

The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside

Stewards of the land and Olmsted's plan

Winter 2022 Newsletter

Our Mission

The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside is dedicated to sustaining Olmsted's vision for Riverside for generations to come. Its members are guided by Olmsted's concern for humanity, nature, sense of community, and the innovative and thoughtful essence of his work.

The Olmsted Society invites residents and visitors to join us in learning, protecting the environment, and preserving our cultural and physical heritage.

Upcoming Events

1/20/23: 7 PM at Riverside Train Station

- [Annual Meeting](#)
- [Presentation](#): *Modern Again! The Benda House & Garden in Riverside, 1938-2022* with Serge Ambrose & Michelangelo Sabatino

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Nominations for FLOS Board of Directors

The Nominating Committee of the Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside is pleased to announce the following candidates for the society's Board of Directors:

Officers

(One-year term)

- President: Dr. Yvonne Lucero
- Vice-President: Jim Petrzilka
- Secretary: Susan Worthington
- Treasurer: Kim Freeark

Renewing Directors

(Three-year term)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Flassing • Trisha Flassing • Kim Freeark • Constance Guardi • Thomas Guardi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cathy Maloney • Mike Maloney • Tim Ozga • Susan Worthington |
|---|--|

New Directors

(Three-year term)

- Richard Marritt
- Steve Oldham

Officers and new board members will be elected, and renewing board members will be confirmed at the Olmsted Society's Annual Meeting on January 20, 2023.

The 2022 Nominating Committee included Serge Ambrose, Constance Guardi, Lisa Lambros, Michelangelo Sabatino and Erin Wieland.

Annual Meeting

Friday, January 20, 2023, at 7 PM at the Riverside Train Station

To kick off 2023, we will host our Annual Meeting on Friday, January 20, 7:00 PM, at the Riverside Train Station. All are welcome.

Following the business portion of the meeting, Serge Ambrose and Michelangelo Sabatino will present, *Modern Again! The Benda House & Garden in Riverside, 1938-2022*

There will be a Membership Table where you can join the Olmsted Society or pay your annual dues.

Refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you!



Annual Meeting Presentation

Modern Again! The Benda House & Garden in Riverside, 1938-2022

Friday, January 20, 2023, at the Riverside Train Station following the Annual Meeting

Co-owners Serge Ambrose and Michelangelo Sabatino share their journey of preservation and perseverance in bringing back the original atmosphere of a modern house. Their addition of a new landscape garden re-establishes the relationship between nature and modern architecture while extending Olmsted and Vaux’s vision for Riverside.

Michelangelo Sabatino is an architectural historian, curator, and preservationist whose research and writing focuses primarily on modern architecture and the built environment. He is Professor of Architectural History and Preservation at IIT’s College of Architecture where he directs the PhD program and is the inaugural John Vinci Distinguished Research Fellow.

Serge Ambrose trained as an architect and engineer and is focused on contemporary design and the preservation of modern architectural heritage. Serge served as a commissioner on the Riverside Historical Commission and as the Docomomo US/Chicago Board Chair from 2016-2020.

The program is offered through the FLOS presentations committee.



Michelangelo Sabatino (left) and Serge Ambrose on the roof-top deck of the International Style Benda House in Riverside. Photo by Alex Rogals.

FLOS 2022 Preservation Award

Owners’ Efforts at the Benda House & Garden Recognized

The 2022 FLOS Preservation Award is presented to Serge Ambrose and Michelangelo Sabatino for their work on the Sylvia Valha and Francis J. Benda House and Garden (1939) by Winston Elting, Architect and Arvid H. Viren, Builder.



The Benda House and garden. Photo by Serge Ambrose.

This 1930s International Style house was beautifully restored by its owners (one trained as an architect/engineer and the other as an architect/historian), and their collaborators. Although there are a number of significant 1930s International Style houses located throughout Chicagoland’s villages and cities, the Benda House is arguably the only International Style building realized in Riverside as well as one of the very few in the Western Suburbs. The addition of a new landscape garden re-establishes the relationship between nature and this modern house while extending Olmsted and Vaux’s vision for Riverside. This award coincides with the 200th anniversary of Olmsted’s birth and the celebration of his living legacy.



Tributes & Trees Program

Linda LaBelle & Sandie Petrzilka
Tributes & Trees Co-Chairs

Thanks to our donors, new tools will be purchased to maintain our Riverside landscape. There is a dire need for hand saw replacement blades, loppers, and safety glasses since these tools are a necessity on [landscape workdays](#).

All funds raised from Tributes & Trees are used to enhance our many parks, whether it be plantings, maintenance, or equipment. Please consider donating to recognize someone special and help us keep Riverside green.

See the [Tributes & Trees Program page](#) on the FLOS website for more details. If you have any questions, contact tributes@olmstedsociety.org.

Tributes & Trees Remembers

In memory of Willa Carr

Donors: *Constance & Thomas Guardi*

In memory of Pauletta Saxon

Donors: *Constance & Thomas Guardi*

In memory of Gregory Klein

Donors: *Constance & Thomas Guardi*

Tributes & Trees Congratulates

Jim & Sandie Petrzilka “Congratulations and Happy 50th Wedding Anniversary! Wishing both of you all the best!”

Donors: *Linda & Rick LaBelle*



Longcommon Road late on a snowy afternoon.
Photo by Cindy Kellogg.



2022 Year in Review



Olmsted 200

April 26, 2022 was the 200th anniversary of Frederick Law Olmsted's birth and organizations dedicated to his legacy held *Olmsted 200* events. FLOS marked the occasion with a birthday party at the Riverside Train Station and a presentation of a botanical box to the Riverside Public Library. The box displays native plants seeds gathered at FLOS seed collection events.



Olmsted Overlook

On Saturday, April 23 FLOS members and friends planted a grove of 20 native trees to create the *Olmsted Overlook*. The grove, located along the Des Plaines River atop the Swan Pond bluff, commemorates the 200th birthday of Olmsted. A bench, gifted to FLOS by the Village of Riverside, will be dedicated next spring.

Walking Tours

115 people attended our regular monthly walking tours. 110 St. Mary, Blythe and Ames School students with parents and teachers toured by foot or trolley. Special tours included RB High School alumni in town for a reunion, Plymouth Place Seniors on a trolley tour, and a family of 10. Our 2022 Tours brought in \$2,500, exceeding our expectations.



HopStop

In September, the popular community beer festival returned to the Riverside Train Station and was extended into Guthrie Park. 660 advance tickets were sold. Over a dozen purveyors of beer, cider, mead, and spirits were on hand to pour.



Landscape Workdays

FLOS held 11 workdays in seven locations around town for a total of 318 volunteer hours this year. That's labor valued at \$9,524.10. FLOS also made \$5,390.38 in monetary donations to the Village of Riverside.



And More...

- 120 students participated in our annual Poetry Contest
- In July, the Vintage Baseball Game drew a record crowd
- FLOS funded a local Girl Scout's Gold Star project to improve Riverside landscape
- Spencer Cortwright (naturalist), Laurence Cotton (Olmsted biographer and filmmaker), and Pat Cannon (architectural historian) gave in-person presentations
- FLOS donated books to the Riverside Public Library's Olmsted Collection

Big Head Fred

This Fall, the National Association of Olmsted Parks lent FLOS the Big Head Fred costume. The Olmsted caricature made appearances at HopStop, the Farmers Market and Riverside Schools.



The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside is a registered 501c3 organization. The Society is dedicated to sustaining Olmsted’s vision for Riverside for generations to come. Its members are guided by his concern for humanity, nature, sense of community, and the innovative and thoughtful essence of his work.

The Olmsted Society invites residents and visitors to join us in learning, protecting the environment, and preserving our cultural and physical heritage. Subscribe to our newsletter by emailing us at: newsletter@olmstedsociety.org

Check out our online resources for information on upcoming events:

 facebook.com/RiversideFLOS


 olmstedsociety.org

Please consider renewing your membership or becoming a member. Membership is open to all interested individuals for a minimum \$35.00 tax-deductible contribution by check or you can subscribe or renew online:

[FLOS Membership Renewal Form](#)

If you prefer print and mail the form below to:
Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside
PO Box 65
Riverside, Illinois 60546

Thank you for your continued support!



BECOME A MEMBER OF THE FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED SOCIETY OF RIVERSIDE

Founded in 1968, the Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the original plan for Riverside. The town was developed in 1868 by Landscape Architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his business partner Calvert Vaux.

Membership is open to all interested individuals for the current calendar year (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31), and is tax deductible. It includes your immediate family members living in your household. Please return this form with your **check payable to the Frederick Law Olmsted Society PO Box 65, Riverside, IL 60546** or join online at www.olmstedsociety.org and select the Membership tab.

<p>MEMBERSHIP:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reliable Redbud</i> \$35-\$49 \$ _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Hearty Hickory</i> \$50-\$124 \$ _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Sugar Maple</i> \$125-\$249 \$ _____ (includes 2 walking tour tickets)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mighty Oak</i> \$250 + \$ _____ (includes 4 walking tour tickets)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New Member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Renewal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gift Membership</p>	<p>COMMITTEES: <i>Put your talent to work & your energy to good use by joining a committee!</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Architecture</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Education & Tours</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising events:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Hop Stop</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Housewalk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4th of July Parade Float</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Workdays</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Library</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Membership</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Website</p>
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Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I wish to receive a receipt for my tax deductible donation