

Marvin's Gardens Historical Background

"Marvin's Gardens" is a small triangular park located at the intersection of Dewees Avenue, Coquina Place, and Shell Street. The park is named after the former dog of the Sheppard's, longtime residents of the neighborhood. Part of the Ocean Grove Unit 1 plat, this triangular parcel was bounded by public right on all three sides. Soon after platting, the area around the park began to develop with homes and was then annexed by the City of Atlantic Beach in 1987. Two years later, the City of Atlantic Beach first proposed to pave Dewees Avenue, Coquina Place, and Shell Street as well as locate a lift station in this area. After opposition from neighborhood residents, these plans were shut down. The City then decided to purchase this land for use as a public park that would later receive the name "Marvin's Gardens."

Years later, in 2002, several petitions from neighborhood residents were submitted to the City Commission for several requests including that the streets be paved and that Marvin's Gardens be improved. This led to two neighborhood meetings led by former City Manager Jim Hanson and former City Commissioner Desmond Waters and attended by neighborhood residents and city staff. The opinions of residents were divided regarding their desire to have the streets paved and drainage improvements made. A survey was then distributed to residents for their input regarding the multiple paving and drainage options presented by city staff. Of the 30 homeowners that were sent surveys, 21 responded with the majority in favor of paving and drainage improvements. In August 2002, it was decided to proceed with paving and drainage improvements to Dewees Avenue, Coquina Place, and Shell Street and to leave Marvin's Garden as a green space.