

Urban Forestation Leslie Sutherland Park, an eight-acre city park and urban forest, commands a stunning view of the Hudson River and the Palisades from its highest point at the southern end of Alta Avenue. The Park was originally the grounds of the Hendrik Hudson Hotel, an elaborate stone building that burned in a spectacular fire in 1901. It covers the hillside bordered by South Broadway, McLean Avenue and Van Cortlandt Park Avenue.



Sutherland Park is undergoing a long-range restoration program under the aegis of the Land Conservancy in cooperation with the Parks Department. Some of the 100-year-old staircases and natural rock caves have been unearthed. Staggering amounts of garbage, debris, and invasive plants have been removed, allowing the native plants to re-establish and thrive. A fernery, a walled perennial garden and vegetation that supports songbird and butterfly habitats have been planted throughout the cleared areas of the Park. Plans for this year include additional clearing and the development of a sugar-maple grove.

The Yonkers Land Conservancy encourages the development of urban forest restoration projects throughout the city and is available to advise on such projects.

Adopt-A-Highway The Yonkers Land Conservancy participates in the NY State “Adopt-A-Highway” program at the northern end of Rumsey Road. Each month, residents clip invasive vines and remove trash in order to preserve an urban forest glade and the small wetlands that grace the entry to Park Hill.

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Please contact a Board member if you wish to make a donation, need a street tree, wish to volunteer, or to place a Conservation Easement on your property.

All inquiries may be addressed to:
Yonkers Land Conservancy, Inc. PO Box 8, Yonkers, NY 10705
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Promoting the Beauty of Yonkers by Preserving Open Spaces

The Yonkers Land Conservancy establishes Conservation Easements to preserve open space, conducts Habitat Restoration, Reclamation and Rehabilitation, develops Urban and Community Forestry programs and provides information on urban environmental issues.



www.yonkerslandconservancy.org



Conservation Easements The Yonkers Land Conservancy helps residents protect their open buildable lots from development through the establishment of a Conservation Easement.

What is a Conservation Easement? An easement is a legal term for any property right that attaches to the land. A Conservation easement can be placed on a qualified piece of property to prevent building on the property in perpetuity. The property owner retains all rights of private ownership and enjoyment of the property. The easement “runs with the deed” and any subsequent owners of the property are bound by its terms. In other words, when the conserved empty land is sold, the Conservation easement prevents future owners from building a permanent structure on the property. This legal device allows a property owner to contribute permanently to the open-space needs of the community.

Are there any benefits for the property owner who places the Easement? Yes. There are federal tax credits granted to the property owner by the I.R.S. and a NY State property tax rebate is available. The Yonkers Land Conservancy can explain these benefits in detail to owners interested in placing an easement on property.

What can the Conservancy do to help me if I wish to place an Easement on my property? The Land Conservancy and its lawyers work with owners to create the most beneficial terms of the easement. We will assist with the cost of legal and surveyor fees that will be incurred with the establishment of an easement, and will also help with the organization and completion of the necessary paperwork.

On the front: A conserved property in Yonkers. Above: A revitalized path in Leslie Sutherland Park.

Has the Land Conservancy succeeded in establishing many easements? Yes! In 1996, an easement was placed on a parcel of land on Spring Road, where builders had actually begun chopping trees. Concerned neighbors, the Westchester Land Trust and the Park Hill Residents’ Association quickly stepped in to purchase the land and preserve it from development.

The Park Hill Land Conservancy was established in 1997, and in 1999 an easement was placed on the property adjacent to the Alta Avenue “O’Brien House,” once owned by Dennis O’Brien, the chief lawyer for United Artists, who hosted such celebrities as Mary Pickford and Charlie Chaplin. Built at the turn of the century, the house remains one of the most important buildings of its kind in the country. The extensive grounds of the house, with its views of the Hudson River, are now protected forever. Three additional lots on Alta Avenue (two of which are adjacent to Sutherland Park) have also been conserved as have properties on Rock Place.

In January 2009, The Park Hill Land Conservancy formally changed its name to the Yonkers Land Conservancy, Inc., to reflect a widened concern for open space throughout the city. The Conservancy is currently working with property owners in Yonkers toward establishing new easements.

The Yonkers Land Conservancy raises money through Tax-deductible contributions to the Conservancy, grants, proceeds from the Park Hill House Tour, and other events sponsored by the Park Hill Residents’ Association.

Monies raised are used to support Legal fees for Yonkers residents placing conservation easements on personal property; planting street trees in Yonkers; the restoration and maintenance of Sutherland Park; removing graffiti from public property; spring and summer flower planting on public property.

Street Trees Numerous studies have reported on the health and economic benefits of trees in urban environments. The Land Conservancy works with the Yonkers Department of Parks and Recreation to plant and maintain sidewalk trees on public properties. Homeowners wishing to establish street trees on their own property should contact the Land Conservancy for information on our tree planting program.

