic and comprehensive plan for the conservation of plant and animal communities in the state of Massachusetts.

VICTOR C. CAPELLI  
Stephentown, N.Y.  
July, 5, 1998



Your list of wildflowers in Springside Park is an impressive list, and indicates this is a special site, certainly worth saving. An area such as this, which would be classed as a **Rich Woods Plant Community**, is unusual, and one of the specialties of Berkshire County, with its marble bedrock and ample moisture. I hope there is no threat to this natural garden. I would think it would be a wonderful educational and pleasurable resource.

**Pamela B. Weatherbee**  
*Botanical Consultant, April 6, 1998*



One day on a walk in Springside Park with **Steve Linscott, Interpretive Nature Guide for Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation at Mt. Greylock**, we noticed that he was utterly astonished at the amount of wild Bee Balm colonies in the park. He said he'd never seen so many, ever, anywhere in one location.



The amount of rarely seen wildflowers that Springside Park hosts is really extraordinary. I've been all over New England and I've never seen such a wide variety of flowers, some rare, in such abundance, in one location. I've seen flowers here in Springside Park that I've rarely seen anywhere else in New England; Bee Balm, Blue Gentian and Hepatica. I've seen Blue Gentian in only one other place and then sometimes in that place it is not present for years, but will then come back. All three grow in Springside Park along existing trails. In some cases we had to part the Bee Balm in order to get through a trail, there was so much of it. The Blue Gentian I found right on the cutting edge of a mowed path. I was wondered if this was the colony Phyllis Prysby, *Wildflower Walk Guide*, had found years ago and mentioned in her book. How excited she was when she found them. Another flower I try to make sure I witness in early spring, no matter how busy I am, is the glorious Hepatica community in Springside Park a little North of the Brown Street entrance. Again, I've been all over New



England and Springside Park is the first place I've seen it, the other is Bartholomew's Cobble. It's also the first place I've seen a wolf and a fisher cat while on a nature walk. Unfortunately I missed the moose that surprised arboretum volunteer Judy one day, as she changed the letters on the front sign. Well, maybe next time I'll see one.

**Elizabeth Kulas**  
*SPC, Hebert Arboretum, Friends of Springside*

*Hepatica*, entrance to Springside Park at the end of Brown Street, Spring 2016



## **2016 Emails pertaining to: Berkshire Mountain Bike Training Series Proposal**

**Joe Durwin:** Opinions seem to be divided on the new trail proposal among those SPC members I have heard from thus far. I've also shopped around to a few other go-to experts for input, including park arborist Bob Presutti, wildlife expert Jane Winn, and Friends founder Royal Hartigan, all of which I'm forwarding on for consideration.

For the purposes of the SPC's role in this, I think our criteria for weighing this really hinges on the question of whether it is consistent with the recommendations of the master plan for that sector and the park overall.

As this is likely going to be a split vote, anyone who cannot attend that wishes to vote in absentia please email or call me at 413-347-9877 thanks.

I may be the odd man out on this when it comes down to a vote (and that's ok!) :)

My concern is whether any more trails in the park is a positive gain, beyond its benefit to these mountain bike races. Springside already has an extremely high density of trail yardage compared to most any public land, in some places far too dense (e.g. between the pond and little league field).

As a result, there is not all that much really continuous wild land in the park. The amount of natural space without interruption of human traffic impacts the overall ecology and biodiversity of the land. The larger of the desired trails will significantly break up some of the few continuous portions of park land remaining.

To me this is a question of balancing having a natural, educational park (our top master plan priority), with the expansion of active recreational use of the forest.

Please try to attend on June 11 so everyone has an opportunity to weigh in as we take a vote on whether to give a positive recommendation. Joe

**Jeff Turner:** I won't be able to make that meeting date. And I really don't think we need new trails through the park. We probably have too many already. They break up habitat, endanger wildlife, and encourage erosion. And bicycle trails become ATV trails. It's bad enough with the dirt bike nonsense north of the Reid baseball field, that stuff looks ugly.

**Royal Hartigan:** I strongly feel that we have to preserve the park as an open space natural preserve for all people, as opposed to single use activities, layouts (such as bike trails) or events. This ideal has already been compromised at the outer boundaries of the park and even some of the internal areas.

I suggest a ban on any new trails whatsoever, and also limiting the use of the park by the bikes on the existing trails.

**Jane Winn:** The proposed trails fragment the little remaining habitat too much. I think they have plenty. I have not run this by BEAT's Board, so that is my personal opinion (as a scientist with a Master's degree in zoology).

**Bob Presutti:** Sections 2 and 3 appear to be in wooded areas. Are they talking tree removal? What is their ultimate plan? The width of the trail is an important factor along with the number of people and days used. Exposed tree roots should not be subjected to traffic. Will the added trails meet best practice standards? A one day race will probably not harm the park but no live trees should be removed or their roots exposed to damage. If a layout is marked in a non-destructive manner, the trail can be viewed for impact.

Any approval of new trails should name the people to maintain them.

**Elizabeth Kulas, June 1, 2016** Rather than bringing this issue to a vote I believe the officers could simply follow the rules the Millers laid down for anyone who has a project in Springside Park that it be in keeping with their multi-use directive. There is no need to bring a project to SPC for discussion or a vote when it does not meet the multi-use criteria and clearly makes such an impact on the physical terrain of the park which is already much in need of being tenderly taken care of. Two points:

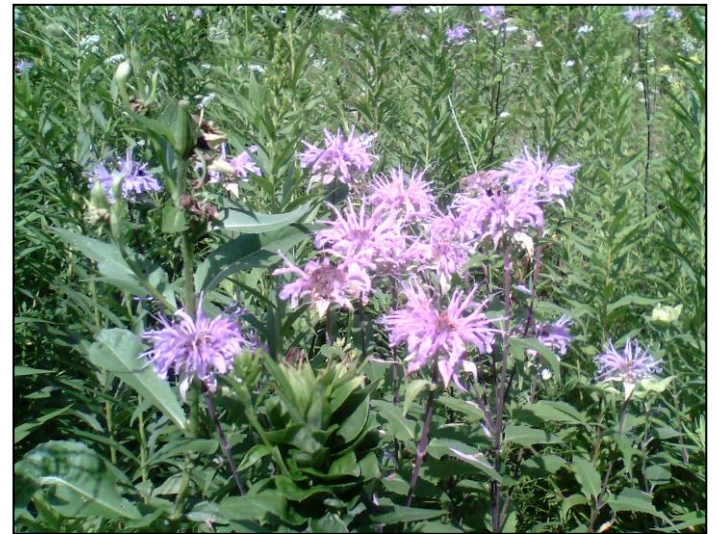
-anyone in the future can come in and say they want to do something. If it doesn't interfere with keeping the park's multi-use rule then we can discuss and each group can cast its vote on whether or not to support a project. Let's connect with Jim McGrath who will screen many of these kinds of applications and ask him to direct to us only proposals that honor Springside Park's multi-use status because that was stipulated in the deed of the gift of Springside Park to the City of Pittsfield by the Miller Family. If a project doesn't meet that criteria he might quickly be able to direct them to finding a venue that fits their project.

-The other issue is that we will be watched more closely as interest in Springside Park widens. Thus it is important to continue to follow and support the Miller's multi-use deed clause. That is one of the reasons Springside Park Conservancy exists, to ensure things like that. Of concern is that they have already completed trails and I think we should review that and its impact on Springside Park.

An **ecological footprint** measures how much [people](#) take from nature. The footprint is then compared to what [natural resources](#) there are to provide for people. The ecological footprint takes into account how much farm land, forest area, grazing land and sea area it takes to provide everything people use. More simply, footprint calculations answer the questions: how much nature do we have? And how much do we use?

When analyzing the world as a whole, humanity is using nature about 1.5 times faster than nature renews itself.<sup>[1]</sup> It is like using 1.5 planet Earths. Since people consume differently around the world, it is also possible to calculate how many planet it would take if everybody around the world consumed like a particular population. For instance, if everybody consumed like the Germans, it would take nearly 3 planet Earths. Another estimate says "the average world citizen has an eco-footprint of about 2.7 global average hectares while there are only 2.1 global hectare of bio productive land and water per capita on earth. This means that humanity has already overshoot global bio capacity by 30% and now lives unsustainably by depleting stocks of "natural capital". Wikipedia

# Springside Park Is A Living Environmental Classroom



Within an hour you can walk through all these different habitats that Victor Capelli, Naturalist, describes: Natural Woods, including 50 species identified so far. Relic Forest and Relic New England Field/Forest Interface, Upland New England Field Succession; complete with Herb, Forb and Tree Pioneer Species. A Migratory Bird 'Funnel'. Wetlands, Vernal Pools and Springs; from which Springside Park gets its name. Edaphic Soil & Plant Communities. Micro-Niches and Habitats home to animals and plants seen nowhere else in the city or the region. Some of the animals we've seen in the park include bear, deer, fox, wolves, fisher cats and a moose.

You can walk through deep, relic forest, cross over streams and brooks, see some its many springs, view rare wildflowers all along the trails and in the fields and forests. You can climb Indian Rocks and refresh yourself with wild strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and blackberries, depending on the season, as you make your way around the park.

In the spring it is delightful to see the vernal pools left by the receding snow and the swamp where you can listen to the chorus of duck quacking sounds the Wood Frogs make as they lay their eggs for another season. If you are really lucky you may see a Fairy Shrimp in one of the vernal pools.

Springside Park houses more wildflowers, many rare and those rarely seen, than I've seen anywhere else in all of New England. The limestone and quartz base of the park wet from the brooks that run through it, the wetlands that fill the park and the many springs nurture a wide diversity of wildflower communities and each of these in extraordinary abundance. A few examples are Bellwort, Hepatica, Wild Columbine, Blue Gentian, Black Cohosh and Indian Pipe to name a few. I've been all over New England and I've seen Hepatica and Wild Columbine in only one other place, Bartholomew's Cobble. As Victor said, "It is very rare to find such a special place containing what Springside Park has, relic tree and plant communities dating back to before the turn of the century that should be preserved, if for no other reason than as part of a living, environmental classroom.

One summer Hebert Arboretum's nature walk attracted a large number of Canadians who vacation in Pittsfield. Throughout the walk they kept saying, "Do you know what you have here," over and over again. "Do you know what you have here?" "We can't believe what you have here, right in the middle of the city.



You are going to preserve it, aren't you?" Like the Canadians I ask, "Do you know what we have here? We are going to work together to preserve it, aren't we?"



## Special Interest Groups, project by project, are defining this public park for themselves

Land by special interest groups and specific sports over the years have carved up Springside Park redefining the land for their specific use (sometimes only a few months a year) proposal by proposal. Examples:

- Permanent Ballfields
- Berkshire Mountain Bike Training Series skills track encompasses the entire northernmost area of the park between the Doyle Complex and the housing development on the west side.
- Berkshire Mountain Bike Training Series Jumps are installed north of Reid Middle School
- Berkshire Mountain Bike Training series has damaged nearly all the walking trails in Springside Park without any maintenance being done to make them pedestrian safe and with only sometimes unsightly maintenance of the trails to make them better for mountain bike use. Their use of all the trails in Springside Park takes more land away from public use because it is simply too dangerous to stroll or walk on trails that host a super aggressive, dangerous and sometimes violent sport, with no supervision.
- The road through Springside Park is now filled with wood chips and jumps and an alternate road is being created in the field right next to the road filled with woodchips. I saw two mothers trying to push baby carriages with all their might on the wood chip road because it was so difficult. This road was easy for those who wanted to walk or run and avoid the fields full of ticks. That is no longer possible because it is just too difficult to navigate.
- The increased usage of the park by ATV's has produced damaging consequences to the trails and noisy and dangerous riding often spills out into the streets around the park.



**We can support the original intention of the Millers with the bequest of this land to the City of Pittsfield that the park be multi-use in nature and serve all the residents of the City of Pittsfield. We can support the City approved Master Plan of Springside Park and the City Council Approved Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park's plans** or we can allow Springside Park to be defined and developed by special interest groups, project by project.

**We, the public and stewards involved, along with the City of Pittsfield can support the work that has been done to define this 237.5 acre, pristine wilderness, within the City of Pittsfield in a way that is good for all the residents of Pittsfield and Western Massachusetts** or we can allow Springside Park to be defined independent of all that council by special interest groups redefining entire sections of the park and the entire park for their exclusive use and purposes at the expense of the preservation of Springside Park for 'the public'.

According to the Pittsfield Parks and Conservation Areas Brochure it appears that of the 34 Parks and Conservation Areas only about 8 of the 29 parks are without athletics, so athletics are well represented within the park system. And there are many other sites, as well as parks within the city, that could house the activities of sports and other venues needing space. Thus, there is no reason to carve up a park with the unparalleled beauty of Springside Park, unless that is not what you value.



# We have a choice before us on how to develop Springside Park

We suggest that we all use the history of Springside Park, The Guiding Principles of the Master Plan and the work that has gone before, approved by the City Council in 1990, to inform our decisions on how Springside Park should be developed, rather than with special interest projects that alter the physical landscape of Springside Park and are not in keeping with the intent of the bequest of this gift to the City of Pittsfield by the Millers, the Guiding Principles and the approved Master Plan, as well as the work diligently done to create the approved Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum throughout Springside Park.

[with edits made at September 20, 2014, SPC voted to approve this draft on 9/20/14]

## *GUIDING PRINCIPLES*

"Any park plan should as a fundamental prerequisite reaffirm this stated purpose: That the area of land known as Springside Park be perpetually maintained as a public park, be preserved, be reasonably improved upon as necessary, and be expanded upon as possible as understood in the acceptance of the grants of this property to the city. Further:

"That the majority of the park acreage be preserved substantially untouched in its current natural character, with an emphasis on providing well marked trail systems, increased interpretive signage, and measures for increasing accessibility to more natural areas.

"That the planning, operation and supervision of Springside Park function to maintain a mixed-use recreational ecosystem which supports a delicate balance of natural and educational programming, community social and cultural usage, and existing developed athletic and recreational facilities.

"That the City collaborate actively with a variety of community institutions to further highlight, and expedite improvement to or replacement of, park infrastructure supporting those educational, agricultural, natural and historic aspects of the park which have lagged behind in development to its athletic aspects.

"That the planning and preservation of Springside Park occur in open cooperation between the City of Pittsfield and the public that uses it, and that any planning efforts, new development, or proposed major new activity or usage be carefully considered in a transparent and comprehensive process that includes review by the Springside Park Conservancy

## **SP Master Plan 2016 Page 14**

### **Part Two A New Vision**

Springside Park: A Natural Park. An Educational Park. A Community Park.

"The vision for Springside Park is to continue to retain the current overall character of the park and maintain a balance of mixed complementary usages, improve infrastructure and enhance its educational benefit, safety and accessibility for all."

## Page 15 Guiding Principles moving forward

- That the majority of the park acreage be preserved substantially untouched in its current natural character, with an emphasis on providing well marked trail systems, increased interpretive signage, and measures for increasing accessibility to more natural areas.
- That the planning, operation and supervision of Springside Park function to maintain a mixed-use recreational ecosystem which supports a delicate balance of natural and educational programming, community social and cultural usage, and existing developed athletic and recreational facilities.

## Page 31

Springside Park Master Plan, 1957

"While Pittsfield has a number of important parks in Pittsfield, there is not one single area that could be considered a park in the generally accepted meaning of the word.... The City needs one large area that can be devoted for activities not feasible or available in any of the other park properties. At least one park in every city should have a horticultural interest, and this is highly appropriate at Springside."

Project request by V. Hebert on behalf of the Pittsfield Parks

Commission to Pittsfield Beautiful:

"[City of Pittsfield proposes] the continued development, promotion and maintenance of the arboretum in Springside Park, which is one of the oldest parks in the city with great potentialities because of its central location, its size, its wooded sections, irregular topography and large open spaces."

**The Mountain Bike Consortium has been ‘nibbling away’ at Springside** and that is not what the Millers intended to be done with the gift of Springside Park to the City of Pittsfield. They intended that Springside Park be preserved in its original state for the enjoyment and use of all its citizens. The intention of the Miller family's original donation of the park was for the 'enjoyment of the public' in perpetuity as a natural, open space for all people and is meant to be a unique, natural resource for the city whose diverse landscape, flora, and fauna, all unique for an urban park of its size, need to be preserved as 'open land' throughout the park:

"...The Millers contended that Pittsfield is as worthy of having a centrally located large park as Springfield with its Forest Park, Albany with Lincoln and Washington parks, Northampton with Childs and Look Parks, Worcester with its Elm Park, Greenfield with Veterans Memorial Park, and Brattleboro, VT with its Living Memorial Park. page 3

The Miller philosophy on parks was well expressed in a letter which Donald B. Miller sent in July 1964 to the then Pittsfield mayor, Robert B. Dillon, who was hopeful that part of Springside could be used as a high school site. He wrote in part and I quote "Would anything be left of Boston's Common or New York's Central Park if their acreage were nibbled away in the name of 'free land' whenever those cities needed land for some municipal facility? The pressure for underground parking and additional services in those big city parks even now gnaws away at the concept of open green spaces in an urban setting. In many metropolitan instances physical necessity has required compromise. No such necessity prevails here." page 3 & 4

(from *A Celebration of Pittsfield Parks Honoring Kelton B. Miller & Family*; "I Remember When" A Paper by Ted Giddings, 1999)

While the 80 or so acres nearest Springside House have been the focus of the first year and a half of the Arboretum Advisory Committee's existence, the committee really has designs on all of the park. None of the park's existing roles need to be affected at all, except for the better. Gradually, new plantings and better care of the whole park will be a part of its "arboretumization."

*Mark Miller, to The Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park Advisory Committee, January 14, 1998*

The arboretum is now about 80 acres in the southwest corner of Springside's roughly 230 acres, but a long-range goal is to "arboretumize" the entire park while keeping what we do fully compatible with all of its uses.

*Mark Miller, to a landscape designer, May 4, 1999*

Good City parks, as a new biography of Frederick Law Olmsted reminds us, are critically important and will become more so as the years pass. Springside Park, next to a school and bordered by residential neighborhood, has many recreational uses, all compatible with the arboretum. Like Pontoosuc Lake, the park lends its grace to the northern approach of Pittsfield, much as the grounds of the Country Club of Pittsfield and the Berkshire Life Insurance Company and adjacent land do to the south and Hancock Shaker Village does to the west.

A first-class arboretum throughout Springside's 231 acres will make this resource more valuable to residents of Pittsfield and the Berkshires and can be a key attraction in the region's already-impressive mix. As a restored Colonial Theatre will enhance downtown's attractions on South Street, so will the developing arboretum on North Street just north of Berkshire Medical Center.

Vinnie Hebert lived and breathed parks and recreation programs for more than 30 years after World War II as the city's commissioner of them and continued to promote them in retirement until his death this spring. We hope that long after people who knew him are gone his legacy will continue here and the park that is transformed in his name will be emulated elsewhere.

*Mark Miller, to James McGrath, September 30, 1999*

**Those interested and involved with Springside Park could build upon the work and vision of those who had the foresight to see what would benefit the greater good of Pittsfield and the entire region of western Massachusetts;** Mayor's Ann Wojtkowski's proposal to name the Arboretum at Springside Park the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park unanimously approved by the City Council on January 9, 1990. City Council Minutes reads:

A communication from Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski, proposing to name the Arboretum at Springside Park the "Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park", was read. Councilor Arlos moved for approval and it was so voted on unanimous vote.

We could support the Master Plan Vinnie Hebert commissioned: **1963 Master Plan of The Arboretum at Springside Park, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Development Of The Springside Park As An Arboretum** Prepared by Richard C. Page October 1963 for the City of Pittsfield. We could support and continue the years of work done by the Arboretum Advisory Committee with Mark Miller as first president, then the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park, with Jim McGrath as president, followed by Dean Maynard and Elizabeth Kulas as presidents. Or we could continue to allow proposals of special projects by special interest groups which physically change the character of Springside Park to serve their special interest at the expense of the public's use and the Miller's intent change the landscape of Springside Park.

**The Master Plan approved by the City of Pittsfield** supports that the majority of the park acreage be preserved substantially untouched in its current natural character. **I ask the Parks Commission to support that and to find other suitable locations for proposals from special interest groups that would change the face of Springside Park.**

*A first-class arboretum throughout Springside's 231 acres will make this resource more valuable to residents of Pittsfield and the Berkshires and can be a key attraction in the region's already impressive mix. As a restored Colonial Theatre will enhance downtown's attractions on South Street so will the developing arboretum on North Street, just north of Berkshire Medical Center. Mark Miller, September 30, 1999.*

**I'd like us all to think about what's better for Pittsfield and Western Massachusetts** allowing this park with all its priceless natural attributes to be the living, environmental classroom it already is, so rare because of the biodiversity of ecosystems in this one location and a top priority of the Master Plan, or is allowing this park of unprecedented natural beauty to become another local sports park of which we already have an abundance of. What's preferable? A first class arboretum and nature preserve would be a destination, given that the Berkshires is one of America's premier cultural resorts. It could also serve as an indoor/outdoor classroom for the colleges in the area, potentially generating an income stream that could be used to support Springside Park programs and maintenance of the park.

