

**Chess Suite I** was installed January 16, 2010 at the ROCURC Garden.

### **About the ROCURC Garden:**

#### **History:**

Nothing symbolizes the fruits of community activism in Roselawn more than the ROCURC Garden and Parking Lot. The Roselawn Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation (ROCURC) purchased the parking lot at 7405 Reading Road from the City of Cincinnati in 1986. Since that time, it has continuously operated as a free parking amenity for patrons of the Roselawn Business District.

#### **Its Present and Future Role:**

From its prime location at the Gateway to the Roselawn Business District, ROCURC Garden commands an enviable vantage point from which to lead and influence future development in our neighborhood.

Recognizing this, the Roselawn Community Council (RCC) and ROCURC began site improvements in 2009 to create a **dedicated public greenspace** within the Roselawn Business District that reinforces existing design standards within the Commercial and Residential Areas of Roselawn. ROCURC Garden brings the genteel feeling of this mature neighborhood of gaslight streetlamps, wide tree lawns bordered by sidewalks and well-manicured yards, into the heart of the Business District.

#### **Design Values:**

ROCURC Garden has been certified as a National Wildlife Federation Habitat. Not only must landscape selections be suitable for the urban environment of the Reading Road Corridor, but they must also satisfy the sustenance and shelter requirements for habitat certification. The twelve trees received from Fall ReLeaf 2009 are selections made by the Urban Forestry Division of Cincinnati Parks. The Southern magnolia is an urban tolerant evergreen, prominently featured in many Roselawn residential landscapes.

Choices for the human furnishings must consider comfort, functionality, aesthetic design, and quality craftsmanship. **Chess Suite I** is hand-carved from locally quarried Indiana limestone, a material prominently featured in existing Roselawn homes and commercial buildings built in the early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century (note the limestone trim on the Roselawn Center Building across the street). The **Sunderhaus Bench Suite**, recently refurbished from local sassafras wood, reminds us of the farmland heritage of this area little over a century past, and echoes the use of timber trim on many of our Tudor-style homes.

## Phase I Site Improvements:

### Landscape improvements:

- Removal of dead or dying trees
- Addition of soil amendment (pine bark fines and compost)
- Installation of 13 new trees, representing 4 different species
  - 5 -- Cockspur hawthorn (*Crataegus crusgalli*)
  - 4 -- Kousa dogwood (*Cornus Kousa*)
  - 3 – Yoshino cherry (*Prunus x yedoensis*)
  - 1 –Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora* 'Little Gem')

### Furniture:

**Chess Suite I**, multipurpose game table with stools

- Indiana limestone
- Karen Heyl, stone carving
- Paul Lashua, metal armature

**Sunderhaus Designer Bench Suite** refurbished

- Sassafras wood
- Peter Hilligoss, wood fabrication

**Site Certification:** National Wildlife Habitat #125209

## Funding for Phase I:

Phase I funding for ROCURC Garden improvements in 2009 came from the following sources:

○ Roselawn Community Council	\$3,649
○ KCB minigrant	\$ 450
○ Fall ReLeaf 2009	\$ 600
○ Private donations	\$4,040
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,739</b>

**Phase II plans** target additional permanent furnishings, Chess Suite II and a bench, a gatepost to display the NWF Habitat sign, and WiFi (wireless) access through LilyPad.

**If you would like to participate** in the planning, fundraising, or implementation of Phase II, please contact the writer, [nancysunnenberg@hotmail.com](mailto:nancysunnenberg@hotmail.com).