

Clark Park Construction to Begin

By Frank L. Chance, President, Friends of Clark Park

After years of community discussion, the long-awaited revitalization of northern Clark Park will begin the week of August 9. Funded by grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the City of Philadelphia, the plans for this reworking of “A Park” (from Baltimore Avenue to Chester Avenue, and from near 43rd Street to the HMS School) were developed by Studio/Bryan Hanes under the direction of the Friends of Clark Park, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, and the other community organizations that make up the Clark Park Partnership. Major supporters of the planning process include the University City District, State Senator Anthony Hardy Williams, State Representative James Roebuck, and donors to PARC, the Park A Revitalization Campaign of the Friends of Clark Park.

Philadelphia Public Property, with oversight from Parks & Recreation, will manage the construction through general contractor Donato Spaventa. The main goal is to improve drainage in A Park, so that more storm water will be captured while less remains on the surface in the form of mud puddles. Some walkways will be rerouted, and the central plaza around the flagpole expanded, but finished with gravel beds to allow rainwater retention. The wiring of the lighting system will also be replaced, and new lights added to create a generally higher level of nighttime illumination. After the major work is completed, a separate grant administered by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society will provide plantings to create a series of garden niches along the west end of Park A, creating quiet spaces even when the central area is busy with events.

We expect the construction to be completed by the end of November, and that A Park will be ready for full normal usage again in the spring of 2011. We expect the Farmers Market to continue along 43rd Street during the construction. Events scheduled for A Park, such as the August, September, and October Uhuru Flea Markets, will be moved to B Park, south of Chester Avenue. Please feel free to contact FoCP President Frank Chance, at 215-551-8186 or friends@ClarkPark.info, or Philadelphia Parks & Recreation representative Barbara McCabe, at Barbara.McCabe@Phila.gov, if you have any questions.

The Friends of Clark Park and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation apologize in advance for any inconvenience that this construction might cause. Thank you for your continued support of Philadelphia's parks.