

## Summary

- LCFP's forestation goals for Fort Sheridan are for the birds
- TFS's Parade Ground lawn mowing cost is very little
- Details and adverse effects of LCFP's forestation plan
- TFS secured exclusive right to maintain east grove of Parade Ground
- Parade Ground grove can't be altered unless alteration is harmonious with TFS landscape and majority of TFS MHA members give informed approval
- A few of the other problems that LCFP's forestation plan will cause
- Destroying Parade Ground lawn is not the best way to preserve trees

Please see the enclosed LCFP's forestation plan for Fort Sheridan. The plan's goal is to create and extend a "continuous" forest on its Fort Sheridan property that connects with Open Lands to the south and Lake Forest to the north, making life better for birds and other wild animals. Homeowners are not even an afterthought in its plan.

The plan makes no secret of the LCFP's "blind eye" for the landscape that O.C. Simonds sculpted on and around the Parade Ground. The LCFP's plan will reduce the seeming vastness of the Parade Ground and close up vistas. As their plan states, the LCFP wants to "**restore**" the Parade Ground to a wild natural state that the LCFP supposes might have existed on this land "**before it was historically altered**" by our forefathers.

The LCFP's ultimate goal is to convert all of the Parade Ground to a wild state. The TFS Newsletter of Feb. 2014 "Board Notes" say that "representatives of the [TFS MHA] Board" met with the LCFP then and "favorably discussed" the LCFP's forestation plan — even though the LCFP told them that it desires to make the entire Parade Ground "look more like other vegetated [LCFP] sites as opposed to a large lawn area"!

Mowing the lawn of the eastern grove costs us less than \$5,000 a year. For some Board member(s) saving that \$5,000 is worth destroying the Parade Ground lawn and "impeding sight lines" as indicated in the Board Notes in recent TFS Newsletters.

**But \$5,000 is only 1.8% of the \$272,000 TFS landscaping budget. \$5,000 divided by the 550+ homes in TFS averages only \$9 a year for each home to pay for mowing the lawn of our "crown jewel". \$5,000 is not even 1/4 the \$19,000 to \$25,000+ that TFS has budgeted each year (2010 - 2015) for sprinklers and watering the grass in the common area lots.**

The LCFP's forestation plan entails planting thousands more trees and shrubs all at one time and replacing the Parade Ground's mowed lawn with 3-foot-high wild undergrowth.

Such tall ground cover on the rolling terrain of the Parade Ground will obliterate vistas from vantage points on lower terrain toward higher terrain. And the "shrubs" listed in the enclosed LCFP plan all grow 12 to 20 feet high. The new trees will be cheap, very undeveloped saplings. That means their foliage will be at eye level for years and years, obstructing vistas much more than full grown trees.

It's shocking that the LCFP wants to do this despite the Parade Ground being an integral part of Fort Sheridan's National Landmark site. And the very thing that makes it such a cultural and scenic treasure is its "historical alteration" by our forefathers — the very thing that LCFP's forestation expressly wants to try to erase!

**The Illinois Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") has made it clear that they object to the LCFP's Parade Ground forestation plan.** (See their "Adverse Effect" letter, enclosed.)

Initially, the LCFP aims to "reforest" no less than 1/3 of the Parade Ground, starting from the east. This will obscure or block vistas both to and from the Parade Grounds eastern grove and to and from the eastern historic district of homes. It will also reduce the seeming vastness of the Parade Ground.

Our TFS MHA Declaration gives us the right to maintain the the easternmost 1/6th portion of the Parade Ground so that we can ensure it remains harmonious with our landscape throughout TFS — no matter who owns the Parade Ground now or in the future. That right also helps ensure that our home values can't be diminished or our vistas blocked by discordant alterations of the Parade Ground.

**Our Declaration (Article 5.5) forbids changes to the eastern grove landscape and other "improvements" that are inharmonious with that of the homes and common areas of TFS. Even harmonious improvements of the eastern grove are not allowed unless a majority of TFS homeowners give informed approval first. And allowing a third party such as the LCFP to take over our right to maintain the eastern grove would require an amendment to the Declaration, which even more homeowners would have to agree to.** (It is very disturbing that our Board has been silent about all of this.)

Simonds made the Parade Ground's sweeping panorama apparent from vantage points all around the Parade Ground. But the LCFP wants to create a single "tourist attraction" view of what will remain of the Parade Ground panorama after forestation. That roadside "tourist attraction" will be at the center of the elevated north edge of the Parade Ground. By impeding views from other points around Parade Ground with forestation, LCFP wants to encourage people to consider that one spot to be the prime vantage point for the Parade Ground. Such a "best view" plan may well cause problems

at that one spot where tourists may want to briefly park their cars on Leonard Wood there rather than walk from the parking lot.

Another very predictable problem will be created if the Parade Ground is converted to a wild state of nature: skunks and other rodents. The growing number of coyotes moving into Fort Sheridan and its surrounds may also appreciate the added cover.

The LCFFP claims that the trees in the eastern grove now will soon die without replacing the mowed lawn with 3 foot high wild undergrowth. They say that is the only way to save them. That is not true. Ensuring the health of the trees can be achieved in ways homeowners do for the trees on their own land, such as creating mulch beds (which also makes mowing the lawn even quicker).

Tree plantings should be staggered over many years, replacing dying trees with well-developed young trees, rather than planting many hundreds of very undeveloped, "twiggy" saplings all at once amongst all the existing trees.

Please sign the enclosed SOS Petition as indicated on it, and returning it to us by hand or mail to the address below:

Friends of the Parade Ground  
C/O Peter Almeroth  
3649 Leonard Wood E  
Highland Park, Il. 60035

(An self-addressed envelope is provided for your convenience.)

# SOS — *SAVE OUR SITE* — PETITION

Are you aware that the "Forestation Plan" of the Lake County Forest Preserve ("LCFP") is about to reduce and block your Parade Ground vistas by replacing much of its lawn with wild, tall-growth ground cover and by planting many hundreds more trees and adding hundreds of tall-growth "shrubs"?

Such forestation will also ruin the scenic harmony that the Parade Ground's landscaping shares with our Town of Fort Sheridan ("TFS").

The Parade Ground's vast, broad vistas of its stunning, picturesque union of land, sky, and architecture is Fort Sheridan's "crown jewel". It adds immense value to TFS.

If you object to such disharmonious forestation of the Parade Ground, and want its vistas maintained throughout, then please sign and return this petition by hand or mail to the address on the envelope provided ASAP.\*

NAME PRINTED      SIGNATURE      TFS ADDRESS

Janet Beger      Janet Beger      3535 Patten Rd 6F  
Highland Park Ill.  
60035

\* If you wish more information, please see accompanying material.

*Thank you for your efforts to make us aware of this plan!*