



City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

New Bedford to Unveil New Public Orchard at Hazelwood Park

Friday, November 4, 2016, 11AM at Hazelwood Park in New Bedford

New Bedford, Massachusetts- Tomorrow, Friday, November 4, 2016, at 11AM Mayor Jon Mitchell will join with other city and community leaders to celebrate the planting of a new public orchard in Hazelwood Park on Clark's Point. The orchard is the latest of a series of improvements outlined in a new Hazelwood Park Master Plan designed to highlight the sprawling urban park's history, amenities and breathtaking views of Clark's Cove.

A collection of 30 heirloom apple and pear trees, which include a diverse group of early, midseason, and late fruiting tree varieties for an extended harvest of fruit good for fresh eating and culinary uses have been planted along the park's entryway.

The public orchard is one of several planned enhancements for Hazelwood Park included in the City's new park Master Plan recently prepared by the Parks, Recreation & Beaches Department with input from the public. Other improvements identified in the Master Plan include rehabilitation of the historic bowling green, additional picnic tables and shade trees, as well as adaptive reuse of the Congdon-Lucas House.

"When Hazelwood Park was a private estate, the property featured an orchard and so it's a bit of a nod to the history of this place that we are able to plant an orchard. This orchard will also be educational resource for the residents of the city thanks to the support of Youth Opportunities Unlimited and New Bedford City Fruit," said Mary Rapoza, Director of Parks, Recreation and Beaches.

Sourcing and planting the fruit trees was joint effort between the City of New Bedford's Department of Public Infrastructure and Parks, Recreation, & Beaches. "The Department of Public Infrastructure maintains the backbones of much of the city's critical infrastructure and we are pleased to support the establishment of this public agricultural resource," said Chancery Perks, City Arborist and Superintendent of Parks, Department of Public Infrastructure.

The Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network's New Bedford City Fruit initiative will take on the role of stewardship for Hazelwood Park's public orchard. State Representative Bill Straus (D - Mattapoisett) and the Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network launched the New Bedford City Fruit initiative this year, in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, and the City of New Bedford.

The mission of New Bedford City Fruit is to promote food security through maintaining historical connections with the cultivation of urban fruit in order to nourish people, build community, and encourage a healthy climate. "Urban fruit is an underutilized agricultural resource in our community," said Stephanie Reusch, Coordinator of the Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network.

New Bedford City Fruit will partner with the local youth of Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) who currently help water and weed the Victory Park Children's Garden and Orchard.

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