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Boston Planning and Development Agency  
Board of Directors Meeting, July 18, 2024

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**Re: Reject the Request for Waiver**

The Olmsted Network asks the Boston Planning and Development Agency to reject the Article 80b large project waiver request by Boston Unity Soccer Partners, LLC (BUSP).

Twenty individuals, including a member of our national board and our partner the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, have filed a lawsuit against the City of Boston, the Trustees of the George Robert White Charitable Trust, and BUSP to protect and preserve Frederick Law Olmsted's landmark Franklin Park. This active litigation insists on regulatory compliance and seeks to prevent the privatization of a public asset. Given the serious matters at issue, we call upon you to postpone action until the issues have been fully resolved.

The Olmsted Network is the national voice for Olmsted parks and landscapes based in Washington, DC ([www.olmsted.org](http://www.olmsted.org)). Our organization was founded in 1980 and our partners include many Boston and Massachusetts organizations including the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, Arnold Arboretum, Brookline Parks, Charles River Conservancy, and Friends of Fairsted.

Waivers are typically allowed for small or minor changes. This is not a minor change. This is a massive project which ignores the design intent and integrity of Franklin Park as it limits school and community access, drastically increases the hardscape footprint, floods the local community with uncontrolled traffic, and introduces lighting and noise pollution intrusive to humans and wildlife. At a time of climate change, this project will remove public green space from the people when green oases and the shade they provide are more important than ever.

The fact that the Stadium has been allowed to deteriorate for so many years is not reason to limit the opportunity for the public— and public officials — to scrutinize projects that will have substantial environmental and community impacts. The environmental justice communities which surround Franklin Park have, for too long, been the victim of projects which take away public park space. First the zoo, then the stadium and parking lot, the maintenance yard, Shattuck Hospital — and now this.


Franklin Park's designer Frederick Law Olmsted created parks for all people. His urban parks were consciously designed to provide "democratic spaces," where people of all backgrounds and economic status could come together and have access to the mental and

**PARKS, PLACES & PEOPLE**

physical benefits of thriving green spaces.

The city's plan to rely on private parties to finance park improvements is neither good policy nor the city's only option. As outlined by the litigation, cities should not be allowed to move forward without following applicable rules and regulations, especially when their actions will undermine environmental equity, social justice, and public health. Please reject the request for the waiver until the active litigation is resolved.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne 'Dede' Petri". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Anne "Dede" Petri  
President and CEO, Olmsted Network  
July 18, 2024