



SOUTHBEND DRIVE RIPARIAN REBIRTH



Our initial approach to the honeysuckle nightmare

RIPARIAN VEGETATION SHOWCASE ON WOLF RUN AT CLAYS MILL ROAD

Final report on a project funded by Kentucky American Water Company.

Summary. During April to December of 2016, the Friends of Parks in Fayette County implemented this project supported by a grant of \$5000 from Kentucky America Water Company. In partnership with Friends of Wolf Run Inc., Bluegrass Woodland Restoration Center (Julian Campbell), Fayette County Schools (Lafayette High), and Living Gardens LLC (Beate Popkin), we worked along Southbend Drive, from Clays Mill Road to Lafayette Drive. We removed weeds (especially bush honeysuckle) and plant native shrubs or small trees. On September 11th, a larger group of volunteers was assembled from the neighborhood and Y Club at Lafayette High School, with food donated by the Good Foods Coop. We removed weeds from the prior (2012) plantings of plum, willow, cane and rose. We removed all of the remaining honeysuckle and vines from the two old house lots now owned by the city (1856 Clays Mill Road and 566 Lone Oak Drive). We removed the old wire fence along the creek, and miscellaneous trash. We then planted 6 wild plums (*Prunus munsoniana*), 6 wafer-ashes (*Ptelea*), 6 bladder-nuts (*Staphylea*), 12 spicebushes (*Lindera*), 12 black raspberries (*Rubus occidentalis*), 18 cane (*Arundinaria*), 10 chokecherries (*Prunus virginiana*) and 28 roughleaf dogwoods (*Cornus drummondii*). These were all grown from native sources in the central Bluegrass Region, and mostly 5-10 ft tall. They are planted mostly in broad rows parallel to the creek. Extra dogwoods were used to help screen Clays Mill Road from Lone Oak Drive, replacing the previous thicket of alien honeysuckle. Living Gardens installed a small but intense wildflower planting behind the guard-rail at the bridge. In addition to this general report for 2016, we are providing some general recommendations for future work and maintenance, so that the neighborhood association could be briefed. We are also printing a flier for the neighborhood and city staff, and placing a few educational signs at the site. In future years, the site could become a small botanical garden, producing fruits and seeds for local use.



**Halfway
through the
clearing
process**

Details of budget and implementation during 2016

Weed removal: budgeted at \$2000, with \$1500 paid by grant to JC. Additional donated work by L. Register, neighbors, Y Club, other volunteers was valued at \$500+ (more than 50 hours).

Design of front: budgeted at \$1000, all paid by grant to Living Gardens LLC (Beate Popkin) for their installation of the flower bed behind the guard-rail.

*Woody plant material (trees, shrubs, cane, etc.): budgeted at \$3000, with \$2000 paid by grant to JC. His prices were discounted by \$1000+, itemized as follows.

6 wild plums	(<i>Prunus munsoniana</i>)	3-6 ft	\$270
6 wafer-ashes	(<i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>)	4-8 ft	\$360
6 bladder-nuts	(<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>)	1-3 ft	\$120
12 spicebushes	(<i>Lindera benzoin</i>)	1-3 ft	\$240
12 black raspberries	(<i>Rubus occidentalis</i>)	1-3 ft	\$240
18 cane	(<i>Arundinaria gigantea</i>)	1-3 ft	\$360
10 chokecherries	(<i>Prunus virginiana</i>)	6 ft	\$600
28 roughleaf dogwoods	(<i>Cornus drummondii</i>)	6-8 ft	\$1960

TOTAL			\$3350

Print brochure (flier and final report): budgeted at \$500, from grant for distribution of information selected from this report.

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*Two lines in the original budget are combined here since emphasis was shifted from “Flowers, Cane, Grass” into general woody plantings by JC. Some wildflower planting was included as part of the work by Living Gardens LLC.



Tangled corner of the Clays Mill lot: honeysuckle and hackberry grown into utility lines, which we cleared out

Overall design and future potential

The basic concept for design here is to combine three components.

1. Restoration of native vegetation along the unmowed side of the creek, with focus on woody plants but also trying some wildflower beds.
2. Extended plantings of native small trees and shrubs in rows set back from the creek, with broad mowed grassy walkways between the rows; these can be used for seed production.
3. Selection of some woody species for fruit production, especially raspberries, plums, and pawpaws.

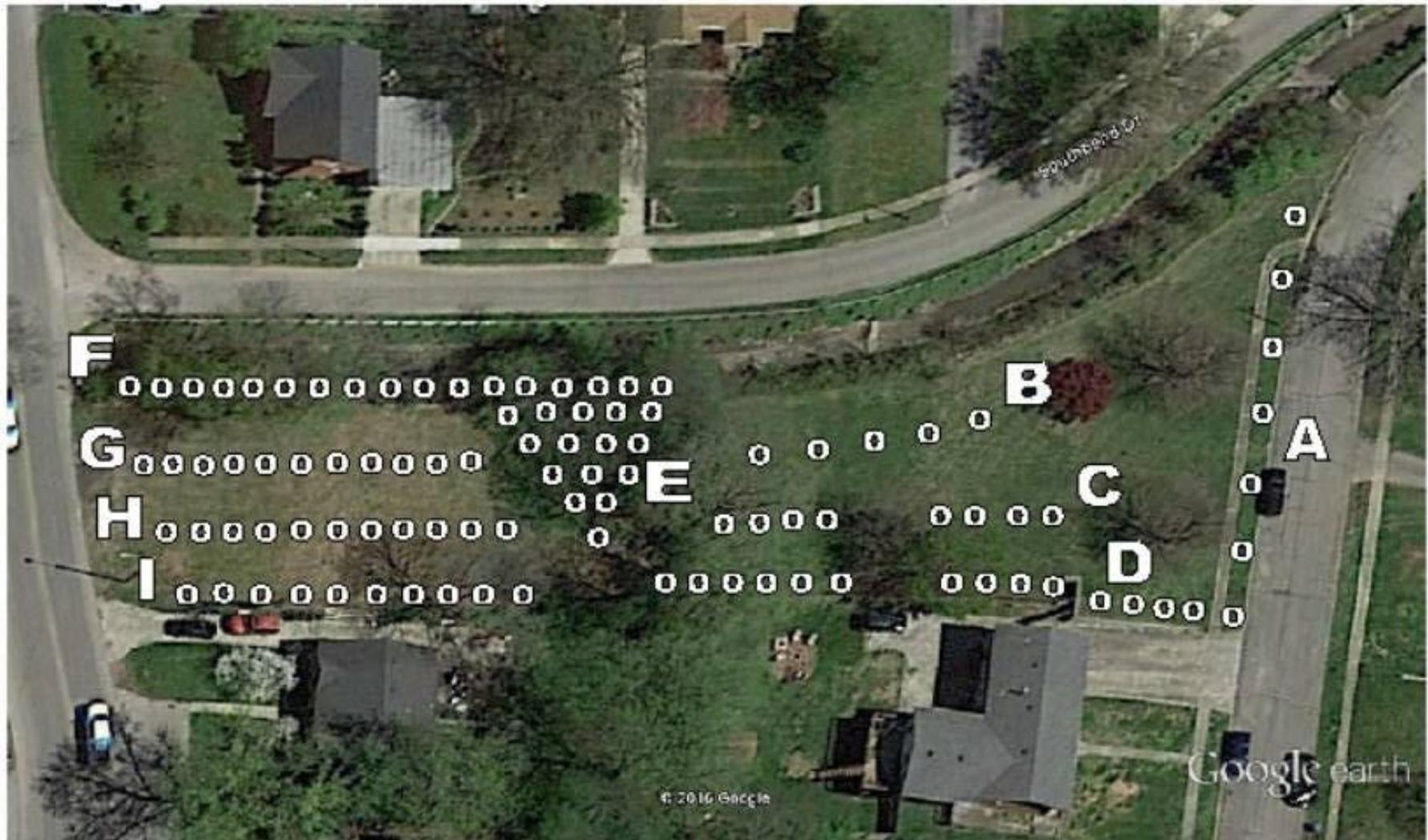
There are practical issues involved in this combination.

1. General height and density of vegetation should shade the creek in part but not bend onto roads or sidewalks; Clays Mill Road should be screened but the junction not obscured.
2. The best balance of mowing, mulching or other weed control will have to evolve with the site, and with further communication among neighbors plus city staff.
3. The future potential for production of cuttings, fruits and seeds could be developed, perhaps in cooperation with the UK Arboretum, Ky. Native Plant Society and local nurseries.

This site could eventually be part of a connected corridor from Southland Drive to the Allendale-Moberly Wetland and further downstream. In addition to providing a native shady corridor along this “Southland Branch” of Wolf Run, the new plantings could become an important botanical feature. The diversity of native species could be demonstrated for students and general public. There are currently almost no local commercial sources for some of these species, so propagation from these plantings could fill a significant need for restoration in the central Bluegrass region. Moreover, here we could promote more consumption of native fruits and nuts. Large oaks and hickories could be grown in the future.



At an initial tour with neighbors and students during July, some aspects of the project were discussed and detailed



Suggested plantings: this whole plan will take another year or so to complete. At the 11th Sep event, we can focus on preparing planting beds for B, C, D and E, plus some plantings but not the raspberries yet. Section E will block the view through from Lone Oak to Clays Mill.

A = plums; B = plums; C = wafer-ash (citrus family); D = raspberries; E = mix of spicebush and bladdernut (shade); F = more cane and willows; G/H = pawpaw etc. I = raspberries etc.

Draft of flier (as one-page educational handout)

Southbend Drive: riparian restoration from Lafayette to Clays Mill

In 2016, the Friends of Parks in Fayette County has continued to enhance the landscape along Southbend Drive, especially in the two cleared lots towards Clays Mill Road. We received a grant from Kentucky American Water Company to do most of this work, for which we are most grateful.

The basic concept for design here is to combine three components.

1. Restoration of native vegetation along the unmowed side of the creek, focussing on woody plants but also adding wildflower beds.
2. Extended plantings of native small trees and shrubs in rows set back from the creek, with broad mowed grassy walkways between the rows; these could later be used for seed production or cuttings.
3. Selection of some woody species for fruit production, especially raspberries, plums, and pawpaws. Edible nuts could also be added in the future, especially shellbark hickory, which has large nutritious kernels within thick hard shells.

The project is part of a grander vision promoted by Friends of Wolf Run (wolfrun.org), a partner in this project. Their vision is “dedicated to the proposition that neighbors, with the right information, working together, can make a difference in the quality of our creek. And in the process, make our property more valuable, and our community a more pleasant place to live.” Friends of Wolf Run works with the Wolf Run Watershed Council, The Lexington, Fayette Urban County Government and the Kentucky Division of Water to update and implement the Wolf Run Watershed Management Plan (<http://wolfrunwater.org/index.php/planning/>).

A complementary botanical vision is provided by the “Bluegrass Woodland Restration Center”—as conceived by Julian Campbell, another partner in this project. Diverse native trees and shrubs used to grow around Lexington before the arrival of Virginian settlers (bluegrasswoodland.com). Some of these species are now planted along Southbend Drive, in addition to the preexisting elderberry that has already scattered itself along the creek (thanks to birds).

Cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*): this bamboo was dominant along buffalo trails, persists in thin woods, but rarely flowers or seeds.

Roughleaf Dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*): this is the best native replacement species for the invasive alien bush honeysuckle.

Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*): this was probably common in more shady woods, but it has been virtually eliminated around Lexington.

Black raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*): this persists along cool woodland edges, and provide delectable eating in early summer.

Goose Plum (*Prunus munsoniana*): this edible wild plum was common around Indian village, but it has been largely ignored.

Choke-Cherry (*Prunus virginiana*): this northern shrub is rare in Ky. but persists along the Palisades with showy spring flowers.

Wafer-Ash (*Ptelea trifoliata*): this member of the citrus family produces aromatic flowers and leaves eaten by giant swallowtails.

Bladder-Nut (*Staphylea trifolia*): this was probably common in deeper woods on steeper slopes—another good native replacement.

Many other small trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses could be established at this site as part of a continuing program. The site could eventually be part of a connected corridor from Southland Drive to the Allendale-Moberly Wetland and further downstream. In addition to providing a native shady corridor along this “Southland Branch” of Wolf Run, the new plantings could become an important botanical feature. The diversity of native species could be demonstrated for students and general public. There are currently almost no local commercial sources for some of these species, so propagation from these plantings could fill a significant need for restoration in the central Bluegrass region. Moreover, here we could promote more consumption of native fruits and nuts. And of course there is plenty of room for vegetable gardens in the cleared lots along Lafayette Parkway.



Sherri McPherson (left), nationally-renowned high-school teacher, brought her Y Club students to the Sep 11th event. Timothy Mitsumori brought the International Tutoring Club, also from Lafayette High School

Recommendation for future work.

In the short-term, following actions would be appropriate.

1. Signage: a few signs could be posted on site; final text to be determined by partners.
2. Weeding: continued work of several days per year will be needed to maintain quality.
 - 2a. Pulling of obvious annual weeds in early and late summer, especially ragweed.
 - 2b. Cutting/herbicide of woody resprouts, especially honeysuckle & wintercreeper.
 - 2c. More intensive weeding in flower bed planted by Living Gardens LLC.
3. Host a day in spring and a day in fall, in order to do basic maintenance with volunteers; also tour the area on these days for general education, and perhaps SCAPA.

In the long-term, further discussion and planning with neighbors and city is needed, The following actions are worthy of consideration.

1. Additional plantings in the two cleared lots, as outlined above. These could include a broad row of pawpaws in the lot facing Clays Mill Road. But we will have to wait a few years for completion, after the road-widening project.
2. Perhaps further wildflower beds close to the fronts of these lots and along Southbend Drive; this would depend on if volunteers organize themselves or if regular funding is secured.
3. More planning to connect this project with work in the cleared lot west of Clays Mill Road, in the other cleared lots along Southbend Drive, and in the lots along Lafayette Parkway.

It will be useful to develop these plans together with Friends of Wolf Run and the city, plus interaction with neighborhood associations, local schools and colleges. Success will depend on a regular program of maintenance that involves neighbors and student. Success would also be enhanced if we can demonstrate useful propagation of the native plants growing at this site or elsewhere along the creek, if we generate more pollinators such as butterflies, and if we can produce good food.



Whether working alone (left: with “King-of-Spades” tool) or in groups, it is possible to get the job done and have fun!



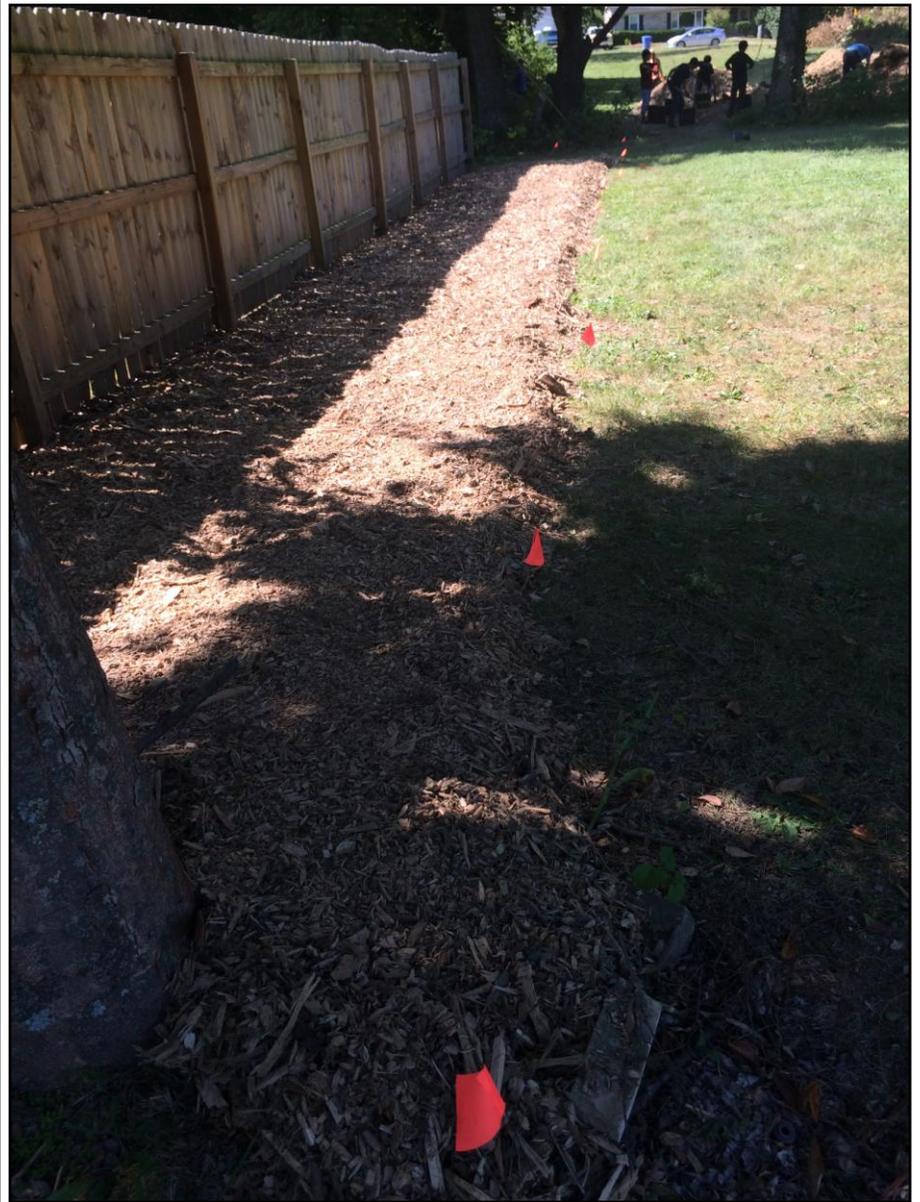
“Rome was not built in a day”—but with a large friendly group for a few hours, great progress can be made!



As the afternoon wears on, relief comes from endless jokes, social media, drinks, snacks and smiles!



Then, a surprising treat—weird wild fruit workshop led by Julian Campbell, Ph.D.—pawpaws, wild plums, crabapples!



Future bed for black raspberries—formerly grass (left) but now wood-chipped and planted with delectable fruit (right)



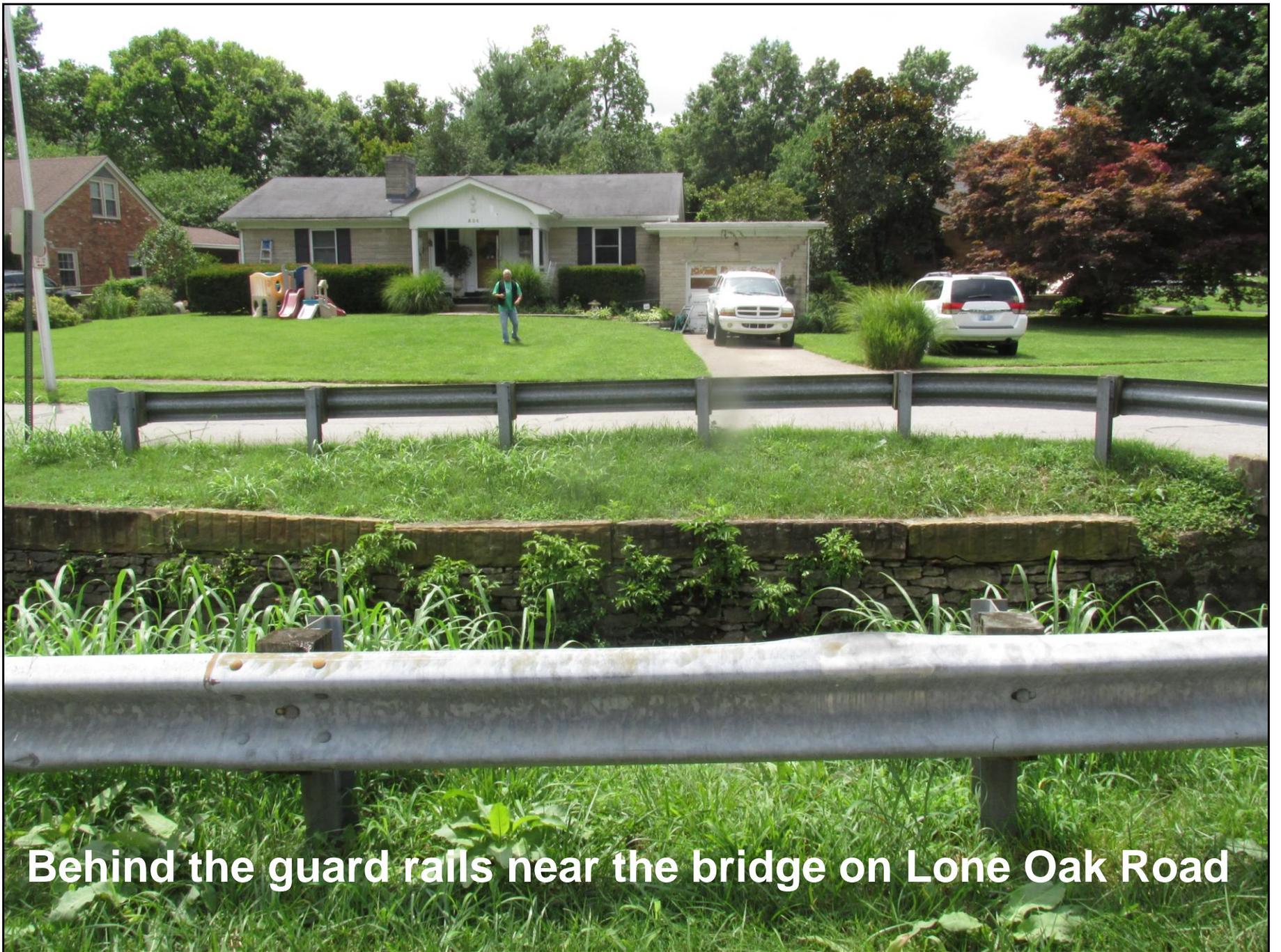
Setting out dogwoods in former honeysuckle thicket

**Relaxing finally
after much hard work,
chipping & planting**





**Wait—there's more!
Looking east towards
Lafayette Parkway**



Behind the guard rails near the bridge on Lone Oak Road

**PLANTING BY LIVING GARDENS LLC, 124 Idle Hour Drive, Lexington, Ky. 40502
859-619-9202; www.LivingGardensKentucky.com**

Proposal: to design and install a mixed shrub and flower bed along the creek on the southeast corner of Lone Oak and Southbend Drive near the bridge. The bed would be 35' long and 6' wide. I propose to plant 3 red chokeberries, 3 St. John's Wort shrubs, 58 perennial flowers and 3 switchgrasses. The flowers are selected so that they create a succession of showy bloom from May to October. I would plant the following flowers, starting at the bridge and moving toward the end of the guard rail:

3 eastern Bluestar	(<i>Amsonia tabernaemontana</i>)
10 Tennessee coneflowers	(<i>Echinacea tennesseensis</i>)
1 slender mountain mint	(<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>)
3 aromatic asters	(<i>Symphyotrichum oblongifolium</i>)
2 blue baptisia	(<i>Baptisia australis</i>)
5 blazing star	(<i>Liatris spicata</i>)
14 smooth beardtongues	(<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>)
4 black-eyed susans	(<i>Rudbeckia</i> , garden variety ? <i>deamii</i>)
2 New England asters	(<i>Symphyotrichum novae-angliae</i>)
3 smooth asters	(<i>Symphyotrichum laevis</i>)
3 ox-eye sunflowers	(<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>)
2 white baptisia	(<i>Baptisia alba</i>)
3 Arkansas bluestar	(<i>Amsonia hubrichtii</i>)
3 switchgrass	(<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Northwind')

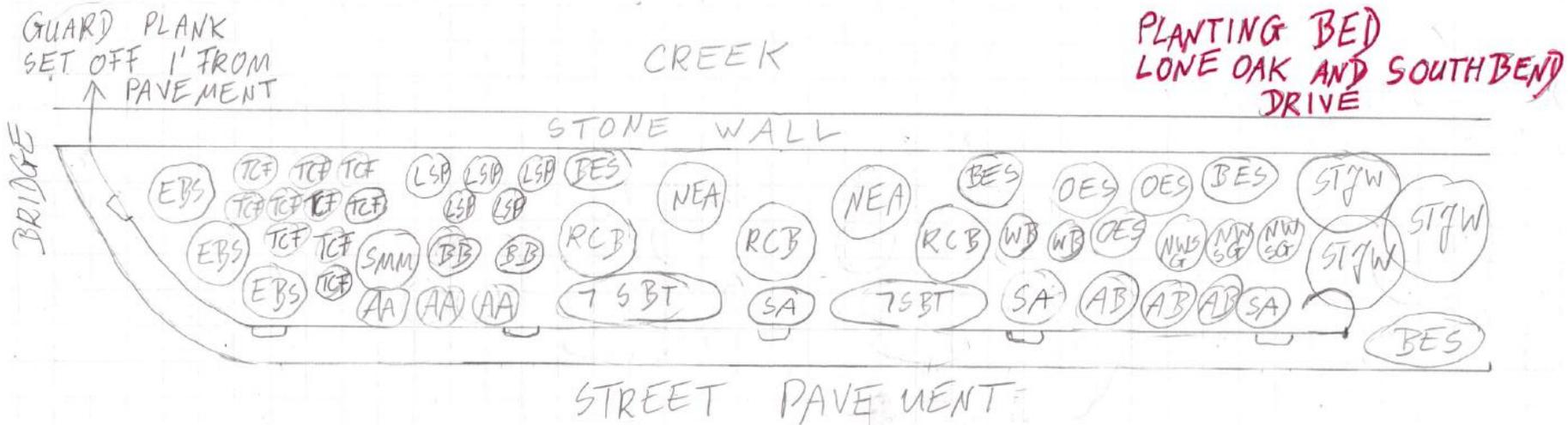
Cost	\$ 990.00
3 red chokeberries (<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>) @30 each	90.00
2 St. John's wort (<i>Hypericum frondosum</i>) @ \$20 each	60.00
58 native perennials @ \$5 each	290.00
Labor: design and grass removal (with glyphosate)	150.00
Labor: planting and mulching (4 hrs. each for 2 landscapers @ \$40/hr. and 1 helper @ \$20/hr.)	400.00

If weather permits (i.e. with some rain in September and October), the spraying can be done in September and about half the planting (spring and early summer flowering plants) in October. It would be desirable for a few volunteers, who are committed to maintaining this bed, to be present at the time of planting so that they can get a sense of the future maintenance tasks. I advise against volunteers doing significant amounts of the actual planting, because that tends to be inefficient, and – in this case – hazardous due to the drop toward the creek.





**The flower bed
installed by Beate
Popkin (Living
Gardens LLC)**



KEY

- 3 AA AROMATIC ASTER
- 3 AB ARKANSAS BLUESTAR
- 4 BES BLACK-EYED SUSAN (GARDEN VAR)
- 2 BB BLUE BAPTISIA
- 6
- 3 EBS EASTERN BLUESTAR
- 5 LSP LIATRIS SPICATA
- 2 NEA NEW ENGLAND ASTER
- 3 NWSG NORTH WIND SWITCHGRASS
- 3 OES OX-EYE SUNFLOWER
- x 3 RCB RED CHOKEBERRY
- 3 SA SMOOTH ASTER
- 14 SBT SMOOTH BEARD TONGUE
- x 3 STJW ST. JOHN'S WORT
- 10 TCF TENNESSEE CONEFLOWER
- 2 WB WHITE BAPTISIA

1 SMM SLENDER MOUNTAIN MINT

1 SQUARE = 1 FOOT

x SHRUBS (2 SPECIES)

57 perennials
1 GRASS

1887 Clays Mill Rd
Lexington, Kentucky

Street View - Aug 2015



Before: August 2015

Hide imagery

5 Southbend Dr
Lexington, Kentucky

Street View - Aug 2015



Hide imagery



Before: August 2015



After: August 2016