

Dear Friends,

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." I'd paraphrase that as "A threat to any park is a threat to every park." This comes to mind when I hear talk about redeveloping our lakefront, starting with tearing down O'Donnell Park, which it is said is too valuable a piece of land to house a parking structure. Well, it's more than a garage and even though it's not what one typically thinks of as a "park," it IS public parkland and the plaza atop the garage IS used by downtown workers and visitors as a place to enjoy the view. Most importantly, it IS our public land and we are obliged to protect and preserve it for future generations. If we cede this land for private development the die is cast and we'll find it much more difficult to stop development in other parks. Envision housing developments on County golf courses! We remain committed to opposing all attempts to put our parks up for sale.

Thank you for your interest in our parks and for your support.

John Lunz

President, Preserve Our Parks

Wind turbine finds right site

When the City of Milwaukee's new Office of Environmental Sustainability (EOS) made plans last spring to put a 154-foot wind turbine on the lakefront, two sites in Bay View were considered. One was a spot near the Lake Express Ferry terminal and the other a more inland location near the Port Authority Building at 2323 S. Lincoln Memorial Dr.

POP influenced the EOS to choose the Port Authority site. The ferry terminal is on former lakebed land—filled land—and thus it is subject to the Public Trust Doctrine. The doctrine, which has roots in English common law, requires that the waters of the state, and by extension filled lakebed lands, be available for free use by the public for navigational or recreational uses only.

POP applauds the OES decision. Siting the turbine on filled land would have violated the Trust Doctrine and set a dangerous precedent. POP is a staunch advocate for adherence to the Doctrine. The doctrine has been the principal protector of our open lakefront for many decades.

Neighbors propose changes for two downtown parks

Juneau Park Friends and the East Town Association combined forces recently to propose a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) to raise money for improvements in Juneau and Cathedral Square Parks. Long-term bonds would be issued for the estimated \$3 million cost of the projects and the bonds would be repaid by special taxes on property in roughly a 60-block area bounded by Ogden and Clybourn Sts., Broadway and Lake Michigan.

Plans for the two parks vary:

- **JUNEAU PARK** Juneau Park Friends propose to re-landscape the park, open lake views and add and reconfigure paths to the lower lakefront. The County will repair the park's slumped bluffs.

- **CATHEDRAL SQUARE** To accommodate its outdoor concerts, East Town Association proposes to install a grove of trees and a 48-by-58-foot stage and toilet building on the northern one-third of the Square. The building would be oriented north to south and have an open center passageway. Its southern façade would include two sound amplification towers. Plans call for covering the building and towers in four-season vines.

POP agrees maintenance and operation of the parks are important and that a NID might be a viable means of raising the necessary funds. However, there are problems with the NID plan as proposed. For example, the plan calls for turning over Cathedral Square to the East Town

Association and Juneau Park to the Juneau Park Friends. This is contrary to the terms of the deeds of the two parks, which require that they be operated and maintained by the County and not be conveyed to any private party. Also, the NID as proposed would be governed by a board consisting only of property owners, meaning that other neighbors and general park users would have no voice in their governance.

POP supports the effort of the NID proponents to find money for park improvements but believes it is essential that control of the parks remains with the County Parks Department.

Eyes on O'Donnell Park

O'Donnell Park has not been the magnet it was meant to be, but it has occupied its downtown lakefront promontory for twenty years, largely without challenge. Last year, though, when a concrete panel from the park's garage fell and killed a boy, a discussion on the park opened. Philanthropist Michael Cudahy proposes that the entire park with its plaza, pavilion, garage and green space be torn down and replaced by a hotel and an office building plus an accompanying garage and small park. This would create a "gateway" to the city, Cudahy says. County Executive Chris Abele has expressed interest. A broadened tax base would benefit both City and County.

A proposal like this raises questions. Do we trade public recreation space for commercial development? Push our commercial buildings out onto the lakefront parkland? Raze the O'Donnell pavilion, valued at \$30 million? Would a hotel and an office building feel like a gateway or like more downtown?

Art in a troubled park

As it did last year, POP will sponsor a week of kids' free art sessions at Garden Homes Park on 26th Street north of Capitol Drive. The park is a haven for drugs, drinking and prostitution and neighbors, led by Joe Bova, are working to take the park back. Cleanup crews have been organized. Curfew and dog-leash rules have been posted in the park. Police are giving more surveillance.

POP's gift of the art sessions is part of the "take back" initiative. The sessions, presented by Artists Working in Education, will be held daily at the park from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. from August 16 through Aug. 20. Children will work on three art projects each day. All are welcome.

POP pops for intern pay

POP again has contributed half the salary for a summer intern to work with Brian Russart, coordinator of Milwaukee County's 10,000 acres of natural lands. This year's intern is Julia Robson, a UWM senior majoring in biology and environmental science. Besides leading projects in species control and habitat restoration, she is running a program to monitor the endangered Butler's garter snake and other reptiles. "She's a wonderful trainer of other interns and volunteers," Russart says.

POP welcomes new board member

POP welcomes new board member Eddee Daniel, fine art photographer, writer, activist, arts educator and blogger extraordinaire. See urbanwilderness-eddeeblogspot.com/.

Preserve Our Parks Inc. was founded in 1999 to work for preservation of parks and green spaces. **Our board:** John Lunz; Betsy Abert, Laurie Albano, Randy Bryant, Diane Buck, Eddee Daniel, Barbara Elsner, Beth Fetterley Heller, Jim Goulee, Bill Hibbard, Bob Kalupa, Charles Kamps, Mary Kamps, Kaye Kern, Bill Lynch, Betty Quadracci, Ted Wiley

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