

Jackson Park Watch Statement

To the Meeting of the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Margaret Schmid, JPW co-coordinator

Good afternoon Commissioners, President Ruiz, and Superintendent Kelly. I am Margaret Schmid, co-coordinator of Jackson Park Watch. Thanks as always for the chance to address you.

As we have said on prior occasions, Jackson Park Watch is dedicated to the notion that all significant plans and decisions about Jackson Park should be developed through a transparent process including extensive community engagement. As you move forward to work with the Obama Foundation to craft plans for Jackson Park as the home of the Obama Library, the need for transparency and community engagement is heightened so that the result can be one that all stakeholders can embrace.

The need for transparency and community engagement in your processes has been heightened as well given the fact that the installation of the Yoko Ono sculpture on Wooded Island in Jackson Park is a glaring display of the opposite – complete lack of transparency, absolute lack of community engagement. In fact, you appear to have violated the policy that is stated on the Park District website: *The installation of any art work or sculpture, whether on a temporary or permanent basis, requires a Standard Access Permit. Please note, approval for the display of the art and an agreement regarding the art are also required.* There has been no response to our requests for documents showing the approval for this display and the terms of the agreement regarding this art.

In the meantime, the actual installation of the Yoko Ono sculpture has occurred,



"Petals" show over the protective fencing in a 9/13 view from Cornell Drive

but critical questions about the art work remain unanswered: Who will own the sculpture? Who is paying for it and for its installation? Who will maintain it? At whose expense? What are the plans for the new space that will be created? How will they impact the adjacent nature sanctuary? Even more troubling is the possibility that your planning for other key changes in Jackson Park will also proceed behind closed doors, away from the public eye, with a complete lack of community input.

[**jacksonparkwatch@gmail.com**](mailto:jacksonparkwatch@gmail.com)

jacksonparkwatch.org

Like us on Facebook