

Jackson Park Watch Statement

To the Meeting of the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners

Wednesday, October 18, 2016

Margaret Schmid, JPW co-coordinator

Good afternoon once again. I'm Margaret Schmid, co-coordinator of Jackson Park Watch, and I am happy to have the chance to address you again today.

To start, congratulations are due you, the Mayor, and Project 120's Bob Karr for the unveiling of the Yoko Ono sculpture in Jackson Park on Monday. While some very unhappy community members were rejected at the check-in point for this invitation-only event, it was nonetheless quite a lavish performance.

Questions remain, however, the same ones we have been raising for some time. By what authority was a private entity able to erect such a large permanent sculpture in a public space? Is this in effect a kind of privatization of public space? Why was the community not involved? Whose money was used for the manufacture and installation of the sculpture? Who actually owns it and who will pay for its maintenance?

These questions take on additional weight when considering the secretive nature of all things surrounding the Sky Landing sculpture as compared with your rules for the creation of dog parks serving regular Chicagoans. A comparison chart is included on the next page for your consideration.

There are other still-unanswered questions: when will access to the Wooded Island be restored so people can visit the new sculpture? Where will those visitors park, and what restroom facilities will they use? And most importantly, what does the secretive process by which you allowed Project 120 to appropriate this public space without public involvement imply concerning how you will handle Project 120's still outstanding and extremely controversial proposal to build an oversized visitor's pavilion with a music venue across from the Wooded Island in Jackson Park?

A comparison that speaks volumes:

*CPD requirements for (regular) Chicagoans to establish a dog park in a Chicago park**

vs.

CPD requirements for the private not-for-profit, Project 120, to erect a permanent sculpture by Yoko Ono on Wooded Island in historic Jackson Park adjacent to a nature sanctuary

| | <i>FOR DOG PARK</i> | <i>FOR YOKO ONO SCULPTURE</i> |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Location</i> | Mandated by Park District | Chosen by Project 120 |
| <i>Application process</i> | Residents committee must submit application | Secret, if any |
| <i>Site requirements</i> | Must be close to water and sewer, distant from neighbors, have open and shaded areas | Site chosen by Project 120, no known requirements |
| <i>Mandated show of community support</i> | Petition from community; letters of support from alderman, others; three public meetings; other requirements | None |
| <i>Financing</i> | Resident committee must raise the est. \$150,000 funds to build and maintain | Unknown who paid for the sculpture, the site preparation, and the installation |
| <i>Building and maintenance</i> | Residents committee required to build and to maintain; layout design and maintenance plan required | No record of any CPD review or action prior to installation permits in June 2016. Unknown who paid for installation or will pay for maintenance. Is some or all at taxpayer expense? |

* As described in <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-chicago-dog-parks-south-side-met-20161003-story.html>