

Pike and Parks Team Up for Tree Planting (5.31.09)

Indy Parks, Pike Township neighborhood associations, City County Councilor Janice McHenry and the Pike Soccer Club joined together on May 30 to complete their plan to enhance the Mary & John Geisse Soccer Complex by planting over a hundred shrubs and trees along Reed Road.

The landscaping will serve as buffer between the neighborhoods, soccer fields and Eagle Creek trail users. Don Colvin, Deputy Director of Indy Parks, said Indy Parks was able to keep the cost to \$3,000 by using volunteers and in-house mulch the department derives from recycling trees it removes from parks in the course of normal maintenance.

Trees like Arrowwood and Juneberry were part of the mix. There were several factors considered for tree and shrub selection, primarily the ability to withstand wet conditions in a swale location. Colvin said the Juneberries will attract wildlife and offer pink leaves in the fall. Tree height was a factor with power lines overhead. "The right tree at the right location," he said. McHenry said the neighborhood residents are taking on the responsibility for watering. The Pike Township Fire Department assisted with the initial watering. Thomas Geisse of Pike Youth Soccer called neighbors coming together in support of the initiative "fabulous." "Who doesn't like to plant a tree," he said. Residents from The Trees, Trees II, and Ballinshire Estates neighborhoods participated in the plantings.

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Volunteers and Pike Township firefighters came out to assist Indy Parks with planting trees and shrubs along Reed Road.

Photo by Linda Karn

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Submitted by: Jeffrey R. Miller

Have you driven down Reed Road, near 56th St, recently? On Saturday morning, May 30, a combination of homeowners, Indy Parks employees, Pike Soccer Club representatives, elected officials, and even some Pike Firemen pitched in to plant over 150 trees and shrubs along this section of Eagle Creek Park. Operating out of the Mayor's Gardens parking lot, the volunteers gathered starting at 8:15 am. A demonstration was provided by Indy Parks Lindsey Purcell. Teams then spread out and started digging and planting.

Joe Hunt, of the Eagle Creek Residents Alliance, made it a family outing, bringing his 4 grand daughters. Joggers and hikers along the Eagle Creek Greenway stopped to see what was happening. Some pitched in and helped. City Councilor Janice McHenry, Indy Parks Director Stuart Lowry, and Pike Township Trustee Lula Patton worked side by side with the volunteers.

A large mulch pile in the parking lot was methodically moved to cover the vicinity of the plantings. Parks officials explained the mulch was from recycled tree waste from Indianapolis parks; essentially free mulch. In less than 3 hours, the plants were in the ground and the mulch moved. In the coming weeks some additional mulch will be positioned by Indy Parks. A watering schedule will be developed to preserve the investment in the future.

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