

Whetstone Park Summary

Addresses

Park & Community Center: 3923 North High Street

Maintenance Building: 4015 Olentangy Blvd.

Park of Roses: 3923 North High Street

Park of Roses Shelterhouse: 3901 North High St

Parcel ID(s) 010-071202, 010087449

Total Acreage 148.887 acres

Description

Whetstone Park is an approximately 148 acre park located off of High Street at Hollenback Drive. Most of the property was purchased by the City in 1944, and Whetstone Park opened in 1950. Much of the park is developed for recreational use (soccer fields, tennis courts, library, bike trail, rose garden). There is significant acreage of forest most of which is in the form of riparian corridor. The park is bisected by Adena Brook, which flows into the Olentangy River on the west side of the property.

Background Info

- The land of Whetstone Park was historically used for farmland. The area was Clinton Township, so it became known as Clintonville.
- 1944: Original parcel acquired from John Rankin, Dorothy Peters Eis, and Earl Peters: 5/29/1944 – 106.305 acres, Ordinance No. 146-44, \$75,000.
- 1949: The name “Whetstone” was proposed by petition and sponsored by the Clintonville Women’s Club in 1949. The name’s origin is the name European settlers gave to the Olentangy River for the whetstones they found at the river. The Ohio General Assembly renamed the river Olentangy River in 1833 (the indigenous name for the river).
- 1950: The Clintonville Community Council, upon receiving the petition, dedicated the park as Whetstone Park.
- 1950: the City sold a parcel of land along High Street to Third Church of Christ Scientist (2.387 acres) and a small parcel in 1966 (.066 ac) – total of 2.453 acres.
- 1952: Columbus City Council issued \$205,000 in bonds to construct the Park of Roses (35 acres of Whetstone Park—13.5 acres of rose gardens and the rest ravine and woods).
- 1952: The Columbus Rose Commission was formed to plan and execute the garden. Clintonville Woman’s Club purchased a 1.769 parcel of land (May 9, 1952, Ordinance No. 191-52, 2/18/1952), north of recreation center.
- 1953: Park of Roses opened and dedicated.
- 1955: Several parcels of additional parkland were acquired north and south of the park, providing an additional 39.67 acres.
- 1956: Whetstone Recreation Center built.
- 1958: City sold 0.314 acres to the Calvary Bible Church for parking.

- 1960: 20' access easement granted to Clintonville Woman's Club and the Kiwanis Club of Northern Columbus (Ord No. 1076-60, Sept. 19. 1960), from High St to their property. A 5' utility easement adjacent to access easement was granted. (ord, No. 1034-64, 9/14/1964). A landscape easement (.090 ac) was granted to Clintonville Woman's Club in 1966, along north side of their entrance drive for "the sole purpose of conducting appropriate and proper landscape practices thereon, to preserve the natural beauty of said area".
- 1962: City sold 1.158 acres to the Board of Education of the City School District of Columbus, Ohio. Ordinance 519-62, passed 4/16.62.
- 1978: Barber Roselea Senior Center opened.
- 1983: 2.816 acres leased to the Public Library of Columbus and Franklin County, as well as non-exclusive easement for utilities and access, via Hollenbach Drive, for the following 40 years (1983-2023).
- 1985: Whetstone Branch of Columbus Metropolitan Library opened.
- 2002: Whetstone Park of Roses Shelter Site improvements: renovate plaza around shelter: bike rack, kiosk, ash cans, asphalt concrete paving, light posts, metal panel roofing improvements, bollards
- 2007: A prescribed burn was conducted on the 4.5 acre prairie.
- 2009: Barber Roselea Senior Center demolished (contract with S.G. Loewendick & Sons, Inc.) for \$50,000. The senior groups were relocated to the Whetstone Recreation Center.
- 2010: Prairie was burned again.

Amenities: 6 ball diamonds, 11 tennis courts, Park of Roses Shelter House, the Whetstone Community Center, the Whetstone Branch Library, Park of Roses gazebo (original bandstand from Fort Hayes, 1878), 6 soccer fields, football fields, and 2 outdoor playgrounds.

Current Use

- Park of Roses
- Adena Brook (OSU studies on stream quality)
- Library (Lease with the Public Library of Columbus and Franklin County, 1983, for 40 years)
- Bike shelter (2012 MOU with Department of Public Service—DPS paid to construct and maintain, will pay for future removal)
- Joint agreement with: Clintonville, Inc., CRPD, and the State of Ohio Board of Regents to coordinate internet access, June 2013, for 3 years (June 2016).
- Prairie: maintained by Whetstone Prairie Stewards, burned in 2007 and 2010
- MOU with North Columbus Intramural League (NCIL) Baseball and Softball Organization, 12/08/15. NCIL will pay for the use of diamond 1 & 2 at Whetstone. Original MOU was for 5 years (2016-2020). The MOU was amended on 4/23/17 and extended for the following 10 years 2017-2027).

Natural Resources

(Species observed in 2003 Bioblitz)

- Special interest: Blue grosbeak, Black-throated blue warbler, Mourning warbler.
- Species of Concern: Wavy Rayed Lamp Mussel, Elktote
- Potentially Threatened: Ohio Goldenrod

Future Use/Management

Habitat Management:

- Prairie: maintain prairie with open burns.
- Mature Hardwood Forest: This area of approximately 6 acres in size is located on the bluffs of Adena Brook. The best management practice for mature forests is to allow natural succession to maintain the quality habitat. Invasive species are a major problem throughout the park.
- Riparian Corridor: This 42 acre area is located adjacent to Adena Brook and the Olentangy River. Riparian corridors are essential in maintaining good water quality in streams by controlling erosion and pollution into the river. The best management practice would be to allow the forest to do its job by not impacting it in anyway. This is the most significant natural feature of the park providing homes to nesting birds such as: Baltimore Oriole, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Cooper's Hawk, Eastern Wood-pewee, Great-crested Flycatcher, Orchard Oriole, Red-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Wood Thrush, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Yellow-throated Warbler.
- Controlled Succession: Approximately 9 acres are to be managed as controlled succession. Much of these areas have been seeded with native species of wildflowers. Management would consist of invasive removal and annual mowing to keep back woody invaders.
- Successional Hardwoods: The rest of the natural area (~11 acres) in the park falls under this classification. These areas will be allowed to mature and become a part of the mature forest. Invasive are to be controlled if feasible Birds that depend on these habitats include Carolina Wren, Gray Catbird, and Indigo Bunting.

Researched in March 2018 by Rosalie Hendon, Planning & Design.