

Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society
City Operations Report to the 2022 AGM
Review of 2021

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With a year of pandemic protocols under our belt it was nice to see the restrictions ease during 2021. However, weather was one of the biggest factors for us with heat domes and atmospheric rivers, terms many of us had never heard before. Our staff worked through it all and the garden came out showing few signs of damage.

Projects:

With regards to projects, we did several pathway improvements in addition to regular repairs in 2021.

- A definite highlight was the redevelopment of Gunnera Walk (around beds 11 & 12). The construction of the stone wall along the path made it possible to widen the path, while updating the existing decayed wood retaining wall. The result is a continuous route through the garden for cart tours as well as a separate cart and pedestrian route during large events.
- The Native Loop (around bed 7n) also saw changes; we rerouted the path to reduce the grade and as a result expanded the Loop. We had had reports of slippery conditions on the original path in the section that has now been re-adapted with plantings.
- We raised the pathway at the bottom of the Nut Orchard, completing this project. The new plantings in the Nut Orchard are growing nicely, the disease resistant cultivars have taken off.
- Work improvements continue in the area around the old works yard shed. Plantings were added to bed 74, the new numbered bed to the south as you first pass through the gates from the 170th St. parking lot. Thank you to the collections committee for their tireless work planting our new acquisitions here (and elsewhere in the garden). The historic wrought iron "Dartshill" sign, originally from the main driveway leading to the house, was re-conditioned and re-installed, at this location. Plans for the elevated pathway through the forested area were delayed due to cost considerations; however, we will be continuing with this work in 2022.

Partners in Parks:

- To accompany the physical changes in the garden our Park Partnership team worked hard to modify the programming of the garden to suit Covid protocols. In 2021, we had a total of 4250 visitors. The number reflects Covid restrictions and extreme weather events, noted above.
- We were able to host a Sounds of Summer event in late August and five Music in the Garden Strolls that were well-received by the public.
- In the fall, we saw a positive trend towards visitor numbers that paralleled those we saw in 2019. We are hoping that this is an indication of what 2022 will hold.
- In the late fall of 2021, we piloted a city-run volunteer event in the Maple Meadows area, assisting with weeding of the wildflower beds. It was such a success that we are rolling out volunteer events once a month throughout the year. We found that this was a wonderful way of raising the profile of the garden, with a few of the volunteers becoming members.
- We are working to develop the program to provide an educational component for the volunteers, keeping them engaged throughout the year. Any members who are interested in assisting are most welcome and can contact myself for more information.

Looking to 2022:

- Projects for 2022 include on-going improvements and additions to the drainage, irrigation, and collection.
- We will be developing a signage plan to assist with the implementation and development of a cohesive suite of informational and directional signage.
- This spring you will see improvements coming to the shack and the area where the crevice troughs were placed. This work was delayed due to weather last fall.
- In August we will be moving forward with development of the elevated path into the garden. Preliminary work will commence this month.
- One of the more innovative projects we will be working towards is a virtual tour in the garden utilizing historical video footage of Mrs. Darts talking about the different plants in the garden. I look forward to seeing what she recommends.

It should be an interesting and progressive year ahead.