



Media Contact: Therese Fuerst, Fuerst Consulting Corp., 716.200.3593

[Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Launches the South Park Arboretum Restoration Project](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Expert Panel Provides Community with Highlights of the Restoration Project

(Buffalo, NY – *April 27, 2018*) – The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, the first nonprofit organization in the nation to manage and operate an entire urban park system, gathered today at the Margaret L. Wendt Archive and Resource Center at Forest Lawn to launch the South Park Arboretum Restoration Project. The public event was a part of Olmsted-ucation Week, a key component of this year’s 150th Celebration of Olmsted in Buffalo. Moderated by David Colligan, local attorney and philanthropist, national expert panelists included Dr. Ned Friedman, Director, Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University; Lucy Lawliss, Chairwoman, National Association for Olmsted Parks; Doug Blonsky, Former CEO & President, Central Park Conservancy; and Kyle Zick, ASLA, South Park Arboretum Consultant, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture.

“The historic return of the South Park Arboretum is a critical mission-centered step in restoring Olmsted’s vision for our park system,” said Stephanie Crockatt, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Executive Director. “The results of the feasibility study indicate that this arboretum effort can be partially restored in the short term to serve the community, while providing additional educational opportunities, improving the natural environment, and becoming a regional cultural asset. With few actual Olmsted designed arboreta in existence, the South Park Arboretum has the potential to attract many visitors from beyond the Buffalo-Niagara region. We have all the original Olmsted plans, details and plant collections identified and ready to implement, and we welcome the support of the public as this is an important investment with tangible and intangible benefits lasting generations.”

In 1901, during the Pan American Exposition, Buffalo was celebrated not only as the City of Light, but also the City of Trees due to Frederick Law Olmsted’s visionary design of the nation’s first urban park system here in Buffalo. Included in his designs was an impressive arboretum - an outdoor museum of trees - to be integrated into South Park for education and enjoyment. Sitting on 156 acres, complete with a large lake, tree-studded meadow, winding carriage drive and pedestrian paths, this extraordinary green space provided park visitors with a unique experience – the opportunity to connect with nature while developing a growing understanding and appreciation for trees, shrubs and aquatic collections.

Today, arboretums provide outdoor opportunities for education programming, scientific research and environmental conservation. They are attractions for families, organizations and tourists, while contributing inherently to water, soil and air quality, as well as wildlife and pollinators. These values all add to community quality of life, health, and the economy.

-more-

“The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy should be applauded for its steadfast belief in Olmsted’s vision,” stated Dr. Friedman. “Living tree collections not only beautify their landscapes, but also hold nearly unlimited potential to unlock the secrets of evolution, predict the effects of climate change, tell stories about the history of landscape and humankind, and offer the community an opportunity to study and appreciate botany hands-on, forever impacting the lives of residents and most definitely young people in Buffalo.”

Construction of South Park occurred largely between 1894 and 1900. During that time more than 100,000 trees and woody plants were incorporated into the landscape, including collections for Oak, Walnut, Linden, Maple, Sumac as well as a diverse collection of evergreens and conifers, and many other tree varieties. The development plans for South Park included a botanical conservatory, which was built by 1905. However as early as 1915 modern park features, like a baseball field and 9-hole golf course were being added, altering Olmsted’s plan.

“The value of the restoration of Olmsted’s Arboretum in South Park is priceless,” stated Richard Griffin, Conservancy Trustee and co-leader of the South Park Arboretum Restoration Project. “I am passionate about the life that trees breathe into a community and that passion is also shared by my counterpart on this project, David Colligan. We believe in Olmsted’s vision and are personally invested in what we know will be a treasure for the region. We currently have a once in a lifetime opportunity to restore environmental and historic integrity to South Park, to return its glory through the development of the Arboretum.”

To download the complete study and learn more about this exciting restoration, please visit www.bfloparks.org/SPARP. For more information on the 150th celebration and to learn more about the history of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System please visit www.bfloparks.org/150.

###

About the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy:

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy is the first nonprofit organization in the nation to manage and operate an entire urban park system that consists of 850 acres of beautifully designed historic parks, parkways and circles. Celebrating 150 years of Olmsted in Buffalo, The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy is a not-for-profit, membership-based, community organization whose mission is to promote, preserve, restore, enhance, and maintain the Frederick Law Olmsted-designed parks and parkways in the Greater Buffalo area for current and future generations. More than 2.5 million people use Buffalo’s historic, award-winning Olmsted Park system annually for recreation, relaxation and rejuvenation. The parks were designed by America’s first landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted more than 148 years ago. Basic maintenance of the parks has been greatly improved since the 2004 groundbreaking public-private agreement with the City of Buffalo and Erie County. Since that time, the Olmsted Parks Conservancy, now partnering with the City of Buffalo, has retained full responsibility for the management and care of these green spaces which are listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Most recently, the American Planning Association recognized Delaware Park as one of the 2014 Great Places in America and The Guardian named the Olmsted park system as one of the best park systems in the world. www.bfloparks.org
The Buffalo Olmsted Park System includes:

Six parks: Cazenovia Park in South Buffalo, Delaware Park in Delaware/Parkside District, Front Park at the Peace Bridge, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park at Fillmore Avenue, Riverside Park at Niagara and Tonawanda Street, and South Park at McKinley Parkway. Seven parkways: Bidwell, Chapin, Lincoln, McKinley, Porter, Red Jacket, and Richmond. Eight landscaped traffic circles: Agassiz, Colonial, Ferry, Gates, McClellan, McKinley, Soldiers, and Symphony