

RESIDENT CURATOR PROGRAM – MARGARET WHITE GARDENS

July 27, 2021 PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

MEETING SUMMARY

A public meeting was held at Green Spring Gardens on July 27, 2021 to introduce the community to the Resident Curator Program and the Margaret White Gardens property as a candidate for the program. The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. and was facilitated by Judy Pedersen, Public Information Officer, FCPA. The names of 10 attendees were captured on the sign-in sheet. Also in attendance were:

- Ron Kendall, Park Authority Board Member, Mount Vernon District
- Mary Olien, FCPA, Site Operations Manager
- Judy Zatsick, FCPA, Green Spring Gardens, Site Manager
- Hanna Kras, FCPA, Public Information Office
- Joe Jasper, FCPA, Public Information Office
- Stephanie Langton, FCPA, Resident Curator Program Manager

OPENING REMARKS & INTRODUCTIONS

Judy Pedersen welcomed all in attendance and introduced Park Authority staff. She explained that the meeting's purpose was to discuss the curator program and the Margaret White Gardens property's potential as a Resident Curator property.

PRESENTATION

Stephanie Langton took the podium to discuss the Resident Curator Program. The PowerPoint presentation began with a brief background on the program, including its basic requirements and the status of the properties involved in the program currently. Next, she presented an overview of the application and curator selection process, describing the steps in the application process and the criteria for evaluating the eligibility of applicants. Ms. Langton then focused specifically on the White Gardens property. She reviewed the John C. and Margaret K. White Horticultural Park's 2006 Master Plan, provided a brief history of the site, shared an overview of recent improvements undertaken on the house and grounds and discussed the potential for its use as a residential property in the Resident Curator Program. To conclude, Ms. Langton announced the open house scheduled for Saturday, August 7, 2021, from 10am to 2pm. The Invitation to submit applications and application package will be made available on the Resident Curator Program website in August.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

At the end of the presentation, Ms. Pedersen opened the floor for questions from the audience.

It was asked how residential use of the house would affect access to the park. Ms. Langton indicated that unlike other curator sites that are able to provide more land in the curator lease, the leased property at White Gardens would be a much smaller boundary around the house. Ms. Langton noted that the deed and master plan do allow the house to be rented for residential use as long as any revenue produced is used for park purposes. Use of the park would continue without interference.

It was asked how residential curatorship of the house would affect the ability of groups to organize small events on site. Ms. Pedersen noted the Park Authority's permitting process which allows for events on park properties depending on location, size of the group and activity.

Several questions were asked about the management of the natural resources at the property. Ms. Langton indicated that the resident curator program is focused on the historic structures. If applicants are interested in contributing to the natural resource management, they can propose activities for consideration in their application submission. Mary Olien noted that Green Spring Gardens staff is planning to re-establish volunteer workdays at White Gardens and to stay tuned for opportunities in the spring. Resident Curator Program staff and Green Spring Gardens staff have been in communication on how the resident curator program can move forward on the property so as not to interfere with access to the horticultural collection.

Ms. Olien addressed the budget for park natural resource management, including support from the general fund and for parks like Green Spring Gardens, revenue programs as well. With limited resources to carry out all desired maintenance and improvements, staff also rely on volunteer support.

Ms. Langton answered a few questions on the logistics of the application and evaluation process. In addition to the open house event on August 7th, potential applicants are welcome to work with RCP staff to schedule tours of the house. When the 60 calendar-day application period is over, the evaluation process will occur over a period of at least 3 months, including a 30 day public comment period, and once the curator is selected, the leasing process will take at least 6-9 months. Applicants are able to request copies of redacted application submissions that have been successful in the program.

Curators are responsible for all costs associated with the rehabilitation and maintenance of the property, including materials, equipment rentals, and contractor costs. Curators are responsible for identifying and procuring contractors in accordance with program requirements. The curator's sweat equity is also credited towards the curator's overall financial investment.

While non-profit uses are considered for other properties within the Resident Curator Program, staff will only accept applications for residential use of the White Gardens house. Curator

maintenance of and improvements to the barn at White Gardens is not required. However, if the applicant is interested in using the barn and incorporating it into the leased curator property, there will be an opportunity in the application package to propose curator responsibilities and improvements.

Designated curator parking will be limited to two parking spaces, with areas considered during lease negotiations for the parking of the curator's visitors as well.

With no additional questions, Ms. Pedersen thanked everyone for attending and invited guests to call or email if they develop any questions in the future. The meeting concluded at 7:50 p.m.