



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION for
OLMSTED
PARKS

February 27, 2013

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Iris Gestram

Mr. Wayne Park
Chief Executive Officer
LG Electronics U.S.A., Inc.
1000 Sylvan Avenue
Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

Dear Mr. Park:

On behalf of the National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP), I am writing to ask LG Electronics U.S.A. to respect the long preservation history of the Palisades in its Hudson River setting and avoid significant damage to the view of the Palisades from other parks, particularly Fort Tryon Park in New York City. We feel that LG can achieve its corporate goals without erecting a building that will destroy the views of what the National Park Service described as the nation's most significant igneous rock sill formation.

The Palisades have been internationally famous since the mid-19th Century because of their centrality in the landscape paintings of the Hudson River School. Well-known painters such as George Inness, Martin Lewis and George Herbert McCord depicted the Palisades in many of their works, spreading appreciation for the views of the Palisades to a worldwide audience.

Because the integrity of the Palisades and the views of these scenic cliffs were threatened by quarrying and other industrial activities during the 19th Century, concern grew about the future of the Palisades. In 1894, Frederick Law Olmsted, the renowned founder of American landscape architecture, first introduced the idea of creating a public reservation on the Palisades via joint legislative action by New York and New Jersey. Olmsted expressed his views on the need to preserve the Palisades in an interview published by the New-York Tribune on August 16, 1894:

“There is one place,’ said Mr. Olmsted, of extremely great value which ought to be held by the public, because in time it will become of extreme value. I refer to the Palisades... It will in time become a place of great magnificence. The view down the Narrows from there is really something wonderful, and the view of the city is also fine. As the city grows further northward the need of the Palisades being set apart will become more apparent.”

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The Palisades Interstate Park was acquired and preserved through the efforts of two states in order to preserve its scenic beauty and unique geology. In an early example of a public-private partnership, citizens and local and state governments in New York donated and allocated funds to buy properties in New Jersey for the park. The investment made over 100 years ago for the long-term enjoyment and benefit of residents and visitors both in New Jersey and New York was farsighted.

In 1993, the Palisades were designated as a National Natural Landmark. The National Park Service states that "Sites are designated as National Natural Landmarks because they contain the best remaining examples of specific biological and/or geological features."

The best vantage points from which to appreciate our nation's most significant igneous rock sill formation is from the parks of northern Manhattan, especially Fort Tryon Park. The park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. to integrate gardens, walks and views of the Hudson River and the Palisades. The Fort Tryon Park Trust and the City of New York recently restored the gardens to maintain the splendid vistas as intended by Olmsted's design.

Both staff and volunteers of the Fort Tryon Park Trust maintain these views by ongoing expenditures of funds and in-kind donations of labor. Fort Tryon Park's value is not only found in its own amenities but in its location and views. It is one of our nation's outstanding landscapes and historic resources, as is the Palisades.

NAOP urges LG Electronics U.S.A. to alter the design of its building plan so that the building will not be visible from any point east of its location.

Established in 1980, the National Association for Olmsted Parks advances Olmsted principles and the legacy of irreplaceable parks and landscapes that revitalize communities and enrich people's lives. It is the only national organization solely dedicated to preserving the Olmsted legacy by providing the advocacy, research and outreach needed to protect, restore and maintain these exemplary parks and landscapes, particularly in urban areas.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "I. Gestran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "I".

Iris Gestran
Executive Director

cc: John Taylor, LG Vice President for Public Affairs
Kathleen A. Donovan, Bergen County Executive
The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
The Honorable Christopher J. Christie
James Hall, Palisades Interstate Park Commission
Joshua Hyman, Palisades Park Conservancy
Jennifer M. Hoppa, Fort Tryon Park Trust
Ed Goodell, NY-NJ Trail Conference



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Iris Gestram

February 27, 2013

Kathleen A. Donovan
Bergen County Executive
One Bergen County Plaza 5th Floor
Hackensack, NJ 07601-7076

Dear Ms. Donovan:

As per our enclosed letter to LG Electronics U.S.A., NAOP is asking Bergen County to prevent the company from implementing its plans to construct a large building that would damage views of the historic Palisades Interstate Park.

Our understanding is that the zoning code that had provided protection for these views was dramatically altered in 2012 to increase the permitted building height from 35 to 150 feet, evidently in response to LG Electronics' proposal to build a 145-foot-tall building on the former Unilever site.

As the only national organization solely dedicated to preserving the Olmsted legacy, NAOP opposes governmental or corporate actions that damage, impinge upon or degrade the parks and landscapes designed by the Olmsted firm. We have engaged our national membership to call and write your office and that of LG Electronics and the governors of New York and New Jersey to urge that this or any other tall building not be constructed where it will negatively affect the views of Palisades Interstate Park.

Fort Tryon Park in New York was designed by the Olmsted firm expressly with the views of the Hudson River and the Palisades in mind. Any diminishment of those views directly undermines Fort Tryon Park's design and purpose.

The State of New Jersey and Bergen County are fortunate to attract and retain corporate activity. However, individual corporations may emerge and disappear over time (as evidenced by the acquisition of the Unilever site by LG Electronics). In contrast, our natural and cultural history will persist to be enjoyed by countless future generations so long as we steward these special places.

Zoning is a powerful tool available to local government, and it is NAOP's hope that Bergen County exercises it in a way that is consistent and protective of a natural resource that citizens and government went to extraordinary lengths to preserve.

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PHONE: 202-223-9113 FAX: 202-223-9112 INFO@NAOP.ORG

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Iris Gestram
Executive Director

Cc: Christopher Szeglin, New Jersey Section
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Joshua E. Hyman, Palisades Park Conservancy
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