

Matthias Baldwin Park awarded Level I Arboretum Accreditation
by The ARBNET Accreditation Program

August 7, 2024

Matthias Baldwin Park has been awarded a Level I Accreditation by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum, for achieving particular standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens. The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program is the only global initiative to officially recognize arboreta at various levels of development, capacity, and professionalism. Matthias Baldwin Park is also now recognized as an accredited arboretum in the Morton Register of Arboreta, a database of the world's arboreta and gardens dedicated to woody plants.

Matthias Baldwin Park was designed by landscape artist Athena Tacha and dedicated in 1991 as Franklin Town Park. The name was changed to Matthias Baldwin Park in 2011. The entire two-acre park is a Percent for Art installation, with central landscaped beds surrounded by walking paths, lawn, and over fifty trees. There are thirty-two different species, cultivars and varieties. Athena Tacha chose the original trees, and some, like the two Cedars of Lebanon, have become spectacular specimens. Over the past thirty years, some trees have been replaced by Philadelphia Parks and Recreation and some by the Friends group. The future plans are to replace dying trees with native species that will withstand climate change.

The park is managed by Philadelphia Parks and Recreation with support from the Friends of Matthias Baldwin Park. The Friends group, and everyone in the Baldwin Park neighborhood, is the "eyes and ears on the park." The Friends sponsor events like Movie Night and the Howl-o-ween costumed dog parade. More specific to the greenery, the Friends have raised and spent over \$20,000 in the last five years to replenish the plantings in the raised beds. In order to make the park an outdoor classroom for the community, the Friends have installed tree tags on all the trees in the park. Each tag lists the scientific name, the common name, and has a QR code linked to a page on our website that discusses that particular tree in the context of the park. There is a short botany lesson on each of these pages. The Friends have conducted tree tours for neighbors and school groups. The main entry page for the tree guides is at www.baldwinparkphilly.org/trees-in-the-park.

The Friends depend on the park neighbors for energy, labor, ideas, and funding. The park would not be the oasis it is without the Friends group. Read about the Friends group accomplishments at <https://www.baldwinparkphilly.org/accomplishments-of-friends> and then JOIN at <https://www.baldwinparkphilly.org/copy-of-membership-form>.

ArbNet is an interactive, collaborative, international community of arboreta. ArbNet facilitates the sharing of knowledge, experience, and other resources to help arboreta meet their institutional goals and works to raise professional standards through the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program. The accreditation program, sponsored and coordinated by The Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois in cooperation with American Public Gardens Association and Botanic Gardens Conservation International, is the only global initiative to officially recognize arboreta based on a set of professional standards. The program offers four levels of accreditation, recognizing arboreta of various degrees of development, capacity and professionalism. Standards include planning, governance, public access, programming and tree science, planting and conservation. More information is available at www.arbnet.org.