

## Beautification Commission Annual Report 2007

### Introduction

It is the mission of the Morgantown Beautification Commission to promote an aesthetically attractive environment in the public and private sectors of Morgantown. While working as a resource to municipal organizations and entities to promote consistent design and maintenance standards, the Commission recommends and reviews projects throughout the City that involve landscaping and related aesthetic issues. It is the goal of the Commission to promote a healthy urban forest. The Commission advocates such education initiatives through the local media and special events.

The Commission was established in 1974. In 1998, it was restructured to add a landscape architect, urban forester, and botanist to the municipal ward roster. The current membership includes:

Dale McGill	1 <sup>st</sup> ward
Marilynn Bowers	2 <sup>nd</sup> ward
Dr. Donna Ford-Werntz	3 <sup>rd</sup> ward
Jerry Stekete	4 <sup>th</sup> ward
Julie Lattanzi	5 <sup>th</sup> ward
Annette Tanner	6 <sup>th</sup> ward
Sandy Poulson	7 <sup>th</sup> ward
Kara Hurst	Landscape Architect and Chair
Dr. Bill MacDonald	Botanist & Vice Chair
Anne Cumming	Urban Forester
Ralph Larue	BOPARC
Don Spencer	City Council Representative

### Programs & Services

Beautification serves landscape maintenance on 32 project sites throughout the City of Morgantown. In neighborhoods, 15 volunteers maintain 8 of these sites. Beautification staff maintains 24 project sites.

The Downtown lamppost baskets are a project of the Commission. In 2007, there were 102 lamppost baskets to plant and maintain. As streetscape renovation was completed on High St., 27 new baskets were added. 1,882 flowers were planted in lamppost baskets, hayracks, and street intersection flowerbeds. For holiday decorations, 612 pinecones, 408 ornaments, 204 holiday bows, and 1,100 pounds of Fraser fir boughs were used. The City purchased the plant materials at wholesale cost for the bump out features of the renovated streetscape on High St.. Beautification staff planted the 102 *Penisetum alopecuroides*, 32 *Fothergilla gardenii*, and 66 *Ilex crenata*.

The Morgantown Beautification Commission contracted the design and planting of the landscape at Krepps Park Poolhouse. It includes 16 Maiden Grass 'Yaku Jima', 2 Prague

Viburnum, 2 Oakleaf Hydrangea, 3 Fineline Buckthorn, 57 Coreopsis ‘Zagreb’, 39 Yarrow ‘Paprika’, and 6 Shenandoah Switch Grass. Beautification staff is responsible for the maintenance of the new plantings.

The Commission worked closely with a landscape architect to develop a plan that was suitable for the islands on South University Avenue. The plantings contributed to the visual improvements for the southern gateway into the City while conforming to WV State Department of Highways guidelines. There were 564 Alpine Spirea and 664 Blue Oat Grass planted.

The Morgantown Municipal Airport worked with the Beautification Commission to facilitate the installation of new rock mulch at the north ramp entryway into the terminal while refreshing the rock mulch at the southern ramp entryway. Additionally, the trees in the parking lot islands were pruned by a contracted arborist. The arborist also pruned the Zelkova trees at the Garlow House.

Projects that came to the Commission for review were lower Walnut Street Improvements, Spruce Street Trees, and Public Library exterior appearance. The Commission requested the landscape plan for the Marina as it did not come through the customary process.

Adopt-A-Street met with the Public Works Assistant Director and developed a new plan for the awarding of streets to volunteers for clean up. The new system will be housed in the Public Works Department while still maintaining Dr. Donna Ford –Werntz as the University contact for students. There are currently 37 groups enrolled with approximately half active and reported.

The subcommittee, Proud of Our Town Awards, bestowed awards on Zoe Romero in Suncrest and Med Express in the Wharf District.

Representatives from the Morgantown Tree Board met with the BOPARC Facilities Director to identify trees that would not be removed along the Riverfront Dock area at Hazel Ruby McQuain Park. The Tree Board facilitated the evaluation of 2 Pin Oaks on Waitman Street.

### Resources

The Beautification staff consists of one full time horticultural technician, one seasonal horticultural laborer, and one horticultural intern from WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Consumer Sciences.

Beautification has one full size and one small truck for landscape maintenance. Public Works Department provides a truck seasonally for the watering of plants. There are various hand and power garden tools along with safety equipment that the Beautification staff utilizes.

## Activities

The annual flower basket planting event was on May 20, 2007. Monongalia County Master Gardeners had 10 volunteers who assisted with the spring planting.

There were 7 trees planted Downtown on September 21<sup>st</sup> for the annual Morgantown Tree Board Arbor Day Celebration. BOPARC, Public Works, and Beautification staff assisted in the process. The Tree Board also held a pruning workshop in Jack Roberts Park on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Forecast

The Beautification Commission remains committed to choosing a design concept annually that will enhance a gateway into the City. The implementation of such concepts will improve the aesthetic quality for those visiting the City. The Commission embraces the growth of public projects while advocating for consistent design and maintenance standards.

## Summary

As the year draws to a close, the Beautification Commission takes pride in having completed several major design initiatives that further advance the attractive qualities of the City. The Commission also continues to welcome and enjoy interaction with City Departments . With a full membership reviewing the ordinance and mission statements, the Commission looks forward to fulfilling its role in the continued growth of the City.