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**PLANTING FIELDS FOUNDATION AND NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ANNOUNCE IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Oyster Bay, New York** – Planting Fields Foundation (“the Foundation”) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (“NYS Parks”) are pleased to announce that implementation of the recommendations from the Planting Fields Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), completed at the end of 2019, will commence in March 2020.

Exactly one year ago the Foundation engaged Heritage Landscapes LLC, a preeminent firm in the field of landscape preservation and stewardship with experience consulting on over fifty Olmsted landscape preservation projects throughout the United States. Heritage Landscapes developed the CLR for Planting Fields, which not only identifies the historic precedent and significance of the landscape, but also sets forth a preservation and management philosophy to inform ongoing landscape stewardship. The report caps off more than a decade of work and collaboration between the Foundation and NYS Parks that originated with the Planting Fields Master Plan, published in 1993. At the end of 2019, the Heritage Landscapes led CLR earned the **Merit Award for Landscape Planning & Analysis** in the 2019 Connecticut ASLA Professional Awards competition.

The CLR has recommended nine (9) early action steps, the first of which calls for the restoration of the Beech Copse, a central Olmsted Brothers design element located on the East Lawn. On March 28th, the Long Island Arboricultural Association (LIAA) has arranged for 100 of its members to spend an entire day to remove 15 mostly diseased beech trees, an imperative and unavoidable preventive measure to protect surrounding, healthy plant life. A few weeks later, beginning on April 22nd, Earth Day, and culminating with the Arbor Day Family Festival on April 25th and 26th, 22 new beech trees will be replanted in the same area by a volunteer team from Wonderland Tree Care.

As Patricia O’Donnell of Heritage Landscapes explains, “This deeply researched historic designed landscape report provides a basis for action to enhance the grace, beauty and horticultural interest of the Planting Fields landscape. As an early project, the replanting of the Beech Copse is a significant step toward renewal. Today this feature, specifically requested by W.R. Coe after seeing copses in England, is much degraded. The trees were planted small and grew up together in a cluster. Removing the remaining declining trees and planting new ones gives us the opportunity to see this unique feature grow back, taking its central place in the scenery of Planting Fields lawn once again.”

Planting Fields Foundation and NYS Parks are working collaboratively on other early action steps outlined in the report, such as improvements to sitewide wayfinding and interpretive signage needs, with the goal of implementation by the end of 2020. Other early action steps include the restoration of the Main Entrance Drive, the Heather Garden rehabilitation and rehabilitation of the Carshalton Gates and Drive Landscape.

“With the completion of the CLR, we now have a clear roadmap for reasonably preserving and enhancing the property’s pre- and post-Coe family era landscape features,” states Gina Wouters, Executive Director, Planting Fields Foundation. “These recommendations encourage us to carefully consider the property’s natural heritage value as part of a contemporary and evolving urban landscape. We believe these goals support the long-term preservation of the historic Olmsted landscape while providing opportunities for a more holistic visitor experience at Planting Fields and a more sustainable future.”

Adds Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park Director, Vincent Simeone, “The collaboration between the Planting Fields Foundation, NYS Parks and Heritage Landscapes is a pivotal moment that will have significant long-term benefits to the Arboretum.  Preserving the integrity of the historic landscape and its integration with the more contemporary hardy and non-hardy plant collections is vital in keeping Planting Fields sustainable and relevant.  Planting Fields is an oasis for public horticulture, landscape design, history and architecture and the CLR will help us meet both our short- and long-term goals in preserving and protecting these features.”

**About Planting Fields Foundation**

Planting Fields Foundation preserves and interprets Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park as the premier public garden and Gold Coast estate for today and tomorrow while creating enriching experiences for the visiting public. Founded in 1952 by William R. Coe, the Foundation is a not for profit public educational foundation chartered by the New York State Board of Regents and tax exempt under the status for a 501C3 organization. Located in Oyster Bay, New York and originally landscaped by the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, the Arboretum grounds feature 409 acres of greenhouses, rolling lawns, formal gardens, woodland paths and outstanding plant collections.  The original historic estate buildings remain intact including Coe Hall, a 65-room Tudor Revival mansion designed by Walker & Gillette.  The interior of the house is a showcase of artistry and craftsmanship and features a distinctly American aesthetic through original ironwork commissions by Samuel Yellin and murals painted by artists Robert Winthrop Chanler and Everett Shinn.  Planting Fields is included in the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of the Nation’s historic sites worthy of preservation.

**About New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversees more than 250 parks, historic sites, recreational trails, golf courses, boat launches and more, which are visited by 74 million people annually. For more information on any of these recreation areas, call 518-474-0456 or visit [www.parks.ny.gov](http://www.parks.ny.gov), connect with us on [Facebook](https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=236a5cc0-7f4eaaa1-2368a5f5-0cc47a6d17e0-78703cfaaadf08c3&q=1&e=c2c0aa58-c70f-4fc1-a4f0-4a7c2da085c3&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fnystateparks), or follow on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/nystateparks/) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/NYstateparks).

**About Heritage Landscapes LLC**Heritage Landscapes LLC is a national and international leader in revitalizing heritage landscape assets and sustaining communities. Celebrating 32 years of exceptional work, Heritage Landscapes LLC is a woman-owned professional firm and small business with offices in Charlotte, VT and Norwalk, CT. Since 1987, we have focused on culturally valuable landscapes and communities completing over 500 successful projects, including 112 cultural landscape studies, for National Register, Landmark and World Heritage sites, to garner 89 professional awards. Our body of work encompasses the diversity of local, state, national and international heritage assets with a focus on cultural landscapes.

**About Wonderland Tree Care, Inc.**

Wonderland Tree Care is a professional tree care company that has been serving residential and commercial properties on the North Shore of Long Island, NY for nearly 40 years. Since 1979, Wonderland has built a positive reputation for combining quality and environmentally responsible tree care practices with superior customer service. We are dedicated to increasing the appreciation of trees and educating the public about proper tree care and management based on “Best Practices” standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

**About LIAA**

In 1988, the Long Island Arboricultural Association, Inc. became a not-for-profit, non-partisan, and non-political New York State corporation formed for educational and scientific purposes. In addition to the professional arborists who began the group, membership has increased to include students, educators, municipal workers, and other concerned individuals. Its goals have also expanded. Today, the Long Island Arboricultural Association, Inc. strives to stimulate interest by teaching proper planting and preservation, educating the public, encouraging research for the adequate protection of trees and shrubs, and promoting the use of efficient and proper arboricultural methods.