Nature Revealed Through The Built Environment: 
Re-envisioning The Clifford A. Phaneuf Environmental Center

O. H. Greenleaf donated the first 65 acres to establish Forest Park in 1884. At least 178 more acres were donated by Everett Hosmer Barney (a Civil War arms producer). Greenleaf and Barney convinced several friends and neighbors to donate most of the remaining land for the park, totaling 735 acres today.

The park was originally designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, most famous for his design of New York's Central Park.

Before interstate 91 was built, Forest Park bordered the Connecticut River.

Forest Park features a zoo, various ponds and lakes, a rose garden, recreational grounds, and many wooded trails.

The Clifford A. Phaneuf Environmental Center

In 1936, “The Warming House” was built to replace an adjacent ice skating house on Porter Lake. The building is framed in steel with wood stud walls.

The exterior is clad in logs, giving the building the appearance of a log cabin.

In 1970, the Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS) was founded by Clifford A. Phaneuf and Lorraine Ide. Phaneuf became the coordinator for ECOS in 1971 and continued to develop the program until his death in 1987.

In 2008, the former skate house was renamed the Clifford A. Phaneuf Environmental Center. Currently, over 8,000 elementary and middle school students attend the ECOS program each year.