

Wawaset Park Handbook

**Wawaset Park Maintenance Corporation
Board of Trustees
WawasetPark.org**



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History

Historic Identity

The name Wawaset Park has been used for this locality for over a century, first as a horse racing track and stable, then as state fairgrounds, and since 1919, as a unique residential community just inside the western limits of the City of Wilmington. Wawaset was the name originally given by the Delaware Indians to the river later called Fishkill by Swedish settlers, then Brandywine by the Dutch and English. Today we use the terms "Wawaset," Wawaset Park" or "the Park" interchangeably in referring to our unique residential area.

Having identified Wawaset Park as the site for its desired development, the DuPont Company hired Edward Palmer, Jr., a Baltimore architect to design a community that encompassed all levels of management. To that end, Palmer mixed multi-family structures, twin homes, and large, detached dwellings along a network of intimate streets. Rather than lay the neighborhood out on a traditional grid, he allowed the thoroughfares to follow the natural contours of the topography. Further, he made a point of setting the homes back from the streets to create a park-like space and sense of openness. Having lived for years in Roland Park, a Baltimore neighborhood designed by Frederick Olmstead, Palmer had a heightened appreciation for strategic land use and the preservation of communal open space within municipalities. Additionally, the houses he designed reflected a wide array of architectural styles - including Georgian, English Tudor, Dutch Colonial, French Revival, and Gothic - and integrated mixed materials, primarily brick, stucco, stone and combinations of the three. Following the precedent set by Roland Park, Palmer encouraged the DuPont Company to institute building and land-use restrictions to preserve the neighborhood aesthetics and high-quality of life for generations to come.

Historic Registry

In 1986, Wawaset Park was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, as noted by plaques at Crawford Circle and at 11th and Greenhill. A very important distinction earned the Park the "Historic" designation—it stands intact as an early example of a designed community in the direct tradition of several predecessor-communities in Chicago and Baltimore designed by the renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.

Wawaset's status in the history of American residential architecture is a source of pride for owners and potentially enhances property values. Being an historic neighborhood can be helpful to the Park as a whole in protecting against undesirable building or street development in adjacent areas. The Register listing, however, imposes no restrictions or review procedures whatever on property modifications by individual owners – such modifications are governed by Wawaset's own Deed, administered by the Architectural Committee of the Board of Trustees.



Wawaset Maintenance Corporation

Deed and Establishment of Wawaset Maintenance Corporation

To enable owners to conserve and maintain the original architectural concept and quality of Wawaset Park, a Deed and Agreement dated February 28, 1919 prescribes conditions which run with the land and are binding upon each and every property owner. Protective restrictions pertain to land use and to the dimensions, type, design, and placement of structures. The Deed enables owners to "properly provide for the maintenance of the tract in addition to that done by the City of Wilmington."

Recognizing the Deed's historic and continuing contribution to preserving the nature of Wawaset Park as a planned community, residents have four times renewed the conditions of the Deed for twenty-year terms. The most recent renewal took place in 2009. A copy of the Wawaset Park Deed and Agreement is attached as **Exhibit 1**. Its contents apply to all the Park's two hundred seven (207) properties.

The Deed establishes the Wawaset Maintenance Corporation. All owners of land in Wawaset Park are automatically members. A copy of the By-Laws of the Wawaset Maintenance Corporation is attached as **Exhibit 2**. The Deed makes the Corporation responsible for:

- Administering and enforcing the Deed provisions,
- Approving or disapproving all new structures or external changes, additions and alterations to existing structures.
- Caring for and maintaining the common areas of the Park and;
- Assessing and collecting membership dues to pay for the various services provided.

Responsibilities of Corporation

The following enumerated paragraphs briefly elaborate on the four areas of responsibility stated above:

1. Administration

The business of the Corporation is administered by a Board of Trustees consisting of up to twenty property owners. Twelve (12) of these represent specific geographical districts within the Park. Each year four (4) of the twelve District Trustee positions are filled by election to three-year terms at an annual meeting of property owners held usually in the month of April. Additional Trustees-at-large and Officers of the Corporation are elected by the Board for one-year terms.

There are seven Committees designated by the By-laws of the Corporation. Five currently active committees include Trees & Grounds, Architectural, Community Relations (Social), Finance, and Traffic, Safety & Utilities. If you are interested in joining a Committee, please reach out to its chairperson.

Exhibit 3 contains a list of the names and phone numbers for all current Trustees, Officers and Committee Chairpersons. An updated list can always be found on the Wawaset Park Website (WawasetPark.org). **Exhibit 4** is a map showing the twelve districts of the Park will inform new residents of their district numbers.

2. Architectural Approval of Changes

Sub-Division VII of the Deed pertains to the erection of a "building, fence, wall or other structure" and in general to exterior changes or alterations of any sort. The Deed provides that the Corporation has the right to pass upon proposed alterations and may disapprove them if not found suitable or desirable. An Architectural Committee has always existed to review such proposed exterior changes or new structures.

New owners are hereby notified of the necessity to contact the Architectural Committee before proceeding with any plans for exterior additions or alterations. Guidelines being used by the Architectural Committee are attached as **Exhibit 5**. The Park's policy for the installation of fences and suggestions for hedges is attached in **Exhibit 6**. Owners are expected to comply with Sub-Division VII and its implementation procedures, all of which exist to preserve the quality environment of the Park; indeed, compliance is in every member's best interest since the Deed specifies that exterior alterations undertaken without approval of the Corporation may subsequently be required to be removed.

3. General Care and Maintenance

The enjoyment of living in Wawaset Park is enhanced by the attractive landscaping and overall property maintenance to which homeowners throughout the Park are dedicated. To complement the residents' efforts, the Wawaset Maintenance Corporation has several major ongoing care and beautification programs:

- a. **Trees:** Scheduling and arranging the care and feeding of several hundred trees located in the curb strips and islands is the responsibility of the Trees and Grounds Committee, which also sees to the removal of debris from storms and the replacement of trees lost to storm or natural attrition. The curb-strip and island trees are owned by the City and are a significant asset to the natural beauty of the Park. Individual owners should not undertake any pruning or other work on these trees, their maintenance being solely the responsibility of the Trees and Grounds Committee. If a resident opts at his or her own expense to have a tree trimmed because of concern for damage to structures on the resident's property, the resident will need to respect the guidelines outlined by the City or be subject to fine by the City of Wilmington. A copy of the guidelines prepared by the Trees and Grounds Committee is attached as **Exhibit 7**.
- b. Landscape: Maintenance of the shrubs and lawns of the island areas at 11th Street, Crawford Circle, Bedford Court and Palmer Square is under the supervision of the Trees and Grounds Committee which also

concerns itself with maintaining neat, trash-free and safe conditions in common areas of the Park including streets, sidewalks, curbing, curb strips and the like.

- c. Snow Removal: Because of inconsistent service from the City, the Maintenance Corporation contracts with a local contractor to plow Wawaset streets after heavy snow falls. When warnings for snowstorms are broadcast, residents are urged to park vehicles off-street in garages or driveways to permit full street-width plowing. Per City of Wilmington guidelines, residents should clear all sidewalks adjacent to their property to the pavement at least one shovel's width within 24 hours after a snowfall event.

4. Assessment and Semi-annual Collection of Membership Dues

Annual membership dues are based on a uniform rate per square foot of land owned by each property holder. Bills are normally sent out semi-annually and are payable upon receipt. Prompt payment is appreciated. Monthly interest will be charged on late payments.



Wawaset Park Website

The Wawaset Park website (WawasetPark.org) contains an overview of the neighborhood as well as vital information from The Wawaset Maintenance Corporation. It contains much of the information contained in this handbook, such as architectural specifications, fence guidelines, community events, and news.

Please go to wawasetpark.org to register by using the sign-up icon in the top right corner next to "login." After registering, you will be added to the email distribution list. Emails include important Park news from the Wawaset Maintenance Corporation Board, forwarded pertinent City of Wilmington information, plus neighbor driven updates and questions.

Community Events

There are two regular community events that take place in the Park each year. These are organized by the Community Relations (Social) Committee and include the Bedford Court Picnic, Halloween Parade & Chili Cookoff and the Wawaset Park Tree Lighting. For more information on these and other community events, please visit the News & Events section of the Park's website (wawasetpark.org).

In addition to these events, the Community Relations Committee is responsible for welcoming residents to the park, delivering Wawaset Park information and the Handbook to new residents, and helping orient new residents to the neighborhood.

Fall Picnic, Halloween Parade & Chili Cookoff

Held at the beginning of October, the Fall Picnic, Halloween Parade & Chili Cookoff is a great way to join together with fellow Wawaset Park Residents for food and fun. Residents meet at the corner of Blackshire and Saymore Roads for the start of the Halloween parade, which heads along several Wawaset Park streets to end in Bedford Court. Food and beverages are provided, and residents bring sides and dessert to share. DJ Entertainment is provided for the kids. The event also features a Chili Cookoff open to all residents, which attendees vote on.



Wawaset Park Tree Lighting

Usually the first Sunday in December, residents meet at the tree in Crawford Circle to celebrate the start of the Holiday season. The tree is lit and the community enjoys pizza, hot chocolate, and desserts shared by fellow residents. The event is capped off by a special visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, who arrive on a fire engine to the delight of neighborhood children. A donation of food or other needed goods for a local food pantry is requested for attendance.



For each event, sign-ups and RSVPs are handled through a SignUp Genius or WawasetPark.org.

Public Services

All City government services can be reached by dialing 311. You can also access Wilmington 311 online at WilmingtonDE.gov/311.

TRASH AND GARBAGE COLLECTION

The City of Wilmington provides regular garbage and trash pickup service twice a week, normally Tuesday and Friday mornings. Pickup may sometimes be delayed due to holidays or unusually severe weather. Containers should be placed on the curb strip no earlier than 6:00 p.m. on Monday and Thursday evenings. Empty receptacles should be retrieved as soon as possible after the collection. If an owner happens to be away from home on or after the collection days, a neighbor can be asked to retrieve the containers.

SPECIAL TRASH PICKUP

The city collectors will not pick up and haul away large discarded household items such as furniture, carpet, plumbing fixtures, building materials, etc. on their regular collections. Such items can only be collected by special pickup, arranged by requesting special services at www.wilmingtonde.gov/residents/311. Items for special pickup should not be placed on the curb strip until the evening prior to the date scheduled by the City, so that unsightly trash piles do not detract from the appearance of the Park.

STREET LIGHTS - ELECTRICAL OUTAGE - GAS LEAKS

The most up to date information can be found at Delmarva.com. The following is information is current as of this writing.

If an individual street light fails to operate in your area, please go to delmarva.com, click the outage tab and scroll down to use the interactive map to report the outage as well as the specific location of the lamp, using the pole number or full street address.

To report electric service outages call (800) 898-8042 or text OUT 67972; for a downed powerline call (800) 898-8042; for gas leaks, call Delmarva Power at 302-454-0317. Or download the Delmarva Power Mobile app on the App Store or Google Play to use all services.

To report a suspected gas leak, leave the area immediately and then call 302-454-0317.

Always assume downed power lines are energized and stay away. To report a downed wire, call 1-800-898-8042.

STREET DRAINAGE AND GENERAL SANITATION

If a catch basin in your area is not carrying off water, please report it promptly (making sure to state the exact location) to the City by calling 311 within City limits or (302) 571-2620 outside of City limits. Any other unsanitary condition observed should be reported to your

District Trustee or appropriate City authority. If rats are seen anywhere in the Park, please report this information immediately to your District Trustee. The City no longer has a department devoted to Pest Control and recommends that householders call professional exterminators to deal with vermin problems.

EMERGENCIES

The traditional phone number for reporting fire, housebreaking, theft or ambulance emergencies is 911. For non-emergency Police response to in-city areas of Wilmington calling 654-5151 is recommended. Residents are encouraged to report all suspicious activity, including burglaries and break-ins of homes, garages or cars, first directly to the police, and then to the District Trustee.

It is important that residents maintain a clear, outside identification of their house number in case of emergencies requiring rapid entry by police, firemen or a rescue squad.

Community Responsibilities

AUTUMN LEAF REMOVAL

The City's municipal code requires that you place leaves, grass clippings, vines and other yard waste in strong paper bags for the City employees to pick up at your street curb on the same day as recycled household waste is collected. During the City's annual autumn leaf collection program you may rake or blow leaves into the street curb for collection by a City street sweeper or vacuum truck. The Trees and Grounds Committee has become active in attempting to set up firm schedules for the arrival of the leaf-pickup machines, and active also in notifying the residents of these dates. You can also check the City's website (wilmingtonde.gov) or dial 311 for notice of the scheduled days for leaf collection in Wawaset Park. You should not rake or blow your leaves into the street until the day before the city is scheduled to pick them up. Landscape contractors are required by city code to always remove leaves from properties they serve and not leave them to be collected by the City.

Rather than raking to the street on scheduled collection days, residents who prefer may collect their leaves in disposable paper bags for pickup by the regular City trash collectors.

HEDGE AND BRANCH TRIMMING

Property owners should be attentive to keeping ground covers, hedges and overhanging trees and shrubbery trimmed near sidewalks for the convenience of the many residents who enjoy walking through the Park.

SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE

The City of Wilmington assesses sidewalks annually and designates those in the worst condition of disrepair. Adjacent property owners are then notified in writing of the hazardous conditions and given the opportunity to make the repair. If owners choose not to make the repair, the City will do so as the annual budget allows, see [Sidewalk Repair Program from City Municipal Code](#). Please reach out to the City or your District Trustee if you have a question.

DOGS

Dog owners are required to keep their dogs leashed while being walked. Also, dog walkers need to have full confidence that large or powerful dogs they may be handling can be completely restrained during encounters with other dogs. The Code of the City of Wilmington requires dog owners to immediately remove fecal matter deposited by their dogs on their neighbors' property. All dog owners are urged to demonstrate good neighborliness and civic responsibility by arming themselves with a "pooper-scooper" or its equivalent and complying with this law. Please do not put waste bags in a trash can that does not belong to you.

CAR PARKING

At the time Wawaset was originally designed, the explosive growth in car ownership was not anticipated; certain practices regarding car parking have evolved over the years as means to avoid congestion. Residents who have driveways and/or garages usually park their cars on their property, rather than on the street, despite the occasional inconvenience of having to shuffle cars in and out of single-lane driveways. On-property parking represents a neighborly gesture, to those who have no available off-street parking. Fewer cars on the street facilitates rapid passage of emergency vehicles when necessary and reduces the hazard to children who might play near parked cars. When parking in the driveway, most residents recognize the aesthetic virtue of parking behind the front-of-house line, so as to enhance the open vista of the Park's attractive front yard landscaping. Under no circumstances should cars parked in a driveway block the sidewalk.

EXHIBIT 1

Wawaset Park Deed and Agreement

Updated Version can be found at WawasetPark.org

EXHIBIT 2

Wawaset Maintenance Corporation By Laws

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EXHIBIT 3
Officers, Trustees, Committee Members
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EXHIBIT 4
Wawaset Park District Map
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EXHIBIT 5
Architectural Committee Guidelines
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EXHIBIT 6

Wawaset Park Fence/Hedge Policy

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EXHIBIT 7
Tree Trimming Guidelines
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EXHIBIT 8

Directory of Wawaset Park Residents

The most current list can be found at the Neighborhood tab at WawasetPark.org