

1WOODLAWN, A COMMUNITY OF NEIGHBORS

1Woodlawn Section 106 Consulting Party Response

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. The undertaking of Roadway improvements (potential federal funding) and the Obama Presidential Center (OPC) and related South Lakefront Framework Plan (potential conversion of parkland to non-recreation use within the meaning of Urban Park and Recreation Recovery [UPARR] under Public Law 95-625).

1Woodlawn has been accepted and listed as an official consulting party to the Section 106 process.

1Woodlawn is a grass-roots representative organization of the Woodlawn community. We, at 1Woodlawn, wish to express our gratitude for this opportunity to express our concerns regarding plans to reconfigure Jackson Park and adjacent roadways to accommodate the construction of the Obama Presidential Center and the potential conversion of parkland as proposed by the South Lakefront Framework Plan. The Woodlawn community will experience significant impact. Such impact will prove positive when the Chicago Department of Planning and Development gives attention to our position regarding these proposed plans.

JACKSON PARK AND LAKEFRONT RECONFIGURATION

- **Recreational green space**

Information we have received from local newspapers covering proposed plans, as well as your presentation describe: (Selected from Curbed Chicago, 12/27/2017)

“A two-story garage covered with landscaping” is proposed to be constructed at the east end of the Midway Plaisance. The bus staging site was eliminated from your draft of the plan along with a children’s play area, a basketball court, grilling stations, and picnic tables. The meeting’s focus was the parking garage and the architects did not say where the bus site would be relocated. An underground parking structure was discussed, but that idea was cut from presentation at the meeting. Questions, (1) is the underground garage no longer being considered? (2) Where will the bus site be moved?

The play area, grilling areas and the basketball court which was proposed to be built on the Midway Plaisance, according to the original plan, is no longer seen. Additionally, no space has been identified for the relocation of baseball diamond and football field. Not addressing these items is a non-starter for our community.

The South Lakefront Framework Plan (SLFP)

On December 7th and 11th, public meetings, you presented three scenarios for review. Attendees were asked to select the scenario that reflects certain principles. The three scenarios are Coastline, Meadows and Lagoons. The principles (designated by color with their respective colored dots to be placed on comment sheets) were as follows:

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- Serve the Community, Inspire the World
- Steward Environmental Integrity & Beauty
- Renew & Maintain Integrity & Beauty

Comment: Serving the community is the element that should carry the most weight. How will the park continue to accommodate family reunions and sports activities with the expected influx of tourists, many of whom will seek to enjoy the parks' pastoral beauty. Can the need to serve the community and renew and maintain integrity and beauty in the park coexist?

The scenarios do not show the type of recreation sports areas traditionally used by and associated with our community groups and families that utilize Jackson Park for recreation.

There may be opportunity to achieve both by looking at vacant city owned land scattered throughout Woodlawn. Attention must be given to creating additional recreational green spaces to avoid the overcrowding of Jackson Park. Hyde Park H.S. sports teams deserve to have sports fields in Jackson Park, within proximity of the school. Residents of southwest and northwest Woodlawn deserve access to quality parks and green spaces as well. This broader perspective will then provide pastoral greenspace and play areas a short walk away from our neighbors. This must be a part of the plan.

(Selected from the Chicago Tribune, July 14, 2017)

The Obama Presidential Center is slated to open in Jackson Park in 2021. As Obama Foundation Chairman Martin Nesbitt said when Chicago was picked as the site,

"This whole initiative is a community benefit"

We've seen the foundation's projections for the center's economic impact on the South Side: Once the center opens, "an estimated 2,175 new jobs. (That includes jobs at the center as well as ripple-effect employment.) Between 625,000 and 760,000 visitors every year, bringing a massive infusion of dining, lodging and retail dollars to South Side businesses. The projected economic impact for the South Side over the first 10 years could reach \$2.1 billion."

Conversely, the Obama group must remember that it's the surrounding community that will have to co-exist with the center's impact on traffic and daily life. And it's the surrounding community that knows best what the community needs.

- **Parking accommodations**

Without adequate parking the local traffic volume will rise to virtual catastrophic proportions. A good example of not considering how to accommodate new businesses and store customers is 51st, 53rd, and 57th streets, from Lake Park Avenue traveling west through the commercial zones, in the Hyde Park community. Traffic and parking are terrible at best. We do not want this problem repeated in Woodlawn. Residential side streets are often filled with cars from shoppers, leaving nowhere for residents, or their visiting guests, to park. DPD and CDOT traffic reconfiguration plans have not included adequate parking allocations. It's better to be proactive than reactive when it's already too late.

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Area of Potential Impact – Architectural

We believe the limited area shown on your map does not capture the significant structures in Woodlawn that will be impacted by our new curious visitors and tourists. Your boundary currently ends at Woodlawn Ave. West of Woodlawn Ave. are several historic places that will see an increase in visitors and curiosity seekers due to their proximity. Below are some examples:

- 1) Dr. Mary Fitzbutler Waring, 6425 S. Eberhart. A Notable Black Woman in Illinois who lived in the neighborhood of Woodlawn. She was 10th president of the National Association of Colored Women Clubs (NACWC), and a president of the National Association's Illinois State's Chicago and Northern District Association (CNDA)
- 2) Lorraine Hansberry- 6140 S. Rhodes Ms. Hansberry is the highly acclaimed author of “a Raisin in the Sun”.

The “lakefront” cannot be the only area of focus, nor can the APE Boundaries be so limited that they do not consider the impact on the entire, historical Woodlawn Community. The APE Boundaries must be expanded to include the entire effected area. We believe the boundary should be moved west to Eberhart.

Woodlawn is a historic community with numerous brown and gray stone homes. There are tourist groups that drive or stroll through the area presently to observe the classic construction of our buildings. We are actively pursuing means to preserve our architecture and display appreciation of our vintage homes of Bedford limestone, imported from central Indiana. We request that the Chicago Graystone and Vintage Home Program will help us Build upon the legacy and experience of the Historic Chicago Greystone Initiative, in all of Woodlawn.

We look forward to your response to the positions stated in this letter from the Woodlawn community. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact the 1Woodlawn Leadership Team listed below.

Sincerely,

1Woodlawn Leadership Team

Cassandra Guice, [REDACTED]

Malcolm Williams, [REDACTED]

Jean Clark, [REDACTED]

Debra Adams, [REDACTED]

Duwain Bailey. [REDACTED]