

It Takes a Team...and Everyone Pulling in the Same Direction

“I’m going to come back in 20 years and see this forest mountain!” exclaimed the excited student volunteer.

After months of planning, 200 trees were planted on May 25 at Hilltop Park, which runs from Long Island Road, up to the pond area on Hilltop Drive, Manotick.

Manotick Culture, Parks and Recreation Association (MCPRA) first approached the City in 2019 to naturalize this Hilltop Park area – a remnant park parcel with little active recreation potential. Finally getting approval in fall 2022, to plant a portion of the site, MCPRA crafted an action plan.

Tom Plant, MCPRA Parks Committee Chair, and a retired teacher, approached the Environment Clubs from both Manotick Public School and St. Leonard’s Catholic School to assist with the planting. He met with each group several times to explain and foster support for the initiative.

Councillor David Brown was fully supportive. Tom and Viv Mitchell went door-to-door to the immediate neighbours, explaining the project and garnering their input and endorsement.

On the day of the planting, the City supplied the trees, mulch, shovels and did a demonstration on how to properly plant a tree. Many thanks to staffers Laura Wood and her capable assistant, Morgan.

And Mother Nature didn’t disappoint – it was a perfect planting day, not too hot, with a slight breeze to keep the mosquitos at bay.

Snacks and welcomed refreshments were provided by the local business community – cookies from 692 Café, juice from McDonough’s Independent, and large beverage dispensers from Manotick Home Hardware..... a big ‘thank you’ to these supportive local businesses.

At the conclusion of this productive afternoon, the teachers from St. Leonard’s and Manotick Public were overheard chatting.....”we need to ‘bridge’ next year and do something together like this again...” Many seeds were planted that day, beyond simply trees!

With climate change, it feels good when you can make a small contribution on the positive side. It takes a team....action happens when everyone pulls together in the same direction.