Launch of King’s Garden Plan

2.3.2010
Collection of maps dating back to the 16th century
with many specifying the king’s garden
A message from the mayor

The initiative to restore the area of the King’s Garden to its ancient glory is part of our fundamental commitment and responsibility to preserve and safeguard Jerusalem, its landscapes and vistas, historic and scenic sites for the sake of future generations.

For thousands of years, the King’s Garden was an island of green, a site of agriculture and water, as part of the systems of valleys and wadis that surround the Old City – ancient Jerusalem.

The reconstruction of the garden is crucial and vital for the environmental reparation of the area. It will not be carried out in its entirety. As an inseparable part of the restoration of the garden, the municipality has decided to acknowledge the changes that have occurred on the ground. The restoration plan contends with the enormous difficulties created by illegal construction in the area, and involves renewal of the neighborhood that adjoins the garden.

The entire area is facing a spectacular architectural and environmental transformation. Jerusalem is ready for this challenge.

Nir Barkat
Jerusalem Mayor
Jerusalem is surrounded by mountains, but also by streams. While the inhabitants of the city settled on the mountains, the streams were left empty of homes and free for agriculture, leaving a number of “green lungs” around the city. As part of its vision to develop the city, the municipality of Jerusalem is making every effort to preserve and restore these green areas as part of its commitment and responsibility to the values of nature and the environment. A historic commitment, which the inhabitants of Jerusalem have stood by steadfastly in the past, and that we will continue in the present for the future.
The King’s Garden – In the shade of fig and olive trees

“I made me gardens and parks, and I planted in them trees of all kinds of fruit” (Ecclesiastes 2:5). The Kidron Stream, which flows from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, passes by the foot of the City of David. The water, the source of life, flowed in the days of Israel’s kings in the Kidron Stream, quenching the thirst of Jerusalem’s residents, irrigating their land and watering their flocks.

At a point known as the “Gates of the Garden of Eden,” the Kidron stream meets the Valley of Hinom, creating a dramatic vista of religious and historic importance.

Traditionally, it was in this place that the kings of Israel established their garden. It is commonly believed that this is where King Solomon planted his garden, and where, sitting in the shade of its trees, he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes.

The beds of spices and roses that blossomed in the King’s Garden are mentioned in Songs of Solomon. The gift offerings and spices that grew in the garden were mixed with olive oil from the Mount of Olives and used by the Temple priests in their daily service.

In ancient times, potters, artists and artisans worked in the garden, and the local residents raised fruit trees, medicinal herbs and spices. Prudent development of the site can serve to leverage the economic-tourist development of the entire neighborhood, improve the existing infrastructure, turning the area into a must for all visitors to Jerusalem.

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The development of illegal construction

For hundreds, even thousands of years, the King’s Garden area was conserved as a flourishing island of green. The importance of the area preserved it as a garden throughout all the generations. As can be seen in the pictures, up until 1967, the garden contained only four structures on its southern side. However, the laying of sewage pipes triggered the development of massive, illegal construction in the area. Currently, there are 88 structures inside the garden area, all of which were built without building permits on an area that had been preserved as a garden thousands of years ago.

The King’s Garden - a green belt in the city

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The vision:
To restore the King’s Garden to its historic state as a major world and tourism site, with a planned residential neighborhood alongside it to properly address the needs of the local residents.
From a sense of commitment to the past and consideration for the present, the municipality is working on the development of the King’s Garden neighborhood, the restoration of its groves, in addition to providing an appropriate and fitting solution for the neighborhood residents. The plan’s vision is to turn the King’s Garden into a blossoming park that will flourish alongside a residential neighborhood, in which there will be restaurants, artists’ studios, souvenirs and local-art shops and more. In the area east of the Kidron, the existing neighborhood will be put in order, the infrastructures improved and public and commercial areas established. The currently existing buildings west of the Kidron will be diverted to available areas east of it.
In the village of Silwan today there is no community center for the benefit of the residents.

The Municipality of Jerusalem is promoting in parallel to the development of the King’s Garden a large-scale community center.

The center will be built in the south of the neighborhood on land zoned for a public building many years ago.

The building will include a community school, kindergartens and day care, extracurricular activity rooms, fitness center, sports fields, an infant care center, and more.

The establishment of this center will improve the quality of life for neighborhood residents and create a center for culture, education, leisure, and enjoyment.
עיריית ירושלים

מחק קים מזרחי - עומץ סבר
מנלי לוי - שיセンター
沭園 זאבי - שוהי

ירוחם לוי

מנהלת הרשות: מני צ'ן
מנהלת חשבונות - דן פינסקי
מנהלת מזחים - יובל איציק

מייסדים נוספים:

מגילה פרידמן - יאיר זיא
דרילר - יאיר זילבר

Fly Design - ענבל רנבי