

The Garden District

13th District Alderman

Terry L. Witkowski



Dear Neighbors,

The Garden District is in full bloom. This year, an international expert on the aerotropolis concept spoke to groups in our area and explained curb appeal is one of the most important elements of creating a city's first impression. Visitors may arrive from many highway entries (Hwy. 38, 241, I-94, I-894 and I-43), but we also host an international airport. We are Milwaukee's front door and our Garden District has worked hard to create that visual appeal. In a communication to the Common Council, the Garden District explained its vision.

"Neighborhoods filled with residential gardens and commercial districts lined with inviting landscaping play an important factor in keeping a community strong, vibrant, safe and a desirable place to live, work and play. Gardening brings people outdoors and into contact with one another. When neighbors connect, they develop relationships that grow a strong community.

Beautification contributes to quality of life and also offers ecological services such as reducing storm water runoff, improving air quality, reducing the urban heat island effect and softening the urban hardscape."

This newsletter features our Garden District plans and offerings and if you are interested in serving on the Garden District committee and making a difference in any of the activities you see featured here, please contact my office.

Sincerely,



Terry Witkowski
Alderman, 13th District



Landscape and Flower Business Meeting

Last spring, we held a meeting for landscape and flower businesses located in the Garden District to advise them of our efforts to make this the Garden District. Since that time, several have been helpful to neighborhood associations and schools involved in public plantings. A big thank you goes out to **Custom Grown Greenhouses, Simon Landscaping, Plantland, Advance Landscaping** and **Wisconsin Firewood**. It can help our efforts if you mention the Garden District when shopping for your gardening needs.

All businesses in the district are encouraged to increase their planting, even by way of containers or hanging baskets. Last year's Garden District awards showed further involvement and more businesses improving their property. The **Garden District Neighborhood Association**, formerly the 13th District Neighborhood Association, runs the Garden District Awards. It is a non-profit organization that accepts tax-deductible donations. The **Gateway to Milwaukee**, also known as the **Airport Gateway Business Association**, is the major sponsor of the awards program.

Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, April 17 – 1:30 p.m.

Vegetable Container Gardening
Custom Grown Greenhouses - 4507 S. 6th St.

Tuesday, April 20 – 6:00 p.m.

Scott Baran, Milwaukee Forestry landscape designer, will present ideas on how and what types of plants to plant in front lawn gardens.
Water Tower Facility - 4001 S. 6th St.

Monday, May 3 – 6:30 p.m.

Mary Jensen will speak on planting front yards, front yard garden designs, perennials, annuals, shade and sun locations. Also, chili will be for sale.
Holler Park Lodge - S. 6th St. & W. Edgerton Ave.

Tuesday, May 4 – 6:30 p.m.

Garden District Committee
1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
Simon Landscaping - 4121 S. 6th St.

Monday May 10 – 6:30 p.m.

Rain Garden Workshop
Holler Park - S. 6th St. & W. Edgerton Ave.

Saturday, May 15 – 10 a.m. - Noon

Perennial Exchange
Custom Grown Greenhouses - 924 W. Armour Ave.

Monday, May 24 – 6:30 p.m.

Rain Garden Workshop
Holler Park - S. 6th St. & W. Edgerton Ave.

Potholes! Call them in to 286-CITY

The city does not know a pothole exists unless someone reports it. The best way to get a pothole repaired is to call it in by address. "There is a pot hole in front of 3972 S. 1st St." tops "There is a pot hole near 1st and Howard." Long gone are the days when the city had staffing to cruise streets looking for holes to fix. As we move into spring, we count on you to help identify post-winter road needs.

Garden Awards

It's what's up front that counts! This summer's Garden District Awards will be based on curb appeal or what people see in front of your home. Many people have great backyard gardens but if we are to be the Garden District, there is a need to have flowers and great landscaping out front where people can see them. If you want to learn more about gardening in your front yard, attend the May 3rd event listed on the front page.

If you have a neighbor with a great front yard or want to nominate yourself, you may use the form below or download one from my website at www.milwaukee.gov/district13 or go to www.theGDNA.org, the **Garden District Neighborhood Association** site. All nominations must be in by July 9th. Judging will take place between July 10 and July 24th and scores will be based on the appearance of the property to the average passerby. The awards program is run by the Garden District Neighborhood Association and sponsored by the Gateway to Milwaukee.

2010 Business & Residential Garden Awards Nomination Form

Nominator's Name _____

Nominator's Phone Number _____

Gardener's Name _____

Gardener's Telephone Number _____

Gardener's Address _____

Why do you think this garden has the best curb appeal?



Return form to:
The Garden District N.A.
1122 W. Bodan Court
Milwaukee, WI 53221

Attention Crafters, Woodworkers, Artists

The Garden Award Committee is considering an award that would be placed in the winner's garden. It could be a rock-like ceramic piece, a piece of wood or a hanging sign that would bear the logo of the Garden District and the words "award winner." If you have the talent and the means to produce 100 to 200 such pieces, please call me at **731-0472**.

Promoting the Garden District with Hats and Shirts

Be proud and help promote the Garden District with Garden District logo wear! **K & M Embroidery** at 4901 S. 27th St. now has the logo in its computer and can place it on hats, shirts and sweatshirts and more. They make the perfect gift for your family gardener. Stop in and select the Garden District apparel you want to give or wear.

It's What's Up Front That Counts!

As the Garden District it is important to have the area reflect our dedication to beautification through visible plantings and curb appeal. Scott Baran, landscape designer with City of Milwaukee Forestry will present ideas on what and how to plant in front lawn gardens on April 20, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at the Water Tower Facility located at 4001 S. 6th St. Come with photos of your front yard and receive a complimentary landscaping consultation. Mr. Baran will also answer questions about annuals and perennials.

Perennial Exchange, May 15th

Saturday, May 15th from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. is the Garden District's annual perennial exchange. We will meet at **Custom Grown Greenhouses** at 924 W. Armour Ave. Park your car, place the perennials you thinned from your garden at the rear of your vehicle for others to take for their garden and grab some yourself! Any leftover flowers will be used in a community planting. The event is free and selling is not allowed. Attendees get a discount coupon from Custom Grown valid that day.

Planting Between the Sidewalk and Curb

Last year, I introduced and the Common Council passed an ordinance that allows planting in the tree border between the sidewalk and the curb. Alderman Kovac and I recently had it revised to be more flexible. As a result, planting annuals, perennials and ornamental grasses of up to, but not exceeding 36 inches is permitted. In addition, residents can install decorative edging up to 6 inches in height including landscape edging, railroad ties, brick, stone or border fencing. Because the tree border is public right-of-way, plantings are subject to damage and loss resulting from city operations such as tree work, utility repair, salt application and snow plowing. City guidelines for planting in the tree border do include limitations and I encourage residents to review them prior to planting. Go to www.milwaukee.gov/mpw for guidelines.



Rain Garden at Holler Park

Last spring, I coordinated with the **Garden District Neighborhood Association** (district-wide and a registered non-profit) to apply for a grant to reduce rainwater runoff and educate about rain barrels. I offered to host the effort if a member neighborhood association was interested. Holler Park member David Ciepluch drew up a plan that resulted in 10,000 plants being planted by school children from five district schools. Members of the **Holler Park Neighborhood Association** also planted, watered and weeded to make the garden work. The work of the grant will be completed this spring with more rain garden and rain barrel classes to be offered. Stop by and see the plantings on three sides of the lodge.

Community Garden - 6th St. & Howard Ave.

The **Garden Committee** has had a community garden on its wish list for the past three years. We just needed a place that would give permission to use the land and that would have water. **County Supervisor Chris Larson** assisted the Garden District garden committee by locating a spot for a community garden - a strip of county owned land on S. 6th St., south of Howard Ave. He secured County Board approval for its use as a community garden and now has the involvement of the UW-Extension service.

We hope to have information on how you can rent a spot to garden here by mid-April. The original proposal for a community garden included planting food for local food banks, and that garden may be north of Howard Ave. If you would like to help with that project or would like information on renting a garden plot, call my office at **286-8537** and we will provide contact information as we get it.



Curb appeal and signage have become key elements in marketing our Garden District. This rock carving is located at the Sleep Inn & Suites at 4600 S. 6th St.

Garden District Neighborhood Association Offers Help

Garden District Neighborhood Association president Chris Kuester announced that the association would assist any neighborhood group with public plantings. The group must be in the Garden District, have an organized leadership structure and be willing to have a representative serve on the Garden District board. It will offer up to \$500 for a planting and assist with applying for **Well Neighborhood Grants**, up to \$2,000. Other conditions apply. If you belong to a group and want to do this in your neighborhood, this is a great opportunity! If you want to start a group or want more information contact me at **731-0472**.

Rain Barrel and Rain Garden Classes at Holler Park

These workshops will include information on the history of our Milwaukee landscape, environmental benefits of this alternative style of wild flower gardening, how to plant a rain garden, and a short walking tour of the Holler Park rain garden.

- May 10 and May 24 at 6:30 p.m. - Holler Park lodge - Open to the public.
- Contact David Ciepluch at **483-9551** or **dciepluch@att.net** if you plan to attend.

Each attendee will receive a computer disk with the files for the Rain Garden Manual, helpful educational brochures and the presentation.



Visit me online at: www.milwaukee.gov/district13

E-mail me at: twitko@milwaukee.gov

MPS Parks

Milwaukee Public Schools owns some playfields and parks. They are overseen by the MPS Recreation Division. They, too, are cooperative with neighborhood groups who want to do public plantings maintained by the neighborhood. The **Uncas Park Neighborhood Association** proposed a planting in that park and is working on that neighborhood beautification idea.

Garden tours

After award winners have been identified, we will run a garden tour. More information can be found on this program after July 1 at www.theGDNA.org, the Garden District Neighborhood Association's web site.

County Parks

In a January meeting with the deputy county parks director, I explored what could be done in cooperation with the county parks in our area to make us the Garden District.

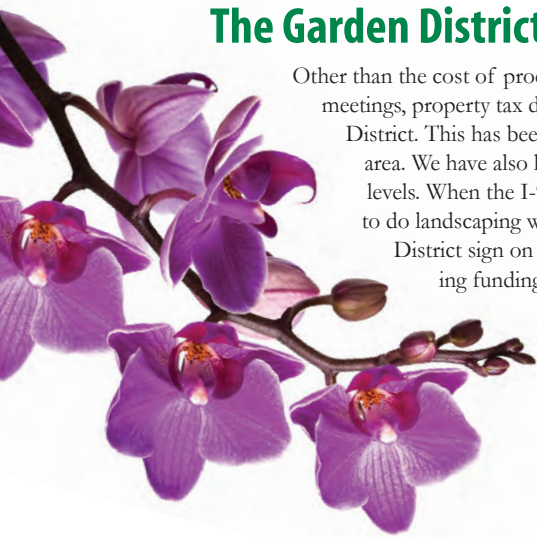
Some efforts have already taken place. A federal grant received through the city and in cooperation with Milwaukee County, the **Garden District Neighborhood Association**, the **Holler Park Neighborhood Association**, and the **Gateway to Milwaukee** created a large rain garden in Holler Park. A **Well Neighborhood Grant** project in Copernicus Park by 17-year old Eagle Scout Tomas Garrett, a junior at Rufus King, established a rain garden at the Grange Avenue entrance to the park. The **Wilson Park Neighborhood Association** is doing a project involving colorful park benches.

The parks are willing to work with neighborhood associations to allow beautifications to the park or parkway near you if the group submits a plan for approval, does the planting and agrees to maintain it.



The Garden District and Your Property Tax Dollar

Other than the cost of producing a Common Council resolution and staff time on meetings, property tax dollars have not been spent on making this the Garden District. This has been an effort to get businesses and residents to beautify the area. We have also had other funding opportunities at the state and federal levels. When the I-94 project started, federal and state dollars were allotted to do landscaping work as the highway project moved forward. The Garden District sign on S. Chase Ave. and W. Morgan Ave. came from landscaping funding on the State Highway 38 reconstruction project which asked the state to add trees, flowers and the sign.



Thanks for Your Leadership

Just a public note to thank district resident Peg Mueller for her leadership in the formation and early days of making this the Garden District. Peg stepped forward to be chair of the Garden Committee at its inaugural meeting, a year before the district had the designation. She led the committee as it prepared the 29-page plan presented to the Common Council seeking designation as the Garden District. She led the group as it sought grants and public plantings at Cooper School, held a public planting on Layton Ave., hosted Melinda Myers and other speakers, started garden awards, garden tours and many other efforts that will be carried on for years to come. Other responsibilities now have claimed her time and she has stepped down from that leadership role. On behalf of the people of this district, I want to thank Peg Mueller and her husband Dennis for the time dedicated to making this the Garden District!

*The
Garden
District*

Use Logo/Emblem

This is the official emblem of the Garden district. We want you to use it! Do you have stationery or a business in the Garden District? It is available for download on my website at www.milwaukee.gov/district13. Please use it on business cards, stationery, clothing or your Christmas card! Encourage restaurants you eat at put it on menus, placemats, napkins or anything else they print! Let's show our pride in living and doing business in the Garden District.

The large flowerbeds on boulevards with rocks and brick pavers are a citywide project called "Signature Beds." This is the last year of this three year budget-cut project to replace thousands of small beds with high impact beds and trees, causing less maintenance, less irrigation pipe, as well as fewer workers. The project began here because we are officially declared the Garden District.

This District will have more flowers on Layton Ave. and on Howell Ave. because the business improvement district or BID (businesses volunteering to pay a special fee annually), the Gateway to Milwaukee, will add new plantings on the boulevards each year and pay the city for maintenance. Hopefully, the 27th St. BID will add to the I-94 streetscape that will appear by fall.

I will continue to ask for beautification of this area from any business or agency operating within the Garden District.



Holler Park Neighborhood Association Plantings

On Grange Ave. west of S. 6th St., you will find the district's first neighborhood-maintained planting and a sign for the **Holler Park Neighborhood Association (HPNA)**. This planting is on a city-owned unbuildable lot and now serves as a beautiful welcome and announcement of a proud, caring neighborhood. The HPNA's most recent planting can be found on the frontage road island at S. 6th St. and W. Maplewood Ct. They also worked with Milwaukee County to be allowed to place a Holler Park Neighborhood sign in the park at S. 6th St. and W. Edgerton Ave.

The group also followed up the work of an Eagle Scout in finishing and revitalizing the lodge in Holler Park. Check it out!

Putting Down Roots

Development spurs on renewal, increases the tax base, provides jobs, can prevent poverty and crime and keeps property values stable.

Pocket Park - 5th Pl. and Howard Ave.

The **Garden Committee** wants to establish pocket parks in the district. A pocket park is a small lot with flowers, walkways and benches. Whitefish Bay has a great one at N. Marlborough Dr. and E. Birch Ave. There is one on N. 51st St. and W. Burleigh St. across from St. Joseph Hospital. The committee may try to establish the first one on county land at S. 5th Pl. and W. Howard Ave. Join the **Garden Committee** and help make it happen there and on public land in your neighborhood! Call me at **731-0472** to help.

Overlay Zones - 13th St. and College Ave.

I have asked the **Department of City Development (DCD)** to prepare an "Overlay Zone" for the area around S. 13th St. and W. College Ave. It is a zoning standard for an area that is higher than city standards. DCD will work with Oak Creek so that both sides of S. 13th St. have a higher landscape requirement and provide a welcoming image for drivers coming into the area from the freeway and for those using the airport. Our image and curb appeal draws more business and creates a great first impression of Milwaukee!

Rain Gardens, Rain Barrels and Green Roofs

What do rain gardens, rain barrels and green roofs have in common and have to do with our district? They all reduce the rainwater run off entering the sewers and creeks and can play a role in reducing floodwaters and sewer overflows. In our case, Holmes Creek enters the Wilson Creek and that enters the KK River, all of which have had flooding. Any water captured before it gets to those creeks reduces the amount of possible flooding.



The Gateway to Milwaukee Business Association has been invaluable to marketing our Aerotropolis.

Gateway to Milwaukee Asked to Represent Area

In a sign of great regional cooperation, it has been proposed that the **Gateway to Milwaukee (the Airport/Gateway Business Association)** represent the area at the **International Shopping Center Convention**. The event is attended by all cities working to fill vacant land and store-fronts and get new development for their city. Three suburbs asked that one Gateway space be used for all in the area, and in the aerotropolis model, we all work together on development. The idea is moving forward and if it doesn't get done for this spring's conference, it may well be done by 2011 and should also include the 27th St. business group.

The Energy Exchange

Simon Landscape and **American Rivers** are partnering with multiple stakeholders to create a center for education and implementation of best management practices. The center will be located at 4121 S. 6th St. in the Kinnickinnic River Watershed. When completed, the facility will maintain over 7,500 square feet of permeable pavement, 4,000 sq. ft. of green roof, 1,100 sq. ft. of bioswales/rain gardens and two 1,000 gallon rain water harvesting systems. In addition, the center will also showcase solar arrays, geothermal heating and LED lighting. The center will host workshops featuring speakers who are involved in Low Impact Development. Policy-makers, local roofers, architects, landscapers, lawyers and LEED specialists will help inform Milwaukee residents of ways to improve the environment while also benefiting their businesses or homes.

Town of Lake Neighborhood Association Planting Proposed

The **Town of Lake Neighborhood Association** is considering a public planting at the corner of S. 6th St. and W. Howard Ave. The flower bed is proposed as a half moon-shaped garden with a wooden park-like Town of Lake Neighborhood Association sign welcoming people into its area. Additional sites may also be considered if neighbors help on this one. Call my office for contact information to help with this and other planting efforts in that area. The garden project will be funded in part by the **Garden District Neighborhood Association** and a **Well Neighborhood Grant**.

Study of Wilson Creek Complete

The **Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD)** study of Holmes and Wilson Creeks findings were presented during a March 4 meeting. The study findings will now go to FEMA for adoption of new flood plan maps based on its data. That will result in many people needing flood insurance in the area around S. 5th St. and W. Armour Ave., S. 14th St. and W. Plainfield Ave., and an area near Wilson Park.

Three projects are needed to remove homes from the flood plain designation. They need to be budgeted and need to go in when they don't cause a problem down stream. The culverts under Point Loomis need to be increased by 35-45% but this cannot be done until the KK River is revised to accept that flow. The culvert at S. 5th St. and W. Armour Ave. needs to be increased by 65% and a flood detention basin needs to be developed at Central Steel. Call **MMSD** at **225-2168** for more information.

Island Added in Front of Pulaski High

An island with a raised flowerbed has been constructed on W. Oklahoma Ave. at S. 25th St. by the city as a safety measure for Pulaski High School students. The school will grow flowers in its green house for the flowerbed.

Stabilizing Vacant Lots

Of the five vacant lots in the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association area mentioned in a past newsletter, one now has a new single family home on it and one more is being considered for a single family home. Another may become the pride of the neighborhood. Last fall, Simon Landscaping planted a rain garden on one near S. 19th St. and W. Grant St. and this season the neighborhood association will use the remainder of the lot as a garden. It is planned that plants started from seed here would be transplanted to establish gardens at nearby homes. Last summer, more than 25 homes in the area received new gardens as neighbors worked together to beautify the area with donated plants from several sources.

Wilson Park Neighborhood Association

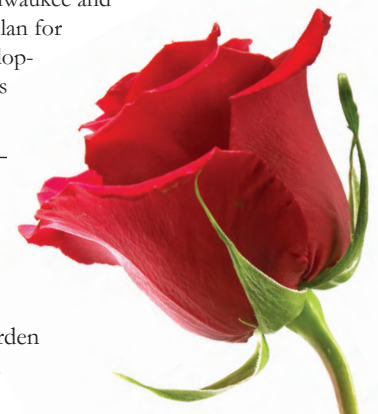
Painting in the Park day is coming soon! Residents in this neighborhood will be refurbishing and painting park benches to bring some color into the park. Visitors of Wilson Park will be able to rest, fish, read or watch their children play on the benches. If you are interested in participating, please contact Tammy Kukla at **383-2007** or **TammyKukla@aol.com**. Also, the association will be wrapping up a city grant by posting new signs identifying the neighborhood on light poles. This is scheduled for June as well. You can sign up to be a part of our Yahoo! group online and stay informed. Go to **www.wilsonparkneighbors.com** to learn more.

Sewerage District & Area Creeks

As **MMSD** does studies of flooding problems related to the creeks in our district, it will look at the possibility of returning to natural creek beds. The concrete liners are beginning to be in need of replacement and it has been found that in some cases, they move water too fast, adding to problems. The KK River, Wilson Creek, Oak Creek and Holmes Creek are being studied. They will also look at the possibility of pedestrian paths and bikeways as recommended in the city plan. Once done, this might also provide opportunities for community plantings.

Aerotropolis Update

At the end of December, the task force I started to improve economic development around the airport legally became a private group, the **Milwaukee Gateway Aerotropolis Corporation**. To date, Milwaukee, St. Francis, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, Greendale and Greenfield's Common Councils have passed resolutions to become founding members. The county will consider the matter in April and we are still working with Franklin. Business leaders will fill the remaining six board positions. The next step is hiring an international expert to study Milwaukee and draw up a plan for future development of this region.



The Garden District

13th District Alderman **Terry L. Witkowski**



Andy and Ella Wasielewski, owners of the Crocus Restaurant at 3577 S. 13th St., are pictured here with Alderman Witkowski after receiving one of the Garden District's Landscape and Garden Awards.

City Hall, Room 205
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

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Civic Agenda and Where Will We Be In 2020?

As we begin a new decade, we need to look ahead to 2020 to see where greater Milwaukee will be. Yes, times now are financially rough but that should not stop us from looking to the future. I have not heard of government and business leaders planning for the future together since the days of Henry Maier! It is time to bring these forces together if we are to compete in a global economy and improve Milwaukee.

M7 has been working on a plan for business growth, but it's happening quietly if I, as an elected official, have not seen a plan. Can you name the leader of **M7**? Is there a plan for a convention hotel at 4th and Wisconsin where land has been vacant for over 20 years? Milwaukee has moved to the next tier of cities below our size city for convention business and phase three of the convention center is yet to be discussed.

The rest of the nation has worked on reducing dependence on foreign oil, but we have been sitting on transportation improvement money since 1991 and have let mass transit service steadily decline. Increasing airport capacity with a parallel runway has been on the drawing boards since 1993.

There is the need to involve business in a public agenda to move these issues forward. The city, county, state, and federal elected officials need to all have the same agenda for Milwaukee, the region, and the state to help make us competitive in the global economy. We can not afford to have elected officials only consider their own turf. We must establish a common agenda. I will be spending time and efforts to make this happen.

The Garden District Committee Needs YOU!

If you are a gardener or interested in making this the Garden District, I invite you to become a member of the **Garden Committee**. It meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month at Simon Landscaping at 4121 S. 6th St. If you can spend a couple hours a month we need your help. Please call me at **731-0472**. The committee is part of the district-wide Garden District Neighborhood Association.

How to Challenge Your Property Assessment

If you received your property assessment and believe it to be incorrect, here is how you can challenge it:

- Go to www.city.milwaukee.gov/assessor
- Click on "Appeals and Assistance" in the left hand column and follow the instructions given there.

Remember, objections must be written and filed before the third Monday in May (May 17, 2010).

