



March 27, 2023

Boston Zoning Commission
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Boston, MA 02201
zoningcommission@boston.gov

Mayor of Boston
Michele Wu
One City Hall Square, suite 500
Boston, MA 02201-2013
Mayor@boston.gov

Mayor's Representative, Margaret Van Skoy
Margaret.VanSkoy@boston.gov

Re: Map Amendment Application 752/Longwood Place

Dear Commissioners:

Existing zoning guidelines prohibit high-rise development in the Longwood Area. These guidelines were adopted for a reason – to protect the Emerald Necklace from damaging shadows. The proposal approved by BPDA ignores those rules and poses an existential threat to the vitality of Olmsted's extraordinary park system. For these reasons, we ask you to **table this decision and seek further deliberation. Creative and thoughtful design alterations can be identified that comply with existing guidelines and allow both healthy development and thriving natural assets.**¹

The Emerald Necklace – a great system of parks designed by famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted – is a world-renowned treasure and national asset whose restorative spaces have been serving Bostonians and diverse visitors for over 100 years. Approving the BPDA decision will threaten this historic park system at a time when healthy green space is critical to addressing climate change.

The Projected Shadow Damage Is Great

As so many have made clear, **the amount of shade created by the proposed development will seriously and negatively impact the ecology and historic character of these parks.** The shadow will interfere with tree, shrub and turf growth, with a predictable impact on the Olmsted design. As outlined by independent parties, the structures would ADD shadows expected to range in size from one to five acres. With more shade, the growth of existing trees and thriving plant communities will be impaired and it will be increasingly difficult to stabilize the soils along the Muddy River –an urgent and ongoing taxpayer-funded initiative. Diminished growing conditions would in turn produce “dead zones” along the Necklace and diminish both the future health of the river and Olmsted’s linear park.

When faced with a similar proposal to change zoning rules in Brooklyn, the New York City Planning Commission unanimously rejected the request, upholding existing rules adopted to protect the Brooklyn Botanic Garden from plant-killing shadows.

Boston leaders should do the same. **The existing zoning guidelines rightly and explicitly protect the Emerald Necklace against shadow threats and should be honored – not rejected.** While parties understandably value Simmons University, that is not justification to look the other way when plans present a clear and present danger to Boston’s irreplaceable park system.

Simmons Can Help the Climate Crisis

Indeed, allowing this zoning exemption may kill the goose that lays the gold egg. The Emerald Necklace is one of the most beloved aspects of Boston and attracts millions of visitors a year. If this proposal is allowed to proceed, the linear park’s vitality can no longer be sustained.

As it has for many years, Simmons should work to partner with the Necklace to ensure that its backyard remains an asset for students and the greater public. A recent report by the University of Massachusetts – Boston School of the Environment finds that “climate change will deplete groundwater levels across the Greater Boston area after 2030, putting drinking water, plants, wildlife and infrastructure at risk.” Allowing high rise development will only exacerbate this condition, producing shadows that will hinder the development of healthy trees, plants and turf that reduce temperature and fight against urban heat islands. Given our fragile environment, collaboration is in order to achieve BOTH Simmons’ economic targets and a healthy historic public landscape.

Maintenance Funds Cannot Make Plants Grow

In an effort to distract from the proposal’s infirmity, the parties have proffered a substantial maintenance fund. But maintenance funds cannot make plants grow. And maintenance funds

do not solve the fundamental ecological problem that the building shadows create: Tree, shrub and turf growth will suffer if these high rises are allowed.

More broadly, allowing this development fundamentally ignores the City and State's written commitment to maintain and manage the historic Olmsted parks so that the Muddy River Project meets its long-term goals and protects the public's multi-million-dollar investment. That commitment includes flood control, water quality improvement, habitat enhancements and historic preservation. Allowing destructive shadow-producing high-rise development in the project area surely violates that obligation.

Nor should the parties be allowed to argue that beneficial modifications will occur in the future; there is absolutely nothing in the approved project which requires the parties to make changes.

Collaboration Can Achieve a Win-Win

If the Zoning Commission and Mayor call for further collaboration, this can be a Win-Win situation. Olmsted understood that we are all in this together. In that same spirit, we believe it is essential that the parties continue discussions to find options that will achieve Simmons' goals AND respect the Emerald Necklace.

On behalf of Olmsted parks and places across the country, we ask you to protect the nationally-recognized Emerald Necklace for future generations. To approve the Longwood project, as is, will ignore the public's interest in vibrant public spaces and threaten the extraordinary and unique Olmsted park system that makes Boston livable and desirable.

Sincerely,



Anne Neal Petri
President and CEO Olmsted Network

The Olmsted Network (formerly the National Association for Olmsted Parks) is the only national organization solely dedicated to protecting and preserving the work and living legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted firm. Our network includes the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, Central Park Conservancy, Biltmore, Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Park Friends-Milwaukee, The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside, Atlanta's Olmsted Linear Parks and scores of other partners around the country dedicated to protecting Olmsted parks and landscapes. The Olmsted

Network is serving as the Managing Partner of Olmsted 200, the celebration of the bicentennial of Olmsted's birth, www.olmsted200.org.

¹ The [Interim Guidelines](#) enhance and protect the physical assets of the Longwood Medical Area -- its neighborhoods, parks, streets and sidewalks, views, landmarks, and human scale: They provide as follows:

- Create no-build zones along the Riverway and Fenway, Avenue Louis Pasteur and Brookline Avenue to protect existing parks and parkways;
- Restrict new shadow impacts on City of Boston parks. ... [N]o project will be approved if it casts any new shadow for more than one hour on March 21st on the Emerald Necklace, Joslin Park or Evans Way Park. **(Emphasis supplied)**. This standard is consistent with the most recent shadow restrictions adopted in the City's Municipal Harbor Plan.

<https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/1b6e9fa9-1c79-4926-9446-5b457e5444b4>



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**Testimony of the National Association for Olmsted Parks
In opposition to construction in Franklin Park**

**Anne Neal Petri
President and CEO**

Shattuck Campus at Morton Street AMB Public Hearing
April 13, 2021

My name is Anne Petri, President of the National Association for Olmsted Parks. We were founded in 1980 are the only national organization dedicated to protecting the legacy, vision and values of Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted firm. We are based in Washington, DC and currently serve as the managing partner of Olmsted 200, the national celebration in 2022 of the bicentennial of Olmsted's birth. We are pleased to be working with many partners including the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and scores of Olmsted parks and places to prepare for this historic milestone.

On behalf of Olmsted parks and places across the country, I am here to oppose proposed construction plans and to underscore the precedent-setting importance of recapturing 13 acres of parkland in historic Franklin Park.

In too many places, from coast to coast -- cities view parks as places to build, often in high need neighborhoods.

Franklin Park is a case in point. Over its history, the park has been subjected to numerous intrusive uses; the transformation of the Meadow into a golf course and buildings; the adaptation of the Greeting promenade into the Zoo and its structures; the addition of a stadium and parking; the building of a maintenance yard; and the construction of the Lemuel Shattuck Hospital. Today, 40% or 200 acres of Franklin Park cannot be accessed freely by the general public. Now the Department of Health and Human Services is proposing to enter into a multi-year lease with a private developer to build another facility.

To be sure: The Commonwealth has an obligation to provide important health services outlined. However, building in Franklin

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Park is not the answer since a far better location – adjacent to public transportation and public services – exists in the Arborway Yard Bus Facility.

What happens here in Franklin Park reaches far beyond Boston to ALL who are dedicated to the importance of parks and green space in our daily lives.

As a matter of environmental and social justice, high need neighborhoods deserve expansive and well-maintained public parks and the mental, physical and ecological benefits they provide. They should not be subject to building – simply because the building is called a Public Health Campus. As Olmsted made clear, “the very reason ...of the park is soothing relief FROM building.” (emphasis supplied)

We are working with the American Public Health Association and others to emphasize compelling evidence that parks reduce stress, improve mental health and help mitigate the pressures of climate change. This is especially clear as we find ourselves in the midst of a global pandemic where parks and open space have been critical to mental and physical health.

THIS, I SHOULD ADD, WAS clear to Olmsted who understood when he designed Franklin Park that outdoor spaces play an important role in the health and well-being of communities. Olmsted viewed the creation of public parks as a “ democratic development of the highest significance” – open to all people and all communities.

And yet, across the country, thriving public parks ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO ALL COMMUNITIES: Parks in lower income communities are often neglected. And too many parks become easy locations for non-park and private projects. At a time when 85 percent of Americans live in urban communities, **preserving, enhancing and expanding parks is essential to public and global health and to environmental justice.**

As many others have eloquently outlined, we are not faced with an “either or.” Boston and the State can easily achieve two goals –ensure accessible health services and recapture 13 acres of Olmsted’s original Franklin Park.

Restoring parkland would be a fitting tribute to Olmsted as we prepare to celebrate his 200th birthday. And it would set a national example for how cities and states can - and MUST-- redress decades of environmental injustice by restoring park land to high need neighborhoods while creatively addressing public needs in other locations.

Thank you.



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Filed via the DCR Website. November 6, 2020

Re: Arborway Parkway Improvements Project

The National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) applauds progress on the Arborway Parkway Improvements Project and believes all three proposed design options present significant improvements over existing conditions.

We support DCR's shared goals and favor modifications that will expand dedicated green space and trees and provide safe and user-friendly pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Project offers a timely opportunity to restore a continuous linear park design in keeping with Frederick Law Olmsted's original plan.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and look forward to further updates on this important project.

Sincerely,

Anne Neal Petri
President and CEO

NAOP is the only organization in the country dedicated to advancing the legacy, vision and values of Frederick Law Olmsted. NAOP is the managing partner of Olmsted 200, a national celebration in 2022 marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, www.olmsted.org.



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Press Release

National Association for Olmsted Parks Calls for Dedicated Paths for Pedestrians and Bicyclists as part of Arborway Parkway Improvements

July 10, 2020 -- The National Association for Olmsted Parks today called for the creation of continuous dedicated paths for pedestrians and bicyclists as part of Boston's Arborway Parkway Improvement project.

In comments submitted by post [LINK](#) and, in an abridged version [LINK](#), via the website, NAOP's president and CEO Anne Neal Petri noted that the Arborway project offered a "timely opportunity to recapture Frederick Law Olmsted's design intent for this section of the Emerald Necklace." "Viewing the Arborway through the lens of Olmsted's design underscores the importance of accommodating cyclists and pedestrians as well as automobiles," she said.

The full statement, and shorter website comments, are available on the NAOP website, www.naop.org.

NAOP is the only organization in the country dedicated to advancing the legacy, vision and values of Frederick Law Olmsted. NAOP is the managing partner of Olmsted 200, a national celebration in 2022 marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, www.olmsted.org

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**Testimony of Anne Neal Petri
President and CEO
National Association for Olmsted Parks
Before the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Committee on Parks and Culture
Tuesday, July 19, 2022**

Good morning, I am Dede Petri, president and CEO of the National Association for Olmsted Parks. Thank you to Chairwoman Nicholson and Supervisor Burgelis for this opportunity.

Biographer Justin Martin says Frederick Law Olmsted may be the "most important historical figure that the average American knows least about."

With this in mind, the National Association for Olmsted Parks heartily supports the resolution to name the roadway in Washington Park Olmsted Way particularly in 2022, as the country celebrates Olmsted's 200th birthday.

We serve as a national voice for Olmsted parks and landscapes and are proud to be the managing partner of Olmsted 200, the nationwide celebration of Olmsted's 200th birthday, dedicated to Parks for All People. We are pleased to work with Olmsted friends groups in Milwaukee, Lake Geneva and Kohler. Our board chair Philip Schultz is from Fox Point and I come from Fond du Lac.

We can honestly say: Milwaukee has an extremely important and underappreciated Olmsted heritage. Drawing attention to this heritage is timely and appropriate.

Thanks to Milwaukee's first Parks Commissioner Christian Wahl -- for whom Wahl Avenue is already named -- Olmsted visited Milwaukee four times.

In the course of his visits from 1892-1894, Olmsted helped site parks as well as create Washington, Lake, and Riverside Parks and Newberry Boulevard, connecting the latter two. He was focused on green space, but he was also attentive to circulation and connectivity. Roads in his plans are not mere roads but essential to the park's

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enjoyment. A signature feature of his park designs is a separation of ways, providing for safe and separate pathways for pedestrians, horses and carriages.

Olmsted designed the circulation system to achieve his vision of an accessible democratic space –where residents of different neighborhoods and different backgrounds could come together.

Olmsted was a great landscape architect, and founder of the profession. But, more importantly, he was a visionary reformer, and his parks, and the principles underlying them – equitable access, public health and sustainability -- deserve our recognition, our understanding and our stewardship.

Olmsted was working both before and after the Civil War. He served as an undercover reporter for the New York Times, showing the moral and economic bankruptcy of slavery. He was appointed the first head of the f US Sanitary Commission, the precursor to the Red Cross, saving hundreds of Union soldiers' lives through improved sanitation, food, and medical care.

These experiences and others, throughout his life, informed his belief that parks were and should be critical infrastructure. He believed that the thoughtful built environment could have positive social, cultural and economic impacts: Parks for all people.

In Milwaukee and Buffalo – and other communities—parks have too often failed to be accessible for all people. In too many cities, we have seen actions that divide communities– as happened in Washington Park during the construction of the spur.

That is another reason we applaud this plan to honor Olmsted at a time when city leaders are examining ways to reunite Washington Park – as it was designed -- and to bring neighborhoods back together. This is an honor for Olmsted but it is also an important step in recognizing the remarkable asset that is Washington Park.

As we celebrate Olmsted's bicentennial, Olmsted has bequeathed us valuable lessons for the twenty-first century – indeed, we might call them “the Olmsted Way.” He has shown us, in city after city, the value of green and open spaces accessible to all. He has provided us with designs that renew our spirits and restore our souls. He has invoked the better angels of our nature to come together in a spirit of community to each other in the park.

Olmsted's enduring vision for Washington Park merits recognition. We wholeheartedly support this Resolution. Thank you.



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April 15, 2022

Comments of the National Association for Olmsted Parks

The National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) endorses the constructive tone and spirit of the Integrity and Condition Study. NAOP urges Pinehurst to work with the Southeast Region and to benefit from National Park Service expertise and experience as the community grapples with continuing challenges to the historic landscape. The recommendations are reasonable and worthy of full study. NAOP is honored to be mentioned in the report and happy to serve as a resource to this delightful and unique historic community.

NAOP also believes the report raises serious concerns that must be addressed. **Of primary concern: continued intrusion on the Village Green.**

Pinehurst should take steps to end future construction in and around the Village Green lest it lose this critical piece of the Olmsted/Manning design. Going forward, the community should consider internal remodeling of existing buildings and place any new construction outside the historic area.

The Village Green is the centerpiece of this charming community which features an inviting combination of canopied evergreen trees, curvilinear village streets and textured plantings. It is this magical combination that lends character to the village and should be diligently retained.

NAOP agrees that it would be beneficial to reexamine the National Historic Landmark (NHL) District and existing Local Designation to ensure sufficient protection of the historic area. This effort can help eliminate confusion between the two districts. It can also allow for a full review of the initial designation so that it may be possible to include the landscape as a specific resource and contributing factor.

Of additional concern: intrusions on historic circulation patterns and the curvilinear design. Going forward, the community should prioritize alternatives to any proposed alterations that would change historic circulation patterns and the curvilinear design. The addition

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of the roundabout has cut into the landscape considerably, against the recommendations of the NPS, The Cultural Landscape Foundation and others.

As the Report outlines, the integrity of Pinehurst remains. But any future developments have the potential to destroy the landscape features that make Pinehurst a unique and historic landmark. By any reasonable assessment, the landscape integrity of Pinehurst is in danger.

Because Pinehurst is such a unique village, it needs to prioritize its historic landscape character. Rightly known as a golfing community, Pinehurst can and should attract visitors focused on historic landscapes and history. In North Carolina, Pinehurst can become a “must stop” on a landscape heritage trail—joining Biltmore, the Outer Banks and the Smoky Mountains—and it can showcase its unique Olmsted/Manning design, the Arboretum, and rare sandhills ecosystem. The Golfing Community has recognized the importance of historical integrity as it returned Courses No. 2 and 4 to their historical landscape designs. This dedication should be equally strong when it comes to ensuring the integrity of the landscape as a whole.

Pinehurst has an enviable problem: it is attracting a growing number of visitors, and residents, with attendant traffic because of its appeal as a community.

As the report makes clear, Pinehurst can retain its extraordinary character. But to do so, city leaders and residents must herald and protect Pinehurst’s unique landscape and landscape heritage. They must prioritize cultural landscape values in determining new directions for the community. And they must be willing to oppose any future proposals that will alter the Village Green and historic core. Once open space is gone, it is gone forever.

Respectfully submitted,
National Association for Olmsted Parks
Dede Petri, President and CEO



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December 15, 2021

Anita Laremont, Chair
City Planning Commission

120 Broadway, 31st floor
New York, NY 10271

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/about/email-the-director.page>

Re: Irreversible Damage to Fort Tryon Park; 4650 Broadway, FRESH Application & 19-story building

Dear Chair Laremont:

The National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) urges you to oppose development of a 19-story building immediately abutting heritage landscape Fort Tryon Park. The proposed structure would do serious and irreversible damage to this National Historic Landmark that was both home to the Wecquaesgeek Tribe and centerpiece of the American Revolution.

At a minimum, it is critical that the Planning Commission take the time to review the details of the proposed development before any action occurs.

Notably, those who are most affected by the development – the neighbors – are opposed. The Manhattan Community Board 12 recently adopted a unanimous resolution opposing the FRESH application and the high rise, noting it is at odds with the prevailing neighborhood of much lower, 6-7 story buildings. Permitting this project would set a precedent for further out of scale construction. The proposed tower would exceed the height of both The Cloisters and the park's summit, among the highest spots in Manhattan. Particularly distressing is the projected intrusion into public vistas throughout the Park-- especially those enjoyed by residents who live on the east side.

Back in 2016, Fort Tryon was threatened by a development that would have similarly destroyed the viewsheds and park design. That effort was vigorously rejected for the reasons outlined above. **This project should be rejected for the same reasons.**

In 1927, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. commissioned the Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm to design Fort Tryon Park as a gift to the people of New York,* on property he had amassed over a ten year period, captivated by the site's outstanding natural beauty. The Olmsted firm ultimately

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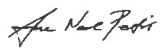
produced nearly 1,000 plans under its Job Number 00529, over a span of 36 years. The site's expansive and unimpeded views toward the City, the Hudson River and the New Jersey Palisades were essential features, as were tranquil vistas from The Cloisters, built on the crest of the escarpment. The superb views --in every direction -- were defining features of the park, intended to be preserved in perpetuity for park visitors and neighbors to enjoy. **Indeed, in creating the Park, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. recommended limiting building heights around the perimeter, urging no higher than six stories, in order to preserve those views.** Cushing, *A Life of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.*, p. 148 (2021), citing Olmsted to Raymond Fosdick (May 10, 1927).

As the neighbors have outlined, the proposed structure will undermine the unique beauty and vistas of Fort Tryon while providing virtually nothing in return. While the developer has made a FRESH request for a grocery, in fact, the neighborhood already has a number of supermarkets. The application is nothing more than a misuse of the zoning rule to grow the building's footprint and to increase the number of residential units -- all to be offered at market rates.

Sensitive natural spaces are also involved. The 19-story building will cast a shadow in the critical morning hours, creating shade at a key growing time. The City should insist on an Environmental Impact Study that thoroughly addresses and mitigates the significant adverse impacts a project of such large scale would impose upon the Park and its surrounding community. It is noteworthy that municipal officials and citizens in Brooklyn recently rejected a proposed high rise development that threatened the BBG's conservatories, greenhouses and nurseries. As here, the proposed development would have caused lasting damage to the landscape and plant collections.

Please reject the FRESH application and building as currently proposed in favor of exploring more appropriate development -- as requested by the neighborhood. The deleterious visual and ecological impacts of this new building demand further examination before any action is taken. To proceed without further review will result in irrevocable damage to Fort Tryon Park and its environs.

Sincerely,



President and CEO

Established in 1980, the National Association for Olmsted Parks is the only national organization solely dedicated to preserving the Olmsted legacy by providing advocacy, research and outreach needed to protect, restore and maintain these exemplary parks and landscapes. NAOP's Olmsted Network consists of more than 80 Olmsted parks and landscapes across the country including the Fort Tryon Park Trust, Central Park Conservancy, and Prospect Park Alliance. NAOP is the Managing Partner of Olmsted 200, the bicentennial in 2022 of Frederick Law Olmsted's birth.
www.olmsted200.org.

**Given the immense philanthropy of the Rockefeller family, the letter opposing this development from the Greenacre Foundation deserves special weight and attention.*

Copies to:

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**Comments of Anne Neal Petri, President and CEO
National Association for Olmsted Parks, November 12, 2021**

Good morning! I am Dede Petri, president and CEO of the National Association for Olmsted Parks. Based in Washington, DC, we are the only national organization dedicated solely to advancing the life, work and legacy of visionary landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. We work with countless Olmsted parks and landscapes across the country including Central Park, Prospect Park, Lake Park, Washington Park, Atlanta's Linear Park.

The Obama Presidential Center is clearly an asset to the community. But sacrificing historic Jackson Park is not the answer. I am here today to lament the court's decision to reject three amicus briefs which outlined why the public interest demands that the Obama Presidential Center be sited outside Jackson Park. I will very quickly outline arguments in our brief.

Olmsted Parks are not luxuries that are expendable. They are critical green infrastructure --places of historical and ecological importance. To serve the public interest, public health and well-being, it is incumbent on all of us to save these natural spaces as the pandemic has surely made clear.

Today, of course, we take public parks for granted. But parks were not always public assets. Before Olmsted, most parks were private property – the domain of wealthy and privileged individuals. Because of Olmsted, parks became places where all people could come together – of every race, class and gender.

That is why we have objected since 2015 to the appropriation of 20 acres of public parkland for a privately owned and operated facility. There are many locations – never seriously examined – that would permit an inviting presidential center and at the same time save Jackson Park which is one of Olmsted's most beautiful and iconic parks. Those alternatives should be explored.

By allowing construction to proceed, the court and the city are setting a distressing precedent. The message will now be that public lands are up for grabs by powerful political interests.

In our amicus brief, NAOP also expressed concern that planned construction in Jackson Park will have a deleterious impact on the ecological health of Chicago.

Long before climate change was a term, Olmsted understood the need for thoughtful and resilient design. Jackson Park transformed a fetid wetland into a magical space that invited wildlife, birds and people into its picturesque, pastoral and restorative setting.

The Park is positioned between the lake and dense urban areas to the north, east and west. As temperatures increase, it serves as an antidote to heat islands and degraded air that challenge human health and productivity.

As early as the 1890s, Olmsted was so concerned about frequent flooding and varying fluctuations in the level of the Lake that he had assistants compile a list of annual water levels from 1859- 1892. He found that the water levels varied as much as three feet. (FLO Papers, Vol 9, p. 781, fn 4 and 5). His design, therefore, used thick plant masses with native dune grasses, sages and sedges to protect park edges when flooded during storms.

By helping soak up water from the sky and the lake, the park operated like a green sponge helping to address the inevitable challenges of storms and water runoff, now only worsened by climate change. The vision and effectiveness of Olmsted's green infrastructure were just graphically demonstrated in Boston where his Back Bay Fens and Muddy River, both constructed to address flooding, were able to withstand the ravages of Hurricane Ida.

It is noteworthy that both the New York Times and the Washington Post have recently written extensive pieces about the serious challenges Chicago faces because of climate change. Allowing construction to proceed in such a sensitive area without a comprehensive and honest environmental impact assessment is counter to the public interest.

Final point. Plans to alter Olmsted's historic roadways in Jackson Park will severely disrupt accessible and workable circulation.

The circulation system through Jackson Park is an integral part of the Olmsted design created to provide easy access to nature for all people.

By closing Cornell Drive and other internal roadways, the OPC will cut off travel routes intentionally designed by Olmsted to facilitate efficient movement, access, and pleasurable circulation. While some contend that the drives should be closed to add greenspace, this argument ignores both the historic and functional roll of the drives.

By any calculation, the area will be inundated by more traffic in a section of the City that is seriously underserved by public transportation. The proposed reconfiguration will potentially separate communities rather than bringing them together – undermining a fundamental purpose of Olmsted's parks.

Like President Obama, Olmsted explored the themes of urbanization, civic infrastructure, and social justice as a foundation for the enrichment and empowerment of American society. He believed, fundamentally, in the democratic nature of parks and the capacity of nature to improve health and bring people together by keeping them free of building.

We fervently hope that Jackson Park and its unobstructed vistas to the lakefront can be saved. As Olmsted knew, the value of a park is the ability to transport urban dwellers to a cooler and restorative space. Once open space is filled with buildings, it is lost forever. Thank you.

State Capitol Committee, Washington State, and Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee

January 21, 2022 via email

Members of the State Capitol Committee and the Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee:

The State of Washington capitol campus is one of the most extensive and intact Olmsted-designed capitol landscapes in the nation. It is a point of pride as we enter the bi-centennial year of Frederick Law Olmsted's birth and fitting that as Olmsted 200 is being celebrated across the country that the State of Washington is acknowledging the importance of its own state capitol's Olmsted legacy. (*The attached brochure provides an overview of that legacy.*)

The Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks and the National Association for Olmsted Parks are pleased that the recommendation for the Preferred Alternative A for the Pritchard Building and Opportunity Site #5 has been chosen with an understanding of the important role of the Olmsted landscape setting for the Capitol buildings.

As the design moves forward, we want to emphasize the importance of setting the extension of the Pritchard building within a landscape to maximize the reintroduction of the richly-layered native landscape backdrop for the historic core capitol buildings. To this end we urge that every effort should be made to re-evaluate the surface parking requirements for both the Pritchard and Newhouse projects.

Thank you to the excellent team of DES staff and designers who have brought us to this point - a process which has been engaging and collaborative with all parties. We appreciate the ability to participate in the process of honoring the historic significance of the capitol campus of the State of Washington

Sincerely,
Anne Knight
Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks
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Press Release

**National Association for Olmsted Parks Opposes Proposed Development
in Essex County's South Mountain Reservation**

June 1, 2020 -- The National Association for Olmsted Parks today released a statement opposing proposed development in the South Mountain Reservation.

Noting that 2020 marks the 125th anniversary of the Essex County Parks system – the first county park system in the country designed by the Olmsted firm – NAOP called upon local officials to mark this landmark by prioritizing the long-term health of the Reservation through maintenance, conservation and preservation of its native flora and fauna and natural lands.

It called on the County, at a minimum, to undertake independent analyses of the environmental and transportation impacts of the proposed development before moving forward.

You can read the full [statement here](#).

NAOP is the only organization in the country dedicated to advancing the legacy, vision and values of Frederick Law Olmsted. For 40 years, NAOP has helped preserve and protect historic Olmsted landscapes; provided advocacy as well as technical assistance at the national and local level; offered key resources and educational material about Olmsted landscapes and landscape design; and published and promoted definitive scholarship through the Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted. NAOP is the managing partner of Olmsted 200, a national celebration in 2022 marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, www.olmsted.org

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February 26, 2023

Chicago Park District
Board of Commissioners
commissioners@chicagoparkdistrict.com
Via Email

Dear Park Commissioners:

Thank you!

The recent decision to protect Promontory Point is very good news. We hope that Landmark recognition signifies a renewed commitment to protecting and preserving Chicago's beautiful lakefront landscapes. In too many ways, the lakefront is no longer "open and free," threatened by intrusive development and climate change. As the national voice for Olmsted parks and landscapes, we look forward to working with you to protect the public lakefront that Frederick Law Olmsted described as both "grand" and "sublime."

In the 1870s, when summoned by Chicago leaders, Olmsted and Calvert Vaux proposed undisturbed lakefront as part of the Chicago Park system. Sited on the edge of Lake Michigan, their park transformed a fetid wetland into a green space that invited wildlife, birds, and people into its picturesque, pastoral and restorative setting, with wide open vistas to the Lake.

The design explicitly focused on ecological challenges raised by the marshy wetlands, using thick plantings – with native dune grasses, sages, and sedges – to protect park edges when flooded during storms. By helping soak up water from the sky and the lake, the designed landscape operated like a green sponge helping to address the inevitable challenges of storms and water runoff. Now 100 years later, the importance of a healthy lakefront has only grown greater. See *New York Times*, "A Battle Between a Great City and a Great Lake," p. 1 et alia (July 7, 2021).

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We, therefore, commend and underscore the urgency of identifying ecologically sensitive approaches to flood control that retain the limestone revetments and the scenic and historic landscape character of Promontory Point.

This approach admirably furthers the District's strategic plan "to increase the amount of natural area acreage and to become a national model for modern, sustainable natural areas in the city." By protecting the lakeshore edge, the Park District can both honor the historic landscape while providing important environmental services to the city and visitors.

Again, thank you!

Sincerely,



Anne Neal Petri
President and CEO

The Olmsted Network is the only national organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the work and enduring vision of Frederick Law Olmsted. Our network includes more than 100 Olmsted parks and places across the country including Central Park Conservancy, Emerald Necklace Conservancy, Biltmore Estate, Prospect Park Alliance, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Seattle Parks, Bok Tower Gardens, Yosemite Conservancy, Midway Plaisance Advisory Council and other groups dedicated to championing Olmsted landscapes and parks for all people. ON is serving as the Managing Partner of Olmsted 200, www.olmsted200.org.