

RIVERDALE PARK

Environmental Projects - CKAR and Pollinator Outreach

The Town of Riverdale Park (Town) partners with the [Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation \(CKAR\)](#), a 501c(3) that forms and nurtures strategic business partnerships that strengthen and promote the social, environmental, and economic development of the Town and Greater Riverdale, including East Riverdale neighborhoods.

The CKAR has been fortunate to receive awards from several applications submitted during 2017 and 2018. CKAR was awarded \$4,783.00 from The Maryland Environmental Trust for maintenance of the Edmonston Road Rain Garden, located across from Fletcher's Field. From the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT), the organization CKAR partners with on the tree planting campaigns, they were awarded \$125,542.00. CBT also provided an award of \$22,099.00 as an Organizational Capacity Building Grant. Strategic partnerships CKAR has made in the community over the past three years since June 2017, have included Kaiser Permanente, the University of Maryland, Prince George's County Community College, the State of Maryland, and area businesses (restaurants, hotels, grocery, etc.).

Kaiser Permanente's (KP) focus has been in classes teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) and information technology training (see [Services | CKAR Riverdale Park | Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization](#)).

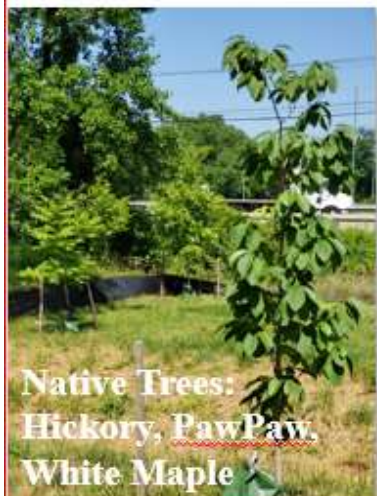
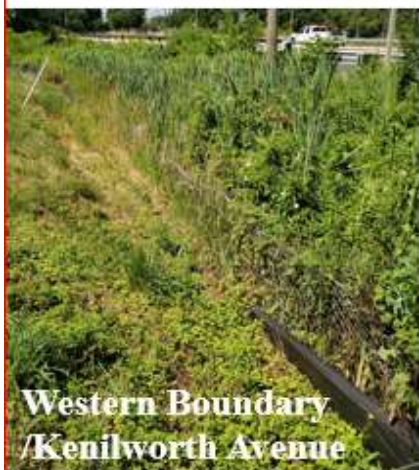
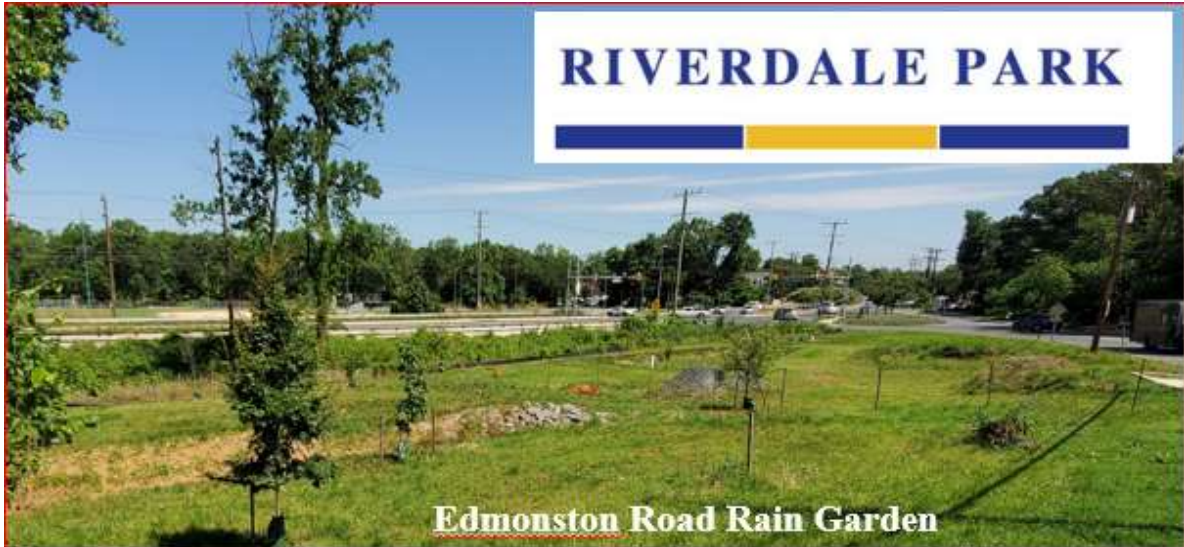


Recognizing that communities are intertwined and that ecology, specifically area stormwater runoff, knows no boundaries, the Town of Riverdale Park and the East Riverdale communities' investment in CKAR served to support the creation of the [Edmonston Road Rain Garden](#). The National Capital Planning Commission approved the over half-acre project in September of 2019. Strategic partnerships with the University of Maryland, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning

Commission (MNCPPC), and Prince George's County Department of Permitting Inspections and Enforcement facilitated this project. To date, underground infrastructure is in place, boundaries have been marked and reinforced, and native trees have been planted.

The rain garden collects and percolates runoff from Kenilworth Avenue (MD-201) close to the Northeast Branch of the Anacostia River and to remove impurities through three micro-bioretenention cells and native plantings. The rain garden provides an aesthetic appeal, environmental education with the use of a forest edge garden, infiltration, benches, bilingual interpretive signage, new sidewalks, a new bus stop shelter, permeable paving, and lighting. The rain garden features trees and plant materials which thrive in wet soils and are also native to the area to support pollinators. Water unable to be managed by the rain garden is now redirected via underground conduits directly into the Northeast Branch of the Anacostia River.

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In collaboration with the Town of Riverdale Park, the Chesapeake Bay Trust, and Prince George's County Department of the Environment, CKAR planted over 120 trees in 2017. The Town of Riverdale Park advertised this initiative to town residents in the [September 2017 Town Crier](#) newsletter. Community residents requested trees, CKAR assisted residents with the selection and placement of the trees, planted and mulched the trees, and required that residents continue to water and care for the trees. In the spring of 2018, CKAR began and completed the second phase of planting 300 trees on residential and business properties in an expanded geographic area. The Town of Riverdale Park advertised CKAR's efforts in the [September 2018 Town Crier](#).

CKAR hired a local minority tree business, Mac & Sons Tree Experts, to plant trees for the residents. CKAR contracted with Community-Based Communications to work with the property owners to determine the best tree and the right placement on their sites (see "Environmental Sustainability" tab on the [CKAR website](#)).

Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization CDC (CKAR)
and partners want to plant a tree for you.*

**Trees are so important for
healthy communities that we
will plant one in your yard.
This fall. For free!**

*Yards must be in or around Riverdale, Riverdale Park, Eastpines, Templeton Knolls, Beacon Heights, Bladensburg and the Port Towns, Cheverly, Woodlawn, Lanham, and Langley Park.

For tree request forms and information visit ckarcdc.org/trees, email gogreenplanttrees@gmail.com or phone 240-608-2527. Sites for large canopy trees -- oaks, maples, river birch -- are especially welcome.

This advertisement for the CKAR tree planting program was included by the Town of Riverdale Park in the September 2017 Town Crier newsletter.

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Pollinators Outreach

On June 15, 2019, the Town of Riverdale Park hosted an outdoor, kick-off event to start the year-long celebration of its 100th anniversary since incorporation (June 1920). The Sustainability Committee set up in the area adjacent to the Riverdale Town Center MARC station and manned two sustainability-themed, outreach tables; about pollinators and the importance of properly disposing of dog waste. Approximately 250 people attended the event.

Krizstina Christmon, a Sustainability Committee member and doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, arranged for three of her colleagues from the [vanEngelsdorp Bee Lab](#) at the University of Maryland (UMD), to join her to provide outreach on the importance of pollinators to sustainable agriculture.

Attendees were able to learn about honey bees, native bees and the importance of pollinators. Because the number one cause of pollinator decline is the loss of habitat, Krizstina and her colleagues explained to an interested audience the importance of planting pollinator-friendly plants. They set up a portion of a live beehive and had a display of pinned native bees. With printed handouts, they showed visitors how to help bees and other pollinators. In addition, they gave away activity books for children to learn more about bees at home. Some of the event-goers were already aware of the importance of plants to pollinators but some were not. For those that were not, they provided them with a list of plants they could add to their home gardens.

There was a “buzz” of activity around the bee table! Curious people posed many questions; some they frequently asked were: Are bees going extinct? Why do bees sting? How can one help the bees? What seemed to fascinate many people was the fact that in a beehive the worker bees are all female with just one mother, the Queen, and 50,000 sisters.



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When people tried on the bee goggles, they were able to see how bees see. Bees see movement very well, because of the multiple lenses in their eyes. It is important to stay calm around bees and to not make hasty movements around bees as they interpret it as danger and will sting the intruder.

The [vanEngelsdorp Honey Bee Lab](#) focuses on an epidemiological approach to honey bee health and is one of the leading labs for honey bee research in the country. They are a major partner and founding member of the [Bee Informed Partnership \(BIP\)](#), a non-profit that collaborates closely with beekeepers from across the country to study and better understand the loss in honey bee colonies in the United States. The BIP conducts the largest and most comprehensive honey bee survey in the world. The data that is compiled through the BIP survey is then used to conduct research to improve management practices for beekeepers. Major mechanisms that are responsible for the decline in

honey bee populations include an increased number of pests and pathogens, the loss of natural forage habitat due to large monocultural croplands, and pressure from human induced changes in the environment. This applies to our native bee species as well. There are 400 species of bees in Maryland and we have surveyed and identified over 96 on the UMD campus alone.