

Cylburn Arboretum Friends Nature Education Center Garden



Cylburn at 200 acres is Baltimore's largest public garden and arboretum. Centered around the historic Cylburn mansion (1863), owned by the city, with free admission it is open six days a week. Cylburn Arboretum is enjoyed by more than 40,000 annual visitors including school groups, walkers, gardeners, and workers from a nearby hospital. Cylburn was once the site of the Cylburn Wildflower Preserve and Garden Center and the mansion is now headquarters for the Baltimore Department of Recreation & Parks Horticulture Division.

This green oasis with towering specimen trees, miles of accessible walking trails, and flowering gardens is reached by public transportation, and is walking distance from dense residential areas, which are primarily lower-income and minority communities. In the midst of this beautiful arboretum what Cylburn needs is a nature education center with an outdoor garden classroom—a place to explain it all and a place to learn.

An active support group, Cylburn Arboretum Friends (CAF), a 501(c)(3), is

working to make this happen, rehabilitating a historic carriage house and stable on the grounds. CAF has been given a long-term lease on the property, raised significant funds from many donors at all levels, and after years of planning, broke ground in April 2022. The new Cylburn Arboretum Nature Education Center is now under construction, but funds are still needed to complete the adjacent Garden Classroom. St. George's Garden Club, Zone VI, is proposing the nature education center garden classroom as a worthy beneficiary of the Founders Fund grant. St. George's GC is supported in this nomination by Garden Club of Twenty, Zone VI.

The design for the garden classroom has already been completed and funded to be consistent with the nature center and will introduce visitors to the arboretum's world of trees. The nature education center landscape design by Intregue Design, Inc. won the 2022 Merit Award from the Maryland Chapter-American Society of

Top: Cylburn Arboretum Friends Nature Education Center landscape design by Intregue Design, Inc. won the 2022 Merit Award from the Maryland Chapter-American Society of Landscape Architects for General Design (Unbuilt). Photo by Gay Legg

Bottom left: Cylburn encourages a sense of wonder. How big can a tree be? Photo courtesy Cylburn Arboretum Friends by Erika Castillo

Bottom right: Day camp at Cylburn Arboretum opens up a hidden world of trees. Photo courtesy of Cylburn Arboretum Friends by Erika Castillo



Proposed by: St. George’s Garden Club, Zone VI

Seconded by: Garden Club of Twenty, Zone VI

Landscape Architects for General Design (Unbuilt).

The Founders Fund grant will be dedicated to providing regionally appropriate, native-plant material and trees for the garden. For kids who may have only seen street trees, this garden will serve as a sort of launch pad before they enter the woodland. It will include benches made from recycled arboretum wood and hammocks designed to encourage looking up at the tree canopy beneath a large, existing catalpa tree. The design includes a stormwater plan mitigating runoff into the nearby Jones Falls stream, which flows into the Chesapeake Bay.

The space is essential for larger school groups and day camps. St. George’s GC members look forward to working on installation of the plant material and the new signage for exhibits. We are confident

in the partnership with CAF whose leadership includes GCA club members, along with volunteer gardeners and docents working with city horticulturalists. We believe that the Founders Fund grant will enable the nature education center garden classroom to make a significant contribution to enhancing the experience of school groups and visitors, highlighting the importance of the arboretum’s trees.

The City of Baltimore is in full support of the new Cylburn Arboretum Nature Education Center and Garden Classroom.

Bottom left: Cylburn mansion in the middle of 200 acres of beautiful trees. Photo courtesy of Cylburn Arboretum Friends by Brooke Fritz

Bottom right: The carriage house under construction to become Cylburn Arboretum Friends Nature Education Center. The Garden Classroom will be adjacent. Photo by Gay Legg

Below: Cylburn has miles of paths into the greenwood. Photo courtesy of Cylburn Arboretum Friends by Brooke Fritz

