



Home Grown



Working with NYC's
Department of Parks &
Recreation to care for the
18th Street Park

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April 2003

It's Planting Time at the 18th St. Park ... Volunteer Gardeners Needed

HomeGrown's garden plan for the 18th Street Park's planting areas has been approved by the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation.

The Spring planting season runs from mid-April (after all danger of frost is past) through early June. A small crew of volunteers has been meeting at the park Saturdays (weather permitting) since last September [see "*What we've done so far,*" over].

HomeGrown is looking for volunteer gardeners who can pitch in at any time on these prime planting dates:

Saturday May 10 from 1:00 to 4:00
Saturday May 17 from 1:00 to 4:00

We're also going to try to take advantage of daylight savings time with two weekday evenings:

Thursday May 8 from 6:00 to 7:30
Thursday May 16 from 6:00 to 7:30

Volunteers are invited to stop by whenever they can, for as long as they can, during these planting sessions.

We'll be putting in annual flowers provided by the Parks Dept., as well as perennials and shrubs donated by HomeGrown and neighborhood friends of the 18th St. Park. If there's a light rain: so much the better for the plants. If there's a heavy rain, planting is cancelled. (With four sessions scheduled, we're hoping we won't need a rain date ... but if the weather's against us, we'll finish planting in early June.)

We can provide work gloves. We also have some tools ... But if you have your own trowel or shovel, please bring them along.

Divide and Conquer ... Calling Volunteer Plants

This is the time of year backyard gardeners live for: time for spring clean-up, then setting out the flower beds and new plantings they've been planning all winter.

Now is also good time to divide mature perennials ... the flowering or foliage plants that grow in a clump or crown. These include, for instance, asters, chrysanthemums, hostas, and rudbeckias. These are plants that can be divided into two or more new plants every two to three years. A bonus for your garden ... or for the 18th St. Park if you've run out of room for your perennials' offspring.

HomeGrown is asking neighborhood gardeners for volunteer plants ... we have space for divided perennials you can't use, or perennials you may want to move out to make way for something else.

You can bring your plant volunteers to the 18th St. Park on one of the May planting days (May 10 & 17, from 1:00 to 4:00, or May 8 or 15, from 6:00 to 7:30). Please let us know what it is, and whether it needs lots of sun or prefers the shade.

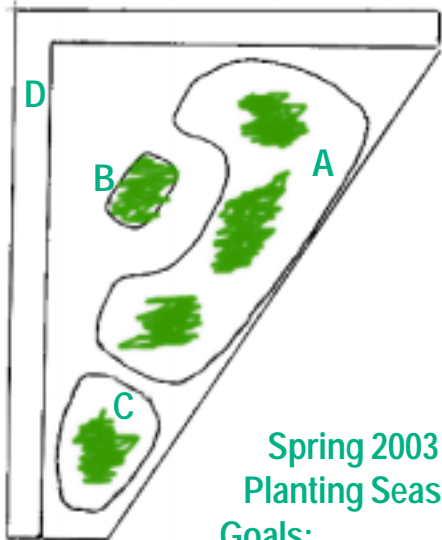
If you have questions on dividing perennials, come to the Park on the May planting days, and we'll give you an instruction sheet. If you can't come those days, let us know. Email: HomeGrown@nyc.rr.com.

HomeGrown is an organization of community volunteers interested in preserving the .442-acre triangular green space (known as the 18th Street Park) at the northwest corner of 18th Street and 7th Avenue in Brooklyn for the use and enjoyment of the broadest range and largest number of constituencies. Working under the supervision of the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, HomeGrown volunteers, help maintain the park and cultivate the park's planting areas.

Join HomeGrown and help make the 18th Street Park blossom this summer!

18th St. Park Garden Plan Highlights

With the approval of the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, HomeGrown is working to create garden plots in the 18th St. Park's actual and potential planting areas. These areas are shown in this (very) rough map:



A: The main planting area. Create **three planting beds** — mounds or berms approximately 18-24 inches high. Shrubs (e.g., rosa rugosa) will anchor each of the beds. A mix of annuals (provided by the Parks Dept.) and perennials (volunteers) will fill out the beds. The space between the berms will be grass pathways.

B: The “decommissioned” sandbox. Convert the now empty sandbox into a small planting area (think of it as a **large window box**) for honeysuckle, daylilies, canna lilies, irises, as well as annuals.

C: The secondary planting area. Create **one planting bed**. This will be planted as shade border: hostas (several varieties), sedum, coral bells, ferns (Japanese painted, maidenhair, cinnamon), bleeding heart, are among the volunteer plants.

D: The buffer strip running along the backyards of homes neighboring the park. Begin establishing fragrant ground covers.

The Spring '03 planting goals make a good start. Through the Summer the focus will be on maintenance. In the Fall, a second round of planting will expand the areas under cultivation. Upcoming issues of the HomeGrown newsletter will keep you posted on plans and progress.

What We've Done So Far ...

HomeGrown started working with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to care for the 18th St. Park last Spring. Because of last year's drought, the Parks Dept. had to put new planting plans on hold. HomeGrown concentrated on preparing the main and secondary garden areas for planting. HomeGrown volunteers have:

- ▶ cleared the planting areas of debris and animal waste;
- ▶ roto-till the soil, working in 25 cubic yards of compost (provided by the Parks Dept.);
- ▶ sow grass seed in both planting areas;
- ▶ plant some 900 bulbs in 5 borders along the perimeter of the main planting area.

If you've been to the 18th St. Park lately, you may have noticed the main planting area's berms taking shape. These garden focal points are being readied for HomeGrown's May planting days (May 10 & 17, from 1:00 to 4:00, or May 8 or 15, from 6:00 to 7:30).

Thanks ...

Lots of work yet to do, but lots of ground-work done — thanks to our volunteers and some help from our friends. HomeGrown is especially grateful for the encouragement and support it's received from the Block Associations of 16th Street, 17th Street, and 18th Street ... Assembly-member **Jim Brennan** ... Community Board 7 ... the 72nd Precinct — and P.O. **Frank Siclari** in particular ... **Lauren Sullivan** of Partnerships for Parks ... and **Eric Greene**, NYC Department of Parks & Recreation.

Join HomeGrown:

Dues are \$8.00 for an annual HOUSEHOLD membership. \$24 for an annual BUSINESS membership. (Dues go to buying plants for the 18th St. Park gardens, and to helping defray the costs of printing the newsletter. Businesses will be listed as supporters in the HomeGrown newsletter.)

Member name(s): _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone (optional): _____ Email (optional): _____

I'd also like to donate: [] volunteer time; [] volunteer plants; [] other: _____

Bring this form + dues to the Park during the May planting days (May 10 & 17, from 1:00 to 4:00, or May 8 or 15, from 6:00 to 7:30). Or return by mail to: HomeGrown c/o 348 16th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215.