



## Mini Community Engagement

This program seeks to engage new applicants and organizations from a diverse array of communities in small-scale projects that enhance communities, engage residents, and, ultimately, improve natural resources. We feel that a broad range of communities can benefit from healthy natural resources even if their primary focus is on other issues. Human health, the economy, jobs, community livability, education and our children are all connected with a health environment.



## McElderry Park Street Tree Plantings in the Harris Creek Watershed—Phase IV

The McElderry Park Trees for Public Health project successfully completed Phase IV of our street tree planting program in the fall of 2013, creating both a cleaner harbor and bay, and adding to the city's goal of 26 percent canopy cover.

The McElderry Park Trees for Public Health program fits into the objectives of the Harris Creek Watershed Coalition’s Master Plan. Tree planting was identified as a strategic goal of that plan in order to ameliorate the nearly 89% impervious surface that characterizes the 48 square block neighborhood.

arranged for pro-bono landscape design services to prepare a conceptual drawing for the church grounds that would incorporate more green space and trees. This plan is currently being vetted to the congregation. As a next step, the Tree Trust has engaged Blue Water Baltimore and the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, as possible partners in this effort.

The tree program’s success has resulted in attracting a Maryland Institute College of Art fellow to work with a group of neighbors to explore other strategies to ‘green’ their block. These include the renovation of a neglected vacant lot vegetable garden, building a cistern to capture rainwater for the garden, and learning about cool roofs. Other activities from the Harris Creek plan that tree planting complements is storm drain painting and quarterly block cleanups.

We have also been meeting with the pastor and trustees of the Prince of Peace Baptist Church to discuss removal of asphalt from the parking lot and adding green space. We



**66** trees planted

**2,016** sq. ft. impervious surface removed

**600** lbs of trash removed

**122** volunteers



## Project Outreach

This was done through a combination of door-to-door canvassing with fliers, presentations at community meetings, a table at the annual back-to-school fair, and through monthly e-mail notices to residents and stakeholders. Listings of the plantings are placed in church bulletins, and in Banner Neighborhoods community events listing.

The Tree Trust was also asked by the U.S. State Department to sponsor a tour of McElderry Park for visiting Iranians as part of its *International Visitors Leadership Program*. The focus of the Iranian contingent, a combination of environmental scientists, teachers, and engineers, was to study how we deal with urban air pollution. The tour offered a unique opportunity to spread the word about urban tree planting efforts. The round table discussion focused on our grassroots community forestry based approach to planting trees to improve environmental conditions in the neighborhood. Dr. Aslan Aslanian, State Department Language Services, commenting in an e-mail to us later, "It was very interesting and encouraging for our guests, to see such small organization doing an epic work like you and your colleagues are doing. One of our guests said to me, that he would go back and start such an operation in Iran."

Neighborhood residents were asked, via a door-to-door survey commissioned by the Tree Trust and crafted by a doctoral student at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, regarding their sense of well-being about their community and how trees fit into that perception. The key attitudes expressed by respondents showed the following:

- 86% felt Baltimore City "needs more trees."
- 88% "prefer to live in a place with trees."
- 86% feel their "neighborhood needs more trees."
- 84% believe trees "help make your neighborhood a better place to live."



For additional information: visit [www.cbtrust.org](http://www.cbtrust.org).

CBT Grant Awarded:	\$5,000
Peck Foundation:	\$1,390
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$6,390</b>

## Project Partners:



**Civic Works**