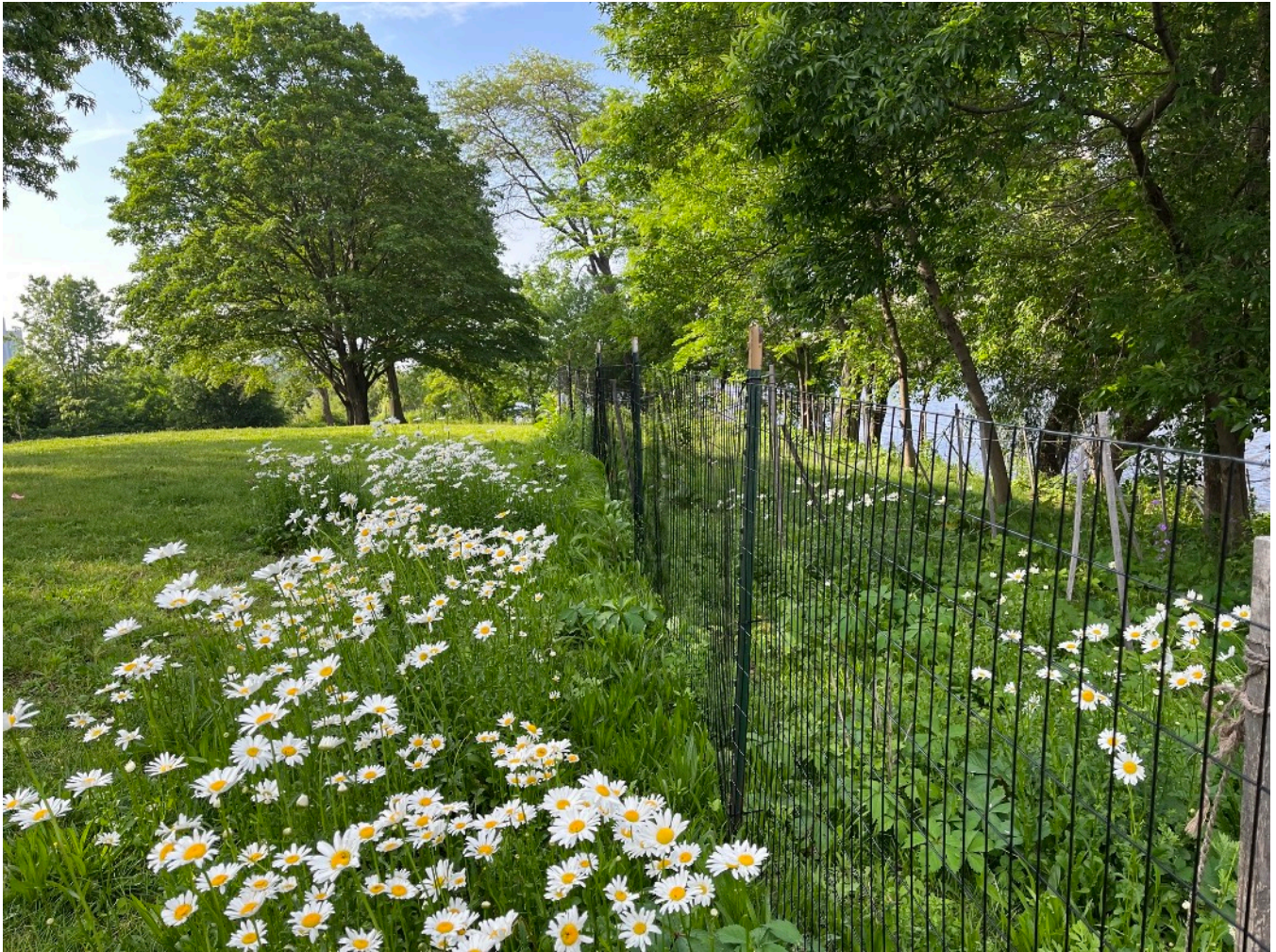


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# Magazine Beach Partners

## 2023 Annual Report



*Making Magazine Beach a more welcoming and vibrant park, connecting its community and stewarding its natural grounds.*

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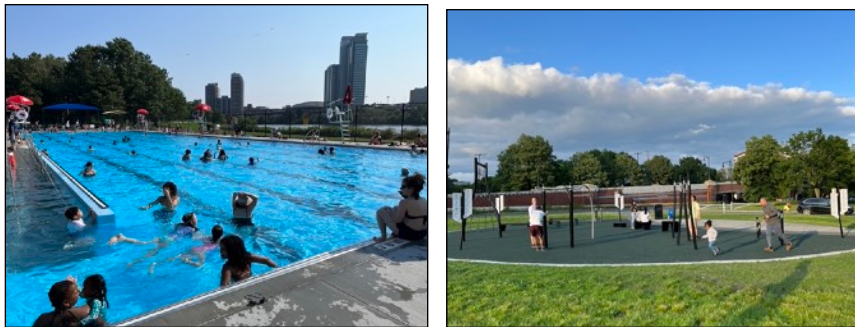


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## Dear Friends of Magazine Beach,

2023 brought the Commonwealth both a new Governor and DCR Commissioner, and with the new administration, more funding for state parks and a commitment to partnerships. We hope this benefits Magazine Beach—a jewel in the Charles River Reservation.

In 2023, DCR again invested in park improvements. At the west end a new ADA-accessible swimming pool and deck was completed and, at the east end a new outdoor gym was installed. DCR also applied for permits for Phase II-2, which will reclaim a half acre of useable parkland from a sunken parking lot. In addition, they defended our public land from the encroachment of homeless encampments—a public health issue that haunted us throughout the year.



The City of Cambridge, which transferred \$2.1 million to DCR for Phase II-2 in 2022, continued to champion this important asset. As specified in the City-DCR partnership agreement, the City maintains this section of the park containing the playing fields and bioswales.

As Mass Audubon and the Charles River Conservancy assume more of the programs Magazine Beach Partners led for over a decade, our role has transitioned to oversight and advocacy. We are the eyes on the park, alerting DCR and the City to park problems: overnight camping, graffiti, storm damage and more. We also monitor:

\*The I-90 Allston Multimodal Project, which will ultimately create a quieter park

\*Eversource's Greater Cambridge Energy Project, this electric infrastructure expansion will tunnel under the playing fields and use them as a staging area

\*Riverside Boat Club's effort to change their lease footprint.

Additionally, we funded dance, art and yoga programs and continued to encourage DCR to move forward on Phase II-2 and to install our historical interpretative markers.

2024 will bring more construction to Magazine Beach. It will be messy, again, but improve our park! Thanks to our many dedicated partners and to all of you park lovers for your years of support. Working together, we have accomplished so much.

Cathie Zusy for Magazine Beach Partners

*Magazine Beach Partners Board:*

*Ken Carson, Clerk*

*Brian Conway*

*Richard Garver*

*Decia Goodwin, Treasurer*

*Paul Lyons*

*Fred Yalouris*

*Cathie Zusy, President*



## **2023 Physical Improvements**

### DCR:

- \*opened new ADA-accessible pool
- \*installed new TrekFit exercise equipment with poured in place rubber and concrete border
- \*pruned trees, removed fallen limbs and branches
- \*twice treated the stand of Japanese knotweed along the shoreline
- \*removed graffiti
- \*added bike rack beside pool bathhouse

### Cambridge:

- \*fixed irrigation system and aerated, reseeded and fertilized the soccer fields
- \*donated heavy duty metal tables and chairs for outdoor use
- \*replaced the broken Big Belly trashcan and recycling bin beside kayak launch

### Magazine Beach Partners:

- \*donated 35 red Adirondack chairs
- \*planted flowers in the spraydeck planters
- \*with the CRC, reseeded 5,000 sq. feet of grass in the picnic grove

### The Charles River Conservancy

- \*removed 26 bags of invasive plants, 122 bags of leaves and weeds, and over 100 bags of trash—over 250 pounds!



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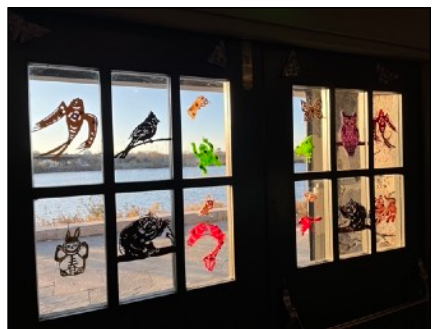
## Programs

During the summer, DCR's free Veteran's Memorial swimming pool continued to be the park's chief draw. Over 18,970 swam there in 2023. Due to a lack of trained staff, swimming lessons were not offered.



Mass Audubon continues to do a stellar job programming at the park, engaging dozens of community partners. In 2023 they hosted 155 public programs, including 7 Nature in the City festivals. They brought 1,100 Cambridge youth to the park and kayaking on the Charles River and 8,000-10,000 visitors to the Nature Center overall. Students who kayaked were from free or reduced lunch summer camp programs offered by the City's five youth centers, Morse, Amigos, Cambridge Camping, Central Square YMCA and the Cambridge Community Center. We are especially grateful to Nature Center Site Manager Mateo Schwartz-Torres and to Mass Audubon's Cambridge Community Education Coordinator Paul Kelley.

From the beginning, the community has wanted nature and art at the Powder Magazine. Mass Audubon has responded by hosting at the Nature Center artist Zhonghe (Elena) Li's 9-meter-long paper cut "The Dragon that Inhabits the Charles River" and Michelle Lougee's Plastic Tapestry. Look for programming relating to Li's dragon in 2024— the year of the dragon!



Magazine Beach Partners promoted Mass Audubon's events on our website, [magazinebeach.org](https://magazinebeach.org) and on local list serves and funded yoga and bachata dance programs. We were a donor and the fiscal sponsor for a second year for Spark Art, which brought Blueprinting Along the Charles: 8 cyanotype workshops.

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We continue to educate visitors about the history of the park via our exhibit in the Nature Center and in presentations to groups.



Waypoint Adventure organized 8 kayaking programs for individuals with disabilities from our ADA-accessible boat launch.

The CRC updated the MathTalk stencils on the pedestrian bridge.

The Cambridge Public Schools continues to use the park for 3rd grade science education. Their Charles River program brought 272 students to the park to learn about habitats and the river's history.

Of course, many of the most magical happenings happen almost spontaneously. In 2023 the park hosted so many picnics, birthday parties, reunions and even a wedding!



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## Stewardship

We are grateful to the CRC, which hosted 12 cleanups of the park, engaging 300 volunteers! They included: the community, Zipcar, Ultragenyx, Precision, Biodiversity Builders, Boston Consulting Group, MediaHub, MobilFuse, Pegasystems, Ernst & Young and Matchpoint Therapeutics.

Under the CRC's leadership, volunteers removed invasive plants: garlic mustard, bittersweet, bindweed, black swallowwort, mugwort and nightshade. In addition to this, they picked up sticks, stones and trash; reseeded grass in the picnic grove; raked leaves; and worked to eradicate the stand of Japanese knotweed along the shoreline, using non-herbicidal methods. Thanks, especially, to Sasha Vallieres, the CRC's Stewardship & Volunteer Program Manager.



MBP partnered with the CRC on the Earth Day cleanup, to reseed the grass, and to eradicate the Japanese knotweed. We must get rid of the knotweed before introducing native grasses along the shoreline as part of Phase II-2! We also planted flowers in the spraydeck planters with neighbors and Cadette Troop 62733. Sadly, the wildflowers we sowed along the shoreline in November 2022 didn't take.



Cambridge managed the maintenance of the playing fields but stopped removing invasive plants from the bioswales because of needles and biowaste present there.

DCR and the City did their regular trash pickups and mowing and responded to MBP requests for graffiti and trash removal and stick and branch pickup. They also responded to neighborhood concerns about homeless encampments—and the needles, trash and feces

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that come with them—moving into the park and to the encampment’s active bicycle chop-shop, operating in clear sight.

In May the Cambridge Police Department removed many stolen bicycles and other things from the BU bridge encampment, at the eastern edge of the park. In October a major explosion and fire decimated it (fortunately, no one was hurt) and DCR filled the area with rocks, arresting erosion and making the area uninhabitable.

We are grateful to DCR and Cambridge for their attention to this challenging problem. Clearly, we need more housing. But our park is not equipped as a campground and for the sake of public health, it should not serve this use. Parks must be safe and serve everyone.



## Advocacy

Magazine Beach Partners shared the life of the park on [magazinebeach.org](https://magazinebeach.org). In 2023, the website had over 20,000 views. It shares programming, provides updates and celebrates the community use of this open space resource.



Rendering of Phase II-2

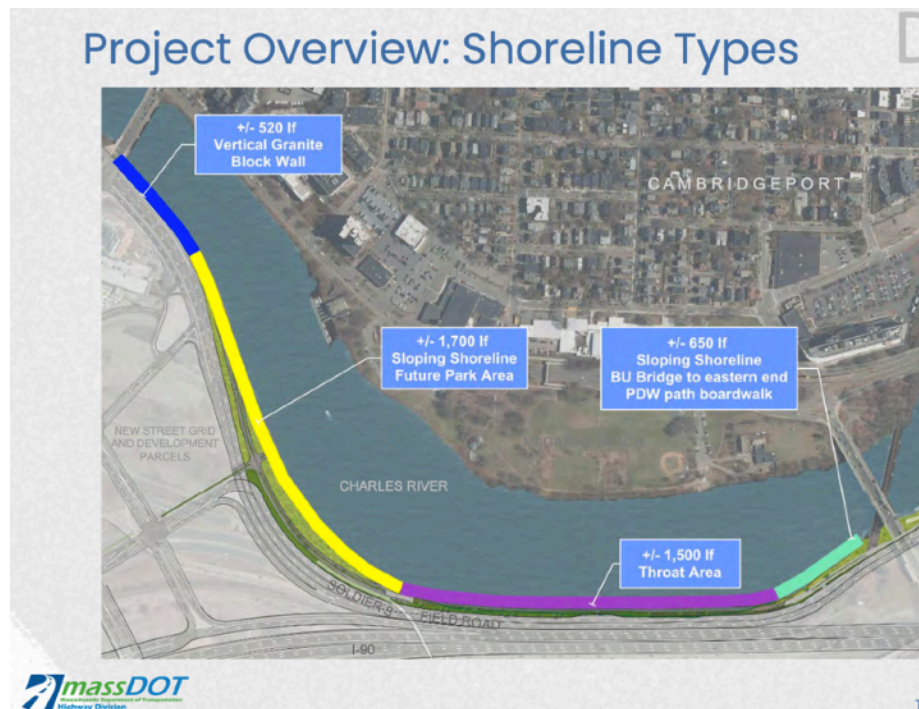
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## Phase II-2

We encouraged DCR to begin Phase II-2. This project was supposed to begin 2 years ago and was funded by Cambridge in 2022, with \$2.1m of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Community Preservation Act funds. DCR has just reported that, pending permit approval, work will begin in June 2024. It will not interfere with pool operations. The pool will still be open!

## Eversource's Greater Cambridge Energy Project

We reached out to Eversource and DCR regarding our concerns about plans to stage the Greater Cambridge Energy Project on the park's soccer fields and to make sure that Eversource provided proper mitigation for this inconvenience. (They will be tunneling under the fields to install high transmission lines that will connect Cambridge and Allston substations.) Eversource is currently awaiting approval for the project from the MA Energy Facilities Siting Board. It sounds like work won't start until, at least, the fall of 2025.



Draft shoreline treatment presented at recent meeting.

## I-90 Allston Multimodal Project

We continue to support funding for the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project, replacing the failing viaduct with a quieter at-grade alternative, adding West Station and expanding riverside parks. We signed 3 letters in support of funding for I-90 in 2023.

## Riverside Boat Club

In May we wrote a letter in support of Senate Bill 1991/House Bill 3006, renewing and reconfiguring RBC's lease with DCR. Since our first cleanup at the park in November 2010,



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Riverside has worked alongside us to revitalize the park. We value their partnership and also recognize that Magazine Beach is a public space. Any future expansion at Riverside must balance the needs of Riverside and the public.

## **Funding**

Phase II-2 is fully funded: by the City of Cambridge, DCR and the community. Our MBP contribution of \$130,000 shows up in our 2023 financials. We also transferred \$1,500 to DCR for a tree for Phase II-2 from the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club.

This next major improvement at the park will create a half acre of parkland—turning the sunken parking lot between the pool and the river into a grassy beach, with a dock and outlook.

## Mass Audubon Programming

We provided \$1,785 to Mass Audubon for yoga and bachata dance programming.

## Cyanotype Workshops: Blueprinting Along the Charles

MBP donated \$1,700 to the Cyanotype Project, \$700 from a donation given specifically for this purpose.

Over the course of the year, we also received \$6,811 in donations for the park and \$3,690 for the Cyanotype Workshops, including a grant of \$2,500 from the Mass Cultural Council. To support this, we served as the fiscal sponsor for Cecily Miller's Spark Art.

## Knotweed Experiment

We paid \$665, for half the cost of the Charles River Conservancy's wire netting+, to try to eradicate the knotweed from the park using non-herbicidal methods.

Thank you, all!



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## What's Next in 2024?

Our hopes:

- Phase II-2 construction begins
- More trees are planted, replacing ones lost to storm damage
- More stones are added to the canoe/kayak launch (It's down about a foot!)
- More native wildflower seeds are sown along the shoreline
- Our 6 historical interpretive markers are mounted

(These were funded in 2016 and 2018 by Cambridge CPA funds and DCR Partnership Matching funds and designed in 2022.)

## Please Contribute!

Remember, we're all volunteers at Magazine Beach Partners, so funds go directly into the park and its programs. Send checks made out to "Magazine Beach Partners" to MBP Treasurer, Decia Goodwin, 175 Chestnut St., Cambridge, MA 02139 or donate on Paypal at [magazinebeach.org](http://magazinebeach.org).

Or volunteer your time or talent! We're looking for new board members and help with photography, publicity, editing and design. Contact Cathie Zusy at [czusy@magazinebeach.org](mailto:czusy@magazinebeach.org) or 617.868.0489



Thank you, donors!

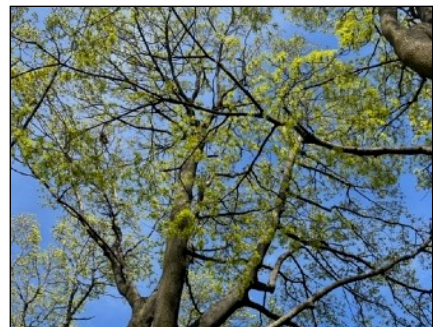
Andy Baer  
Barrett Tree Service  
Cambridge Plant & Garden Club  
Hilma Denué  
Sheila Donohue  
Decia Goodwin & Brian Conway  
Dan & Trudy Harkins  
Linda Kaboolian  
Paul Lyons  
Jeffrey & Patricia Cantor Petrucelly  
Riverside Boat Club

Dagmar von Schwerin  
Lawrence & Lillian Solomon Foundation  
Cesari Tourgee Family  
Chase Willisson  
Zhiliang Wu  
Fred & Charlotte Yalouris  
Karen Zukowski & David Diamond

Cyanotype Project  
Ken Field  
Mass Cultural Council  
Cathie Zusy & Sam Kendall

# Magazine Beach Partners 2023 Financial Statement

Magazine Beach Partners 2023 Financials		
<b>2023 Income</b>		
Category	Source	Income
Magazine Beach Partners	carry over	\$204,865
Magazine Beach Partners		\$6,811
Individual Donations	Miscellaneous	\$2113
Businesses	Barret Tree East	\$250
Foundations	Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund	\$600
	L. & L. Solomon Foundation	\$1000
	Zukowski Diamond Foundation	\$250
Non Profits	CP&GC Tree Fund	\$1,610
	Riverside Boat Club	\$980
Bank Interest		\$8.00
Cyanotype Project		\$3,690
Individual Donations	Miscellaneous	\$1,190
Foundations	Mass Cultural Council: \$ for Spark / Cyanotype Project	\$2,500
<b>Total 2023 Income</b>		<b>\$10,501</b>
<b>2023 Expenses</b>		
Category	Expense	Cost
Magazine Beach Partners		\$137,338
Capital Improvements: Phase II-2	MA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation	\$131,500
Programs	Mass Audubon: for yoga & bachata dance	\$1,785
	Charles River Conservancy: knotweed removal project	\$665
	2022 Programs: Dance & Drum & Plastic Tapestry	\$616
Plantings	Grass seed & spraydeck plantings	\$382
Administrative Expenses	Internet, website, tax filings & bank fees	\$738
	Insurance	\$682
Cyanotype Project	(This includes a \$1,000 internal transfer, a donation from MBP)	\$4,690
General	Artist & organizer stipends & materials	\$4,690
<b>Total 2023 Expenses</b>		<b>\$141,058</b>
<b>2023 Financials</b>		
Total Income		\$10,501
Total Expenses		\$141,058
Cash on Hand		\$204,865
<b>Final Balance</b>		<b>\$74,308</b>





See you at the park!