The following is an excerpt from our President Richard Leary’s report at our Annual Meeting held on May 27 by Zoom.

Looking forward to the new year, we will be active in any number of areas. In addition to our regular activities and efforts in the areas of maintenance and beautification, we will also be doing new things in the areas of education and recreation. Our collaboration with the Garden Club of Buzzards Bay and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth on the pollinator habitat plot will continue, in particular in the area of using the pollinator garden for educational purposes. We will be working with Coastline Elderly Services’ Age Friendly Initiative program to make the park a more livable space/place for residents of all ages and abilities. And we will be partnering with the Buzzards Bay Coalitions and others on the comprehensive Buttonwood Brook & Apponagansett Bay Restoration project which will address the ongoing pollution and ecosystem challenges that plague the Buttonwood Brook and Apponagansett Bay system.

Our tree program will continue with significant energies being devoted to the Cherry Trees Replacement Project. We hope to make tangible progress with the development of an affordable and doable design for the Buttonwood Brook South Bridge. And we hope also to do some initial pathbreaking and clearance activities on the pond perimeter pathway. Both of these activities being a part of our North Trails development project. Last but not least, we have exciting and ambitious plans for the Olmsted 2000 Bicentennial Celebration. Bringing these plans to fruition will be a challenging undertaking which I am confident we are more than capable of carrying out successfully.

Do you like to garden?

We can always use volunteers for weeding. At the left are members weeding the Sensory Garden which is located in the children’s playground area. The Sensory Garden was put in by the city as part of the handicapped-accessible playground in 2008. It was meant for the visually handicapped and has Braille labels. The plants are meant to be a treat to the senses as they emit a pleasing scent when touched or the leaves have a special feel. If you are interested in volunteering, visit our website: buttonwoodpark.org and leave a message.
A storm management plan is underway to remediate conditions in the area the Senior Center located at 1 Oneida Street next to Buttonwood Pond. Currently, areas of Lake Street, Oneida Street, the parking area and the field to the east drain across the parking lot at a low point. Untreated stormwater and eroded soils degrade the water quality in the pond.

The objectives of the project is to improve the access road and parking, solve stormwater management problems, improve walkways in the area, and provide landscape improvements in the eroded area and the pond shoreline, as well as around the Senior Center.

Parking lot improvements will include new pavement, granite curbing, regrading, and accessible parking. Pedestrian improvements will include new walkways with ADA compliant ramps. The lawn areas north and south of the Senior Center will include bio-retention basins (rain gardens) which will slow water outflow and serve as a stormwater treatment area. These areas will include new trees, refurbished lawn areas, benches, picnic tables and trash receptacles. The rain gardens will include low maintenance perennials. Across the street at the edge of the field, along with the existing trees there will be additional plantings and shallow depressions to slow water runoff.

Updates

Geese Remediation

The City has signed a contract with the USDA and Mass Fish & Wildlife to manage the geese in Buttonwood, Brooklawn, Hazelwood, Victory, and Riverside Parks and the Whaling City Golf Course. They have removed several geese from the park system and used remote control vehicles and water craft to drive 400 geese off site. They intend to come back again this fall and will addle eggs in the spring.

Dam Replacement

Mary Rapoza reports that the City is working on the replacement, but there is no time line or funding information.
The British Memorial Monument

The ending of World War I and its impact on society precipitated the creation of monuments and memorials throughout the nation. The War was itself was significant in that the nation’s great melting pot of immigrants participated in great numbers for their new home. In 1936, the British and Canadian Society of New Bedford dedicated the monument to honor the New Bedford servicemen who died in the British and Canadian forces in World War I. It is a stepped granite shaft located on a traffic island at the western end of Fuller Memorial Parkway at the Brownell Avenue entrance.

The sculptor of the memorial was a city resident Harold Kenworthy (1893-1964), who was himself an immigrant from Oldham, England. He was an artist by trade and arrived at Ellis Island Sept. 14, 1914 aboard the SS Lusitania. Harold first worked at his sister’s English Bakery located on Harmony Court and when war was declared he enlisted in the City’s Battery D, 102nd Field Artillery at the city armory on Sycamore Street. First listed as a cook, he became a topographer due to his artistic training. During the war he was wounded four times receiving the Purple Heart with three oak leaf clusters and the Silver Star. He returned from war to study at both the RI School of Design and the Harvard School of Architecture. In 1936 he became an instructor at the New Bedford Vocational High School. Harold became a local noted landscape artist. In 1964 Harold died at his new home in Mattapoisett, MA. He was married to Alneid Kenworthy.

Robert Bromley

The AGO Settlement

The Attorney General’s Office has settled with Tremblay Bus Co. who will pay fines and court costs because drivers allowed their diesel-powered buses to idle for as much as 20 minutes outside schools in New Bedford in violation of several anti-idling statutes.

Under the settlement, Tremblay agreed to pay a penalty of $100,000 split equally between the Friends of Buttonwood Park and the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center. The park’s share of the funds will go for tree planting and the health center will use its money for youth asthma prevention efforts. The money will be received over the next 18 months and we will have 2 to 3 years to spent it.

The $50,000 will be spent on trees; the identifying of dead and dying trees; their removal and replacement with suitable trees, and on trail work. We will be working in consultation and with the approval of the Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Beaches, the Park Board, the Supervisor of Park Maintenance and the Conservation Commission. We hope to work on the replacement of the cherry trees and the old trees along the park side of Rockdale Avenue.
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Tennis Backboard

The new tennis practice backboard at the Buttonwood Park tennis courts has been completed.

The Friends would like to thank Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School principal project Instructor Frank Goncalves and Instructor Mike Richard for their help in the design of the backboard and in leading the construction and installation of the backboard by a team of Voke students. The backboard is an outstanding piece of work in all respects and is a testament to the quality of education that Voke students receive and the proficiency and pride in work that these fine students demonstrated on this project. We also want to thank Chairman Peter Boswell and the Park Board, Director Mary Rapoza of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Beaches, and Supervisor of Parks Maintenance Justin Ohlson and his men for their support and assistance.

Special thanks to Friend's board member Sharon Pinho for bringing Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School and the Friends together on this project and to Steve Walker, GNBV VT Community Outreach Coordinator, for all his help in coordinating things. Last but not least we wish to thank the members of and donors to the Friends. Without their financial support, projects such as this would not be possible.

We will keep you posted on our plans for celebrating Olmsted 200 (the 200th anniversary of Frederick Law Olmsted’s birth) by email and in our Spring 2022 Newsletter.