

# TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH

## Turnip Patch Park Master Plan



Adopted September 2017

## **Background**

Located within the Hillsborough Historic District at 333 W. King Street Turnip Patch Park is a 0.6-acre neighborhood park owned and maintained by the Town of Hillsborough. Prior to being developed as a park and playground, the parcel was a vacant lot owned by the town. The park's name references its prior use. A neighbor, Hoyt Crabtree, previously had permission from the town to plant a garden on the site, and the water account for the site bore the name "Turnip Patch." In 2005, neighborhood residents petitioned the town for permission to build a park and asked to keep the name.

The park was built primarily with volunteer donations. Neighbors conducted fundraising through a variety of means including hosting a 5K run and selling Turnip Patch Park t-shirts. The park opened to the public in 2007. Park amenities include a play structure for 2- to 5-year-olds, a footbridge, several garden areas including a butterfly garden and monarch waystation.

## **Development of the Park**

The original plan for Turnip Patch Park was developed by Charles Burger, a local resident and landscape architect. The plan called for the development of a path system and play equipment area. Landscape areas and park amenities were also noted on the plans. Much of the original design was implemented when the park was developed.

The paths were installed using a local product called Chapel Hill Gravel. After several years of maintenance issues, the town replaced the gravel with concrete paths. A wood privacy fence was built between the park and property owner to the east. Wood post and rail fencing was also installed to define the park borders on the property lines.

A covered footbridge, built by local resident and general contractor Vernon Little, crosses the stream from the south entrance of the park.

Local resident and Hillsborough Garden Club member Karen MacAulay worked with Hillsborough Garden Club to install a butterfly garden and monarch waystation in Turnip Patch Park. Hillsborough Garden Club also installed several small flower beds around the park.

Hillsborough Tree Board planted numerous native trees around the property including a buckeye and several serviceberry trees. Additional landscaping was added adjacent to the play equipment to provide screening for adjacent properties. In the years since the park opened, the town has installed a solid waste receptacle, park signage and a drinking fountain.

Turnip Patch Park has no dedicated parking but visitors often park along West Margaret Lane and South Occoneechee Street. Most visitors travel to the park on foot and consist of neighborhood residents.

## **Master Plan Priorities**

In the summer of 2017, the Parks and Recreation Board and Hillsborough Tree Board, in coordination with the town public space and stormwater divisions, developed a list of recommended improvements for Turnip Patch Park. The recommendations are detailed in this master plan and are intended to guide future spending decisions.

## Recommendations

- Maintain the existing playground equipment and park amenities in safe and working order
- Preserve an open view into the park
- Establish a 10 foot wide stream buffer along the stream except where controlled access is provided
- Maintain access to the stream near the footbridge
- Plant native trees, woody shrubs and perennials in the stream buffer
- Install a stormwater best management practice near the culvert that runs under West Margaret Lane (Example: rain garden, constructed wetland etc.)
- Cease mowing operations on the steep bank near South Occoneechee Street
- Maintain the grass hill adjacent to West Margaret Lane for sledding
- Relocate the butterfly garden to east side of park and expand the garden area
- Incorporate public art in the park (Example: a gnome sculpture under the footbridge)
- Provide opportunities for interactive art (Example: a chalkboard installed on the privacy fence)
- Provide several picnic tables
- Provide benches in the approved style (Butler Bench by Urbanscape)
- Provide interactive play features (Example: checkerboard, giant Jenga etc.)
- Provide child-size furniture (Example: toadstool table and chairs etc.)
- Install a plaque with the history of the park and volunteer efforts
- Relocate iris and other garden plantings to park entrances

Recommendations are noted on the master plan site plan on the following page.



# OCCONEECHEE STREET

