



NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION for  
OLMSTED  
PARKS

**Board of Trustees**

Philip Schultz, Chair & Treasurer  
Fox Point, WI

Douglas Luetjen, Vice-Chair  
Seattle, WA

Lane Addonizio, Secretary  
New York, NY

Mark Buscaino  
Washington, DC

Stephanie Crockatt  
Buffalo, NY

Patrice Kish  
Boston, MA

Lucy Lawliss  
Bradenton, FL

Arleyn Levee  
Watertown, MA

Steven Livengood  
Washington, DC

Paul Daniel Marriott  
Washington, DC

Alida Silverman  
Atlanta, GA

Spencer Tunnell  
Atlanta, GA

Barbara Yaeger  
Madison, CT

Anne "Dede" Neal Petri  
President and CEO

Aga Simmons  
Administrator

**Testimony of the National Association for Olmsted  
Parks on the  
Legislative Campus Modernization Plan**

I am Anne Petri, President of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, the only national organization dedicated to protecting and preserving the life, legacy and work of Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted firms. We support a distinguished network of Olmsted parks and landscape conservancies across the country including Central Park, Prospect Park, Louisville and Buffalo parks and Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks.

We have members coast to coast, and a substantial group based here in Washington because of the extraordinary Olmsted heritage you have in this state -- especially here in Olympia. We owe a great debt to Washington State, in fact, for a grant it administered to expand our online portal, Olmsted Online, to make the rich array of historic records relating to the Olmsted firm in Washington available to the broader American public.

Echoing the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks and Eliza Davidson, we are profoundly concerned by -- and indeed oppose -- the plans and the process that bring us here today.

The State House and surrounding property are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. And the Historic District's importance has been rightly acknowledged by the 2009 Landscape Master Plan which was created to protect this property from ill-advised development plans.

With all due respect, the Legislative Campus Modernization Plan is just that. It ignores the underlying

**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

Erin Gallentine  
Brookline, MA

Betsy Shure Gross  
Davis, CA

Esley Hamilton  
St. Louis, MO

Donald Harris  
Seattle, WA

Faye Harwell  
Alexandria, VA

Thomas Herrera-Mishler  
Sarasota, FL

John Karel  
Ste. Genevieve, MO

Anne Knight  
Seattle, WA

Francis Kowsky  
Buffalo, NY

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

principles of the Master Plan. Its proposed expansion and intrusive parking lots would destroy the integrity of this landscape and reduce it to a mediocre, disconnected collection of buildings and pavement, lacking the structure of the original design by John Charles Olmsted (1911) and later James Frederick Dawson (1927-31), of the Olmsted firm.

These changes would occur with minimal public input and virtually no serious exploration of alternatives and the larger design. And they would significantly undermine a cohesive historic district and landscape at the heart of Washington's capital city.

Capital Grounds are not just mere streets and parking lots. They are the vibrant civic square that bring us together, from all places and walks of life, as a democratic people.

That is especially true here in Olympia where the Capitol is distinctively sited on a forested bluff above the town with unique Northwestern views of the Sound and the Olympic Mountains. The Capitol Grounds represent an intentional designed complex of buildings set with sweeping lawns, major and minor axial drives, and outdoor rooms framed by layered vegetation. The bones of the original Olmsted Brothers design remain remarkably intact.

It would be sad indeed to destroy such an iconic space by a rushed process that pays little attention to the historic grandeur and coherent beauty of the Capitol Grounds. We respectfully request that you postpone a decision until further review can occur.

*The National Association for Olmsted Parks is the only national organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the life, leadership and legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted. NAOP is serving as the Managing Partner of Olmsted 200, the national bicentennial celebration of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, in 2022, [www.olmsted200.org](http://www.olmsted200.org).*

March 18, 2021