

Attachment to Resolution 2021-169

Prospect Park

Location

Prospect Park occupies the Prospect Street right-of-way from the parking area north of 2nd Street to Radar Road. It rises approximately 100 feet and crosses 3rd and King Streets and terminates at Radar Road. A right turn at King Street and a walk of approximately 100 yards leads to a Horizon Hill connector. Vigorous walkers can head to the top of Horizon Hill (750 feet in elevation) or downhill to Yachats River Road



Description

The lower portion of the park is a demonstration garden featuring native plants. A winding gravel path including stairs leading to 3rd Street. This lower area includes three biomes with corresponding native plants – the sunny lower section, a shaded upper area and a narrow wetland along a small creek flowing through the park. There are several memorials in the garden including a cement bench with a view of the Yachats estuary. The middle section of the park rises steeply between 3rd and King Streets with several sets of stairs and sweeping ocean views. It is being restored from non-maintained grounds to native plants. The upper portion of the park requires significant invasive plant removal but has stone steps leading towards Radar Road.

Existing Recreation Facilities

- Parking at Prospect Street at short walk from the Drift Inn
- Gravel and Soft Surface Trail
- Memorial Bench
- Information on Native Plant identification

Visitation

A few thousand visitors annually. Importantly, the park trail provides direct access from the hillside to “downtown” Yachats for residents. Some residents use the trail several times each day.

Botanical Resources

The lower portion of the park (Prospect Garden) contains at least 60 Native plant species and many native allies – species related to native plants. Additionally, there are several species that integrate well with native plants to illustrate how to blend native and non-native plants. There are a few rare (and one endangered) plants in the garden. Some native plants including *Darmera peltata* and *Rhododendron columbianum* are rarely seen in the Yachats area due to habitat degradation. The docents maintain a complete data set of the plants including their uses by Indigenous People. Native plantings provide an opportunity to help restore the area to the habitat known to the Indigenous Peoples and are adapted to Yachats’s wet winters and arid summers. They provide habitat for native bees and mammals.

The middle section of the park, until 2020, was mainly consisted of volunteer escallonia and other invasive plants; primarily English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, Morning Glory, Orange-berry Cotoneaster, Holly, and many others. Docents, the City, and the Trails crews have made significant progress in removing the invasive plants replacing them with native plants including *Viburnum ovatum*, *Baccharis pilularis*, *Garrya elliptica*, and several forms of *Ceanothus*. This is an ongoing endeavor that is anticipated to take several years.

The upper portion of the park contains a few native plants but is dominated by invasive English ivy and Himalayan blackberry. It will require significant time, resources, and commitment to restore it to its natural state.

Cultural Resource Assessment

The entire park was used by Indigenous People. The area has been assessed by an archeologist and all hardscape installations were monitored to ensure there was no artifact disturbance. Planting and trail restoration is confined to shallow digging.

The creek through the park and an associated cistern on the neighboring lot served as the original water source for the City of Yachats. The cistern needs restoration but is still functional.

History

Lee Corbin, a mayor of Yachats provided the initial vision for this park. Over several years, residents worked to bring his vision to fruition. Armed with a trail plan drawn by local landscape architect, Jerry Sands, the then owner of Gerdemann Botanical Preserve, residents requested an archeological assessment and worked to secure City approval.

In 2007, a group of Yachats volunteers and youth from Angell Job Corps and cleared the lower area that was overrun by every weed known to Yachats. The volunteers created a trail and planted

shrubs. Sadly, a water main break washed out much of the plant material. The remaining plants did thrive.

By 2011, the relatively new Yachats Trails Committee led by chair Lauralee Svensgaard, worked to create a demonstration garden of native plants. Yachadians donated and planted many of the plants. This area of the park became Prospect Garden.

In 2010, Leslie Carter, a long-term resident, tireless community volunteer and frequent walker of this Yachats trail passed away. Her neighbors organized the placement of an iconic memorial bench. Additional memorials followed.

However, it takes persistence and constant care to maintain a garden in the Yachats climate. By 2014, despite efforts of the Yachats Trails crew, the garden was overrun by weeds. In a third iteration, the Trails team again cleared the area and replaced a few plants. Without constant maintenance, though, the garden was again totally overrun. In 2016, a few neighbors volunteered to provide the required on-going weeding. Once again, the trails crew came in and did a macro-clearing. The volunteer neighbors expanded the garden on both the south and east ends to encompass the whole right-of-way. In 2018, the Angell Job Corp. built a new fence to visually separate the garden from the neighboring property. In 2020, the trails crew conducted a massive invasive weed clearing of the center portion of the park (3rd – King) and the city removed the first eight of 20 Holly trees.

Over 300 native plants have been installed since 2016. Most were donated by Yachadians and the Trails Committee. The volunteer efforts of several locals keep the garden weed free (almost). The Yachats Trails crew regularly has work sessions to maintain the path, install wood chips and help with weeding. It truly takes the village to create and maintain this park.