LETTERS

Solution in Franklin Park is to remove the Shattuck altogether

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A view of the Lemuel Shattuck Hospital and Franklin Park. ARAM BOGHOSIAN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Scaling back the proposed health care and supportive housing facility in the Frederick Law Olmsted-designed Franklin Park is not the answer ("State downsizes $550m Shattuck expansion," Page A1, Dec. 12). The answer is removing the building altogether. The building takes parkland from a neighborhood that has already borne the brunt of

racism and inequitable investment. The neighborhood should not be victimized once again with more building.

The purpose of a park, Olmsted opined, was to create "a ground to which people may easily go after their day's work is done, and where they may stroll for an hour, seeing, hearing, and feeling nothing of the bustle and jar of the streets." He railed at politicians and public officials who viewed parks as simply places to build. "The very 'reason for being' of the park," Olmsted said, is "the opportunity for pleasurable and soothing relief from building."

Social services and parkland are not either-or propositions. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy has identified at least 12 alternative locations for the provision of health services. And a state Senate budget amendment has suggested that floating hospitals could provide behavioral health care services — an idea Olmsted implemented during the Civil War.

It's time to rethink this project altogether and to save Franklin Park for future generations.

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The network champions Olmsted parks and places, and among its partners is the Emerald Necklace Conservancy.