

The property on the corner of Rahway Ave. and Shadowlawn belongs to the town of Westfield. It was deemed unsuitable for building a home because it is too small and because of an underground conduit located there.

In 1998 Rake and Hoe was interested in planning a touch and scent garden at Mindowaskin Park. A Council person asked us to take over and plan the garden at the Shadowlawn location rather than at Mindowaskin.

Jennifer Ryan, a young local professional landscape architect, and a Rake and Hoe member, was asked to do the plan. All were saddened when Jennifer died suddenly. Club members Linda Parker and Jeanne Monaghan and other members took over the planning of the park. A mason built the brick walk, providing underground piping for a sprinkler system. An irrigation company provided the system at their cost. A landscaper was hired to plant the first trees and shrubs.

Originally, there was a border of cotoneasters along the sidewalk. They were removed in 1995 by the town at our request and grass was planted. The purpose was to reduce maintenance. The club planted the willow tree in the wet wilderness area.

The two wooden benches were donated by neighbors and by club members Michelle Healy and Mary Ellen O'Boyle. They were obtained through the Downtown Westfield Corporation.

Since then, our club has planted and cared for the shrubs and garden with the help of the town, which mows, rakes leaves, and removes the plant debris that we sometimes generate. We call the DPW to request pick-up as needed. They respond in a timely manner.

Over the years, trees have been planted in memory of club members who have died. Not all the plants have survived. We have planted perennials and annuals, weeded, pruned, and added a plaque on a large rock in the new Blue Star garden in memory of our veterans. The new area was dedicated at a ceremony in May 2013/8? attended by numerous garden club members and local politicians.

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy blew over the huge, old maple tree at the center of the garden. The town in and filled in the hole left by the ... One of the benches was destroyed.

*Author unknown. Partly undecipherable original was transcribed by Joe Da Rold.
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