

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Studying, exhibiting, and conserving plants for 120 years

For Immediate Release
March 30, 2012

The New York Botanical Garden Opens a New Parking Garage

New Facility Will Serve Garden Visitors, Community Residents, and Metro-North Commuters



On March 30, 2012, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to mark the opening of The New York Botanical Garden's Parking Garage. Adjacent to the Metro-North Railroad Botanical Garden Station, the new Garage at 401 Bedford Park Boulevard provides secure, covered 24-hour/seven days a week self-park access for 825 cars. Also known as the Peter Jay Sharp Building, the new facility was constructed with public funds and private donations.

Gregory Long, Chief Executive Officer and The William C. Steere Sr. President of the Garden, praised the opening of the new facility. "This Parking Garage is a welcome addition to The New York Botanical Garden and the surrounding neighborhood. It's an attractive building that will enable us to accommodate Garden visitors as well as commuters, community residents, and local businesses. With its parking for electric cars, spaces for bicycles, and exterior vertical gardens, the Garage is in several ways green, and an aesthetically pleasing complement to our museum of plants."

For the convenience of visitors utilizing the Garage, a new pedestrian entrance to the Botanical Garden has also been constructed. The Bedford Park Gate is a short walk from the Garage, will be open during peak times, and will allow visitors direct access to Perennial Garden Way and the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory on the Garden grounds.

New Garage Fills a Critical Need

As visitation to the Botanical Garden's blockbuster exhibitions, Adult Education classes, and engaging programming has grown every year, so has the need for additional parking. With eight parking levels providing more than 800 parking spots, including 42 handicapped spaces near the elevators, 22 bicycle spaces, and charging stations for electric vehicles as well as proximity to major roadways, the Garage offers parking solutions for Garden visitors, neighbors, and nearby attractions such as Fordham University and the Bronx Zoo. Weekday commuters and weekend upstaters will also benefit from the convenience of the new parking facility.

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Zipcar Availability

The Garage will also be the home to a pod of Zipcars, giving local residents and visitors increased access to the convenient, cost-effective, and sustainable alternative to car ownership. The close proximity of the Garage to the Metro-North line will help make Zipcar even more convenient for commuters, offering an environmentally friendly mode of transportation for those traveling in and out of the city on a daily basis. The new Parking Garage will be home to a range of different Zipcar vehicle models, including Toyota Prius, Mazda 3, and Honda CRV, and members have the option to reserve the Zipcars by the hour or by the day with the cost of gas, insurance, and 180 miles of driving per day included in the fee. Zipcar is the world's leading car sharing network with approximately 673,000 members and 8,900 vehicles in urban areas and college campuses throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. For more information or to become a member, visit zipcar.com

From Brownfield to “Green” Building

Construction on The New York Botanical Garden Parking Garage began in spring 2010, after the land was purchased from Atlas Welding and Boiler Repair Inc. The location is a former industrial site that housed an abandoned gasoline service station and the Atlas Welding facility. The site required environmental remediation prior to construction of the project. The Botanical Garden embarked on a testing program under the guidelines of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) and determined the amount of contaminated soil that was present. That soil was specially handled and removed to an approved landfill, under the guidance of engineers. NYCDEP later determined the site is clean and no further action would be necessary.

Architectural and “Green” Features of the New Garage

Designed by Susan T. Rodriguez of Ennead Architects, along with Desman Associates, The New York Botanical Garden Parking Garage transforms a previously decaying, industrial site and is intended to reflect the Botanical Garden's landscape. The materials of the Garage—precast concrete and channel glass—link the building to Pfizer Plant Research Laboratory within the Garden. Ennead Architects collaborated with Light Projects Ltd to create exterior accent lighting that illuminates the structural rhythm of the exterior from Metro-North. The corners are punctuated by glass circulation towers, which glow at night, to form the overall composition. The design takes advantage of a geometric shift in the site to create a light well at the center that brings daylight into the interior of the Garage.

The eight-story Garage, a 303,000-square-foot precast concrete structure was designed to a Silver LEED certification for new construction. Rodriguez and fellow partner Timothy Hartung led the Ennead design team. Construction management was handled by E.W. Howell. The landscape architect is Towers|Golde. The dominant feature of the facility is its distinctive exterior façade, which creates a “vertical garden” on all four sides of the building. Vertical support for the building is provided by bifurcating columns in precast concrete, clearly articulated on the exterior façade and forming a rhythm of flaring pairs of vertical accents across the façade. Interstices between columns will be covered with a Greenscreen® wire trellis, planted with a variety of flowering vines. Greenscreen® is a unique wire space frame configuration that serves as a span between structure members. The panel's depth creates a “captive growing space” for supporting climbing plants that will ultimately cover the building.

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The resulting mix of foliage and flowers will add seasonal interest to the building and hint at the rich diversity of plants from around the world on display at the Botanical Garden itself. A selection of native vines (Virginia creeper, American wisteria, trumpet vine, and Dutchman's pipe) will grow from planters at the base of the walls up Greenscreen® panels between the structural concrete members. Along Bedford Park Boulevard and Webster Avenue, seven willow oak trees have been planted. An elevated planter adjacent to the southbound Metro-North train platform at the Botanical Garden station features crape-myrtle, oakleaf hydrangea, witch-hazel, and winter jasmine.

Manhattan Parking Group (MPG), the largest parking operator in the Bronx, has been selected to operate the Parking Garage. Rates have been established as follows: the Daily Early Bird rate is \$6 (includes tax); the Standard Daily rate is \$12 (includes tax); and the Monthly Weekday rate is \$85 (plus tax). For Monthly 24/7 parking, the special introductory rate is \$99 (plus tax). All monthly parkers will be provided with grounds access to the Garden. Motorists interested in additional information can access MPG's Web site: mpsparking.com/

Security features of the fully lit facility include surveillance cameras monitored by the on-site MPG attendants and Botanical Garden security and routine patrols. During late evening hours, the Garage gates will be closed and access will be available by buzzing the on-site attendants.

Community Open House All Weekend

Following the ribbon-cutting ceremony, a Community Open House kicks off and will continue through Sunday, April 1, 2012. MPG staff will be available to answer questions from community members about parking rates, hand out application forms, provide tours of the Garage, distribute free key chains (while supplies last) and demonstrate how the facility's 24/7 access functions.

An unforgettable departure from the everyday, The New York Botanical Garden is America's premier urban garden. Its special exhibitions, seasonal programs, and engaging activities inspire visitors of every age and interest. The Botanical Garden is an ever-changing living museum and a showplace of natural beauty and wonder.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour: \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors and students with ID, \$8 for children ages 2–12, free for children under 2. A *Grounds-Only Pass* is also available: \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors and students with ID, and \$2 for children ages 2–12, free for children under 2. Grounds admission is free all day on Wednesdays and from 10 to 11 a.m. on Saturdays. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit www.nybg.org

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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