

December 15, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



For more information contact:

Gary Balling, Executive Director **Diane Stanke, Manager of Communications**
(708) 725-2020 (708) 725-2022
garyb@oakparkparks.com dianes@oakparkparks.com

Park District of Oak Park Secures \$1.6 million for Scoville Park Improvements

Grant Allows for Complete Park Renovation

The Park District of Oak Park has been awarded an Illinois Department of Natural Resources Park and Recreational Facility Construction Grant in the amount of \$1.6 million for the renovation of Scoville Park. Often referred to as the “Village Green,” this grant will allow the Park District to renovate the entire four acres of park property. “This is incredible,” stated Park Board President Marty Bracco. “Completing all phases of the park master plan at one time will be a tremendous benefit to our residents and will breathe new life into the District’s oldest park which will turn 100 years old in 2012.”

Improvements to Scoville Park were identified through a public site master planning process which included four public meetings, six focus groups, and three online questionnaires. The park master plan was accepted by the Park Board in August 2010. “The quality of your plans to enhance the recreation opportunities for Illinois’ citizens is recognized by your selection in this year’s very competitive selection process,” stated Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Marc Miller. Park improvements identified in the park master plan include the creation of a Peace Plaza encircling the World War I Peace Triumphant Monument, a permanent stage platform in the park’s southern end, the planting of 104 new trees, new entrances in all four corners of the park with an emphasis on a renewed main entrance at Oak Park Avenue and Lake Street, new lighted tennis courts, and a new playground with accessible surfacing. Additionally, historic signage will be located at park entries, restrooms will be updated and new LED walkway lights will be installed.

The \$1.6 million PARC Grant will fund 75% of the Scoville Park project with the remaining \$551,000 (25%) allocated as part of the District’s capital improvement budget. PARC Grants are made possible through funding by the Illinois Jobs Now! Program. Administered by the IL Department of Natural Resources, these funds are available to eligible local governments for park and recreation construction projects. “Investing in Illinois communities now is essential to growing our economy for years to come,” Governor Pat Quinn said. “The PARC Program will help communities all over the state proceed on local initiatives that will boost local economic development and help improve

continued

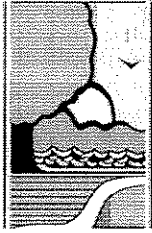
the quality of life of all Illinois residents.” The program was created by Public Act 096-0820, effective November 18, 2009 with funds appropriated from the Build Illinois Bond Fund.

The Park District recognizes the significant efforts of 78th District State Representative Camille Lilly who mentored the progress of this grant in Springfield. The Park District’s gratitude is also extended to Senator Don Harmon for his continued support of Park District projects and programs. Senator Harmon spoke at the November 2009 re-dedication of the Peace Triumphant Monument which stands as the centerpiece of Scoville Park. The construction of the new plaza, made possible through these grant funds, will provide park visitors a place to sit and reflect and appreciate this bronze memorial which pays tribute to those from Oak Park and River Forest who served in World War I.

Construction is expected to begin in August 2012 with anticipated completion in spring 2013. For more information about the PARC Grant Program please contact Chris McCloud, IL Dept. of Natural Resources at (217) 785-0075. For more details about Scoville Park improvements, please visit www.oakparkparks.com.

###

continued



Illinois Department of
Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
<http://dnr.state.il.us>

Pat Quinn, Governor
Marc Miller, Director

December 14, 2011

Mr. Gary Balling
Executive Director
Park District of Oak Park
218 W. Madison Street
Oak Park, IL 60302

Re: Project PARC 11-32
Park District of Oak Park
Scoville Park
Grant Award: \$1,600,000.00

Dear Mr. Balling:

I am pleased to inform you that the above referenced project has been approved at the dollar amount indicated, as part of the State's FY11 Park and Recreational Facility Construction Grant Program. The quality of your plans to enhance recreation opportunities for Illinois' citizens is recognized by your selection in this year's very competitive selection process.

You will soon be contacted with detailed information and instructions concerning implementation of your project and program compliance responsibilities. Please do not proceed with your project until you have received these instructions.

Once again, congratulations on being one of the successful applicants and thank you for your dedicated efforts to improve outdoor recreation opportunities in Illinois.

Sincerely,



Marc Miller
Director

MM/jn



Scoville Park

800 W. Lake Street at Oak Park Avenue



Scoville Park is Oak Park's "Village Green" serving as the gathering place for various community activities, both organized and spontaneous. On any given day, friends and families can be seen playing catch with a Frisbee, going for a walk, enjoying a picnic lunch, or simply carrying on a conversation on the steps of the World War I Memorial. This majestic statue was unveiled on November 11, 1925 in the presence of General C.G. Dawes, Vice-President of the United States. As part of the Park District's Capital Improvement Program, the Memorial was recently restored and a community-wide rededication ceremony was held on November 7, 2009. Located near the War Memorial is the Percy Julian Memorial Bust, unveiled in 2003 to celebrate the life and contributions of this world-renowned chemist, humanitarian, and long-time Oak Park resident.

Acquired in 1913, Scoville Park was named after Charles B. Scoville, the previous owner of the land and an advocate for the creation of the Park District. Like several other parks after it, this four acre parcel was originally designed by noted landscape architect Jens Jensen and is one of the parks that retains the most of Jensen's design. It was the first park built after the creation of the Park District in 1912, and served as the focal point of the Village with the installation of a "Liberty" flag pole in 1915, the World War I "Peace Triumphant" monument dedicated in 1925 and a bronze marker noting the location of the home of Joseph Kettlestrings, the first white settler in Oak Park in 1927. The main gateway to the park, located at one of the busiest intersections in historic Oak Park, features a replica of the Horse Show Fountain, also known as the Wright-Bock Fountain named for its designers sculptor Richard Bock and famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The original fountain was built by the Oak Park Horse Show Association in 1909 and located on the curb of Lake Street. Due to severe deterioration, the fountain was completely reconstructed and relocated in 1969 to replace the badly deteriorated original.

In partnership with the Village of Oak Park and the Library, Grove Avenue was vacated in 2001 and a new plaza was constructed adjacent to the park. The following year Scoville Park was named by the National Park Service to the National Register of Historic Places. Current features include a playground, three tennis courts, and an open space used for summer concerts, movies, and the annual Day in Our Village event. We invite you to visit Scoville Park and enjoy this beautiful touch of nature in the center of the bustling Oak Park community.