

1909 Old Home Week At
Union Park
(Now Harry Murch Park)



Restoration & Preservation of Georgetown's Harry Murch Park It's finally happening !

Thanks to the Community Preservation Act Fund, \$150K granted, jointly to the Georgetown Historical Commission and the Georgetown Highway Dept. for this Historic project that was approved at the May 2008 annual Town Meeting.

The Consultant, Victor Walker of Walker – Kluesing Design Group, Landscape Architects, has provided the Master Plan that both preserves and reflects the Park's historical design and uses of the past, as well as its current use as a Memorial Park. Every effort has been made to make this revitalized park more accessible and useful to the entire community as an inviting public amenity. The circa. 1820 Harry Murch Park has historically become the traditional location for the Town to gather and conclude most of the events where the Town honors those who have served our country. The park itself is officially listed as a Historic Landmark in the data-base of the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Soon there will be a perimeter fence installed around the Park to secure the area during the construction period. Since the Georgetown Highway Dept. will be doing a good portion of the work, substantial cost savings can be achieved. This will allow for the purchase and installation of a significant number of the Master Plan's specified peripheral deciduous trees within the construction budget.

The first task requires a major re-leveling of the site. In some areas, approx. 30 inches of fill will be required, with 6 inches of loam prior to hydro seeding. A natural irrigation system is planned as a result of an existing cistern (well) located in the northwest portion of the site.

Due to the extensive fill requirement, the existing trees will not survive because of the extent of soil required over the root system, so the existing trees will have to be removed and replaced with a new disease resistant maple variety. The existing trees have also become deformed by their close proximity to the utility lines, due to the excessive pruning necessary in this location. The new trees that will line the perimeter of the Park will be positioned uniformly, at a sufficient distance from the existing utility lines, in order to eliminate the need for excessive and harmful pruning.

The plan is to relocate the existing two War Memorials and the single existing flagpole for the American flag to their new locations, when the site work is complete and as shown on the Master Plan. This will allow for the graceful placement of any additional war monument and the multi-service flag display in the future.

The Park has been a major contributing factor to the character of the town, as well as a focal point for town gatherings for many years. The intent of this project is to restore that character by utilizing Historic Landscape elements. It is anticipated that this Restoration project will be completed and available to the public by Memorial Day of 2009.

Residents can review the Town of Georgetown web site (Community Preservation Committee) for specifics in this 24 page document of the Final Preservation Master Plan for Harry Murch Park, as well as review a hard copy at Georgetown Peabody Library.

It is hoped that the time and effort that has gone into the preparation of this Preservation Master Plan and of the finished product, can be enjoyed by Georgetown's children and grandchildren in future generations to come.