



Board of Trustees

Philip Schultz, Chair
Fox Point, WI

Douglas Luetjen, Vice-Chair
Seattle, WA

Lane Addonizio, Secretary
New York, NY

Mark Buscaino
Washington, DC

Ray Chambers
Alexandria, VA

Stephanie Crockatt
Buffalo, NY

Arleyn Levee
Watertown, MA

Steven Livengood
Washington, DC

Alida Silverman
Atlanta, GA

Spencer Tunnell
Atlanta, GA

Wyman Winston
Cudahy, WI

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato
Chicago, IL

William Bell
New York, NY

Anne "Dede" Neal Petri
President and CEO

Madelaine Momot
OlmstedOnline Content Manager

Victoria Vanhuss
Communications Manager

Cara Monaco
Partnership Manager

Leslie Jacobs
Executive Assistant

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).

Advisory Council

Eleanor Ames
Portland, ME

Kathleen Conner
Seattle, WA

Julie Crockford
Boston, MA

Eliza Davidson
Seattle, WA

Rolf Diamant
Woodstock, VT

Robert Doyle
Oakland, CA

Betsy Shure Gross
Davis, CA

Esley Hamilton
St. Louis, MO

Donald Harris
Seattle, WA

Faye Harwell
Alexandria, VA

Tomás Herrera-Mishler
Sarasota, FL

John Karel
Ste. Genevieve, MO

Patrice Kish
Boston, MA

Anne Knight
Seattle, WA

Francis Kowsky
Buffalo, NY

Lucy Lawliss
Bradenton, FL

Phil Loughlin
Cambridge, MA

Rosemarie Murane
Denver, CO

Christine Edstrom O'Hara
San Luis Obispo, CA

Ed Orser
Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Barlow Rogers
New York, NY


Ann Satterthwaite
Washington, DC

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.