

# The Environmental Educational Center is on its way!

October 4, 2017

Hi Friends,

We have broken ground!

We are delighted to inform you that the Environmental Education Center (EEC) project is well underway, with an anticipated grand opening on Arbor Day – April 27, 2018.

## New Public Programs

With construction begun, we are now developing new public programming, including:

- ⚙ adding classroom/workshop elements to existing programs on trees, pond ecology, wildlife, pollination, wetlands, etc.;
- ⚙ collaborating with local scientists to develop new educational programs and student research opportunities; and
- ⚙ working with local artists on wildlife and nature photography workshops.

The Thielke Arboretum is relatively small in size, but it is mighty in its ability to educate many people. Clean air, clean water, and sustained native habitat are important, and science allows us to better understand the related problems and how to resolve them. The EEC will help us all advance toward these goals.

## Thanks to all who have contributed!

We, the FOGRA Trustees, want to thank everyone who has made the project possible:

- ⚙ the hundreds of residents who have donated funds;
- ⚙ the government officials who have reviewed, advised and approved the project;
- ⚙ the suppliers and contractors who have been very generous with their time and pricing; and
- ⚙ the volunteers who have supported the project and work every day to make the Arboretum the special place that it is.

The community has come together to make the EEC a reality, and we appreciate your support.

## Environmental Education Center Rendering:



The building sits along the diagonal path from the mail entrance to the pool parking lot, next to the playground. (NOT near the circle.)

## Effect on trees and plants

While the EEC will occupy only 0.0035% of the Arboretum grounds, we had to remove five larger trees to accommodate its construction. This resulted in some loss of shade in the nearby Children's Park. Please note that one of our FOGRA Trustees is an original founder of the Children's Park, and it is a respected part of the area. It is not the intention of FOGRA to inconvenience any of the park's visitors.

Our land manager, a well-educated forest ecologist from Rutgers, sees the ecological advantages of having new growth area here. The Pitch Pine forest that stands near the playground is approximately 150 years old. One day, these Pitch Pine trees will reach their age limit and the new growth area around the building will be there to provide shade until those trees that replace the Pitch Pines provide shade once again. Nature works in these cycles, and understanding what lies ahead can help us best serve this habitat and the visitors that use it.

Some have proposed replacing the shade with synthetic shades or sails. However, the changing seasons will bring varying sun angles and additional growth. We believe it would be wise to assess the shade situation with more of this experience, rather than pursuing a solution that might be expensive, unnecessary and even harmful. This is the view we have shared with the Mayor and Council, and hope that you agree.

## More Information Available

We hope this helps you understand a bit more about what is going on at the Arboretum. More information is available at <http://www.glenrockarboretum.org/Pages/FAQ.aspx>.

If you have questions, please email FOGRA President Tom Vielbig at [tvielbig@bylnj.com](mailto:tvielbig@bylnj.com).

Sincerely,

Friends of the Glen Rock Arboretum (FOGRA) Trustees

*Tom Vielbig, President*

*Elaine Howe*

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Thielke Arboretum  
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