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Environmentalists Criticize Overton Park's Face-Lifting

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A major face-lifting of Overton Park's formal garden has brought charges from local environmentalists that the Memphis Park Commission is defacing the park.

Mrs. Sunshine Snyder said the park commission has destroyed several rare boxwood bushes and also healthy holly plants in its landscaping efforts.

"It is defacing the beauty of the park. It takes 25 years to grow these plants and they are not common to this area," said Mrs. Snyder, who was one of the original plaintiffs in the Overton Park expressway case.

The garden, which is just west of the park's Doughboy statue, features bordered walkways that weave through an array of manicured shrubs and flowers.

A check of the area yesterday afternoon showed that several large shrubs had been either dug up or cut down, two large trees had apparently been cut down and it appeared workmen have begun preparing soil for the replanting of more plants.

James Hadaway, executive director of the Memphis Park Commission, said yesterday that the park commission hired Duke Moody, a local landscape architect, to draw up plans for the redesigning of the garden.

"We're taking out all the plants and shrubs, and replacing them with new ones," Hadaway said. "We thought it was time to do it."

He said there are no boxwoods in the garden, and that he does not know what Moody's design will look like, "but I'm sure it will be something the community will be proud of."

He added that Moody worked with the park commission on the renovation of Overton Park Zoo.

A spokesman for the Citizens to Preserve Overton Park, who asked that her name not be used, said it was wasteful on the city's part to destroy healthy plants and changing the garden was eliminating a Memphis tradition.

Hadaway said the face-lifting should be completed in the spring and that the new plants will come from the park commission's greenhouse.

Vinson Is Ailing

MILLEDGEVILLE, Ga. (AP) — Former Rep. Carl Vinson, who served in Congress longer than any other person, was hospitalized Friday for "a slight illness." Vinson, 91, served in the House 50 years.

On TV (Med.) this looks terrible!
(at bottom of left-hand comic page!)